

Henry Steel Olcott

**The Old Diary
Leaves - V**



OLD DIARY LEAVES, Fifth Series (1893-96)

by Henry Steel Olcott

CHAPTER I

BUDDHA GAYA AND SARNATH (1893)

THE year 1893 now opens up before us, and its events will be found to be very important.

As previously shown, the rumblings of the coming tempest about Mr. Judge were beginning to be heard. Towards the end of last year the arrival of Mr. Walter G. Old of the London staff, with the budget of notes and memoranda which he had taken, enabled me by comparing documents to see the depth and fullness of the treachery which Mr. Judge had long been planning. I find from my Diary of 1893 that the greater part of the first day was spent by Messrs. Keightley, Old, and myself in summarising the evidence in the case; and needless to say, all our hearts were filled with sorrow, for this was almost if not the very first case of downright perfidy in our Society's history.

Until now the splendid collection of Japanese Buddhist Scriptures, which I had brought back from Japan in 1889, had been lying on our shelves uncatalogued for lack of expert help; but now Mr. Kawakami, a young priest student of Kyoto, who had [\[1\]](#) come to India to pursue his studies in Sanskrit, stopped with us for some time and very kindly set to work to prepare a list of the books.

Our equally valuable collection of Sinhalese Pâli manuscripts, presented to the library by the late Mrs. Ilangakoon, of Matara, for the mere copying of which she paid over Rs. 3,000, is still unexplored though not uncatalogued, but I hope that, some day, I may be able to get a close and scholarly comparison made of the two collections, and to publish the result as a contribution to Buddhistic literature from the Adyar Library.

Day by day our consultations on the Judge case continued until the 8th of the month, when Mr. S. V. Edge, Mr. Kawakami, and I sailed for Calcutta.

For the first time in my life I travelled with what Australians would call a "mob" of Bishops; the sees of Colombo, Travancore, and Sydney, and the Canonry of Windsor, together with some smaller fry, being my fellow-passengers. No harm was done however, not even to the ship, for the usual effect of parsons on the weather, so popularly accepted—yet, so unaccountably

overlooked by the Astronomer Royal and the compilers of the Nautical Almanac—was not observable on this voyage.

Though I cultivated no relations with the clergy, I did with some of the other passengers, among them Professor and Dr. (Mrs.) Edmund Buckley, who were returning from long residence in Japan and whom I found charming; there was also Dr. Kennedy, the  well-known London physician, whose diploma was cancelled by the Faculty for his adoption of the Mattei system for the treatment of cancer.

I had the pleasure of again seeing Professor and Dr. Buckley during my tour of last year, 1901, at Chicago where Mr. Buckley holds an important chair at the University of that city.

We reached Calcutta at noon on 12th January, and were warmly received on landing by our kind friends Norendro Nath Sen, Dr. Salzer, S. J. Padshah, Dharmapala, and others. Dr. Salzer took Edge and myself to his house, and we gladly accepted his hospitable invitation to become his guests. If my memory serves me, it was during that visit that Dr. Salzer made that almost incredible cure of the church-yard cough of my Hindu servant boy Muniswami. I don't know when I have been more convinced of the potentialities of Homoeopathy than in this case. I have often cited the facts in my lecture on "The Divine Art of Healing". The facts were these: the boy had contracted a very violent cough which had reached the stage of danger, he kept us all awake at night by his violent spasms. Dr. Salzer undertaking, at my request, the case, gave the patient a vial of what looked like plain water, with instructions to take a dose every hour. At the end of twelve hours the cough had entirely disappeared, and from that time to the present there has been no relapse.

When the Doctor and I were discussing the case, he said that the percentage of matter in the preparation  might be represented by one as a numerator and some nine ciphers preceded by the figure 1 as the denominator.

"It is needless to say," added the Doctor, "that nothing could be more absurd than to suppose that the result which you have witnessed is attributable to the physical action of this infinitesimally small portion of matter. In my opinion, the secret of homoeopathic action lies in the action of the remedy upon the astral body: the phenomenon of cure has just been worked under your very eyes, and, as your ignorant servant knows absolutely nothing of Hahnemann's system one could not say that it was imagination which was the controlling factor. If, then,

the remedy worked a cure, how can you explain it, save on the theory of action on the astral plane which I have just postulated?”

The Doctor’s theory flashed light into the whole obscurity of the homoeopathic problem, enabling us—at any rate, as Theosophists—to reconcile the hitherto incomprehensible sequence of effect and cause in this system of medical practice. Assuredly, the heroic doses of allopathy belonged to the physical plane and, equally certain is it, that the sometimes almost miraculous effects of homoeopathic “high potencies” belong to and can only be comprehended in connection with the plane of astral matter.

I spent a good deal of my time during this visit to Calcutta in trying to promote the schemes of Dharmapala in connection with Buddha Gaya and the other Buddhist shrines; calling on the Viceroy’s Private § Secretary, the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal, and other officials, who sent me hither and thither so as to shift off their own shoulders the responsibility for action. However, I was too well used to this sort of policy to allow myself to be in the least discouraged or put back. They finally referred me to the Mahant of Buddha Gaya, the holder of the property and the very man whom we wished to oust from the occupancy of the greatest of Buddhist shrines!

While in Calcutta I was so fortunate as to make the acquaintance of Dr. P. K. Ray, a Professor at the Presidency College, and a man who has made his name known since that time throughout the Western world of science. At a garden-party at his house I met the Rev. A. M. Bose, M.A., Minister of the Brahma Samaj, and other distinguished gentlemen and ladies of that society. It was very interesting to find myself for the first time in my fourteen years’ residence in India, in a social world which, while composed of Indians, had almost nothing Indian in its appearance, barring the dark complexions and such slight touch of Indian character as was given by the addition of the Indian sari to the European dress which the Brahma ladies wore. In their appearance of self-possession, their sense of personal dignity and their intellectual conversation, they made one feel as if in a European social gathering; while the men of the party compared most favourably, for culture, fluency of language, and the air of personal independence, with any that one would meet in Western lands. These very peculiarities § and the tone of the whole gathering made one easily comprehend why Brahmaism has taken such slight hold upon the Indian nation. It is distinctly foreign to the Indian national spirit, and much more a reflection of Western than of Indian ideals. As I have said elsewhere, Brahmaism has barely held its

ground, while the Arya Samaj, a much later organisation, has spread like wildfire throughout Northern India, formed its hundreds of branches, founded its great college at Lahore, opened its schools and libraries, built its preaching-halls, evolved its class of lecturers and pushed along the road of success. This is because the late Swami Dayânand was intensely Aryan, an enthusiastic follower of the Vedas, and the lines of his movement were laid in the Indian heart and it had not even a tinge of foreign character about it. Of course, it was just simply a new Indian sect, hence contained in it nothing repugnant to Indian ideals; whereas Brahmoism, in spite of the splendid eloquence and the undoubted learning of its leaders, cannot flourish in the soil of the Indian mind as it might but for its unnational aspect. Theologically speaking it is akin to Western Unitarianism, and in fact the Brahmo Samaj is, at this moment of my writing, engaged in the laudable attempt to raise a fund to perpetuate the memory of the late Rev. S. Fletcher Williams, the respected Unitarian clergyman who has been, for two or three years, preaching in their different churches. For the individual leaders of the Samaj, with whom I have had the good fortune to become acquainted, I have || perfect respect, which makes me the more sorry that their movement has not had the success which the personal efforts of its leaders entitled them to expect.

The restoration of the great temple at Buddha Gaya by the Government of Bengal, at the cost of the former King of Burma, had been largely superintended by Mr. J. D. M. Beglar, formerly a subordinate of General Cunningham. As the work was finished, Dharmapala and I were anxious to enlist his sympathies with us in our own proposed building works at Buddha Gaya and the other great Buddhist shrines, so I managed an interview with him, at which we came to a good understanding, and it was agreed that he should have the title of “Consulting Engineer and Archaeologist” when our plans were ripe. The project never came to anything, I believe, for the Maha-Bodhi scheme was blocked by a bitter and very costly lawsuit between Dharmapala and the Mahant, and sometime subsequently, having become dissatisfied with the former’s management, I severed my connection with the Maha-Bodhi Society and left him to carry it on alone.

On the 26th of January I attended the first general meeting of the “Buddhist Text Society of India,” with whose development Babu Sarat Chandra Das, C.I.E., has for the past ten years been so honorably associated. From the copy of the programme which lies before me I find that there were three speakers, viz.,

Sarat Chandra Das, C.I.E., on his literary experiences in Tibet; Mr. Romesh Chandra Dutt, I.C.S., C.I.E., on the works of Kshemendra, the great Kashmirian [B] Poet; and myself on Buddhist Literature. Sarat Babu has tapped the great supply of early Buddhistic literature which exists in Tibet, and which undoubtedly contains the most precious of the books produced in India up to the time of the Muslim invasion, that religious cyclone which swept over Indian Buddhism and left disaster and destruction in its wake—ruined shrines, slaughtered priests, and high mounds of Scriptures given to the flames. The monks, flying for their lives, no doubt took with them to their sanctuary across the border, their most prized literary treasures, some in the original Magadha, some in Sanskrit, and in time they were gathered into the Tibetan religious libraries and shelved alongside of the other precious works on the Buddha Dharma, which had been rendered into Tibetan. As said elsewhere, Sarat Chandra saw many of these primitive volumes in the great Library of the Teshu Lama and was actually permitted to bring some of them back to India with him. In his possession at Darjeeling I have seen them; and this makes me feel confident that when the Great Teachers of the White Lodge see that the auspicious moment has arrived, these long-lost treasures will be rescued from obscurity and brought before the literary world, to enrich us with their contents. Perhaps, also, to upset the fixed belief of the monks of Southern Buddhism, that they are and have all along been in custody of the whole body of the Buddhist Canon. To my mind this idea is an illusion and I have so thought from the beginning of my connection with them. The Buddha [B] did not preach for forty-five years as constantly as history tells us he did, without giving forth infinitely more sermons than the Southern Sangha now possess. That stands to reason; does it not? Then, where must we search for the lost Scriptures save in the places where they were hidden by the fugitive Indian monks and laity, viz., in Tibet and China, whither large numbers found their way in course of time. On the evening of the day of the meeting, Mr. Edge and I left for Delhi.

In preparing the evidence against Mr. Judge we had found a very serious feature of the case was a certain common cheap brass seal which I had myself had made at Delhi and given to H.P.B. on my return from the tour of that year, as a mere joke and without the remotest suspicion that the article would ever be used by Mr. Judge as authoritative corroboration of the integrity of his bogus Mahatma messages; in fact, this was as great a piece of effrontery on his part as any that turned up in the preparation of the case against him. It was important to get a certificate from the maker of the seal as to his handiwork. The journey of

Mr. Edge and myself from Calcutta to Delhi had this for its object. On searching through Chandni Chauk, the well-known street of jewellers and gem-cutters, we found that our man had died eight months before our visit, but his brother and partner, Allabanda, identified the seal and signed a statement.

At 9 in the following evening, we left for Allahabad where we commenced a short tour; both Edge and I giving public lectures, receiving visitors, holding conversaciones, and presiding at meetings of members and sympathisers. We moved on to our next station, Bankipur, on the evening of February 2nd, receiving a most affectionate farewell from the members who crowded at the station to see us off. In point of fact, Bankipur has been from the beginning down to the present time a most agreeable station to visit, our Branch there comprising several men of elevated character and unwavering devotion, chief among them being Babu Upendra Narain Singh and Purnendu Narain Sinha, M.A., B.L., a man who is an honor to his nation as well as to our Society; he has been President of the Branch for many years. Our host at Bankipur was Guruprasad Sen, one of the ablest men of Bengal, a strong character full of moral courage and the instinct of leadership. Dharmapala arrived from Calcutta on the same day and we all went to test the famous echoes in a vast empty brick-built granary—one of Warren Hastings' famine works of 1776. The echo under the empty dome is something weird and appalling; our words were repeated and sent back to us seemingly from the ground under our feet and if we stamped or shuffled our feet, the noises were returned to us from all sides and over and over again, as though an army of phantoms were marching and counter-marching about us. This is one of the real curiosities of India that I am afraid escapes the notice of most foreign visitors. In the afternoon I lectured to a large crowd on Theosophy; the next day, visited Govind Mandir, the temple of Govind Guru, the tenth Guru of the Sikhs; admitted several candidates into membership, and left at 7 p.m. for Gaya which we reached after a run of three hours.

At the station we were met by Chandra Joshi Bhikshu who informed us of a violent assault having been made the previous evening by the Mahant's people on the Buddhist priests whom Dharmapala had placed at Buddha Gaya; one of the poor and inoffensive monks had been brutally beaten. By appointment I went to Buddha Gaya the next day accompanied by Dharmapala, Guruprasad Sen, Bireswar Singh, and others; and after inspecting the premises had an interview with the Mahant on the subject of the transfer of Maha-Bodhi to the Buddhists. Argument and persuasion were wasted upon him; he remained deaf to all my

appeals and refused the most liberal offers. On the following morning I called on Mr. MacPherson, the Collector, and Mr. Shuttleworth, Secretary of the Revenue Board; exchanged official letters with the former about my fruitless visit to the Mahant; reported to the High Priest, Sumangala, the facts of the outrage; received many visitors; lectured at the Bar Library, and in the afternoon attended a Police investigation at which the Inspector tried to get the injured priests to name their assailants. But these men of peace, while frankly admitting their knowledge of the assailants, firmly declined to name them as it was against the rules of their ordination for them to help in any way the bringing to punishment of those [12] who had done them personal injury. As the assault was made at night, in the absence of disinterested third parties, the culprits could not be brought to book and went scot free. As the lives of the priests were in danger at the Burmese rest-house at Buddha Gaya, we searched for and hired a house for them in the town. A second lecture was given by me at the same place as before on the subject of "Mind" to a large audience comprising the leading men of Gaya. By the night train, Mr. Edge and I moved on to Benares, leaving Dharmapala behind to see to the settling of the priests in their new quarters.

We reached the Holy City at noon. Not to waste time I drove out that same afternoon to Sarnath—"a ruined tope in a desolation of brick ruins"—which marks the spot of the ancient "Deer Forest" where the Buddha met his companion ascetics and preached his first great Discourse. My object was to see the spot and enquire about the title, with the hope that if it were vested in Government we might be able to get permission to build a rest-house and Vihara for the use of resident and pilgrim priests and laity travelling to see the great shrines of their religion. To elucidate this point, I called on the Divisional Engineer. The next day I visited the place again accompanied by Messrs. Mokshadadas and Jadub Chander Mitter to photograph this stupa. Three views of it were taken, in one of them our party being photographed at the foot of the ruin. I had the satisfaction of learning that day that the title was in Government, and opened [13] negotiations with a view to obtain its transfer to the Maha-Bodhi Society.

One of the most curious of all the sights of India for travellers is that of the morning bathing in the river Ganges, of the population of Benares. No matter how many times one has seen it, its interest is always fresh, for new elements enter each time into the composition of the panoramic picture. Fancy a vast multitude thronging the steps of the bathing ghâts that stretch from Durga Kund

to the Railway Bridge, clad in vivid costumes, carrying and using polished brass lotas; thousands bathing while other thousands emerge from the water to change their clothes on the steps; behind them a background of huge castle-like structures erected for the use of bathers by pious princes at different epochs; some undermined by the rushing resistless river and sunk in at the corners; Brahmins sitting in the full sun glare doing their morning worship; unmoved and imperturbable amid the stream of human beings descending to and ascending from the river. Then there is the burning ghat in all the ghastliness of the open-air cremations of corpses that are going on for hours—all this makes upon the mind an unfading picture. Many the artist who has tried to fix the scene on the canvas, but none—so far as I have seen—who have succeeded in giving one an idea of the whole panorama. This we enjoyed on the morning of the 11th as we lay on the roof of a houseboat and floated lazily down the stream past the swarming multitude.

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The next morning I spent at home working at my desk, but in the afternoon lectured in the compound of a cattle hospital (gowshâla) with the sick beasts lying or standing all about me. The lecture was to have been given at the Town Hall, but with a happy incapacity for doing things promptly, sometimes found in India, sometimes, also, in Western countries—notably those occupied by the Latin race who by no possibility do things to-day that can be put off till to-morrow—the preliminary formalities were neglected until the last moment, the public were persuaded that there would be no lecture and went home again, and when the permit actually reached me it found me on an empty packing-box in the cattle-yard going on with my lecture to the small audience who had been got together. This is one of the incidents of the lecturer's life in India. It brought my Bemires visit to a close and I left at 1 p.m. on the 13th for Muzaffarpur.

CHAPTER II

EXTRAORDINARY CASE OF PSYCHOPATHIC HEALING (1893)

IT was a long, tedious, fatiguing railway journey across country from Benares to Muzaffarpur; involving several changes and night travel. We reached our destination an hour past midnight. The travellers' bungalow to which we were taken, was excellent, and so we were able to refresh ourselves after our tiresome transit. The next day at 2.30 p.m. I lectured to a very large audience which embraced nearly the entire European community—a most unusual circumstance for, as a rule, the Anglo-Indians stop away from any Theosophical lecture where they would have to mix with the natives of the country. For my part I can see no difference between their antipathy for the dark-skinned men of India, and that of our American whites for the dark-skinned men of Africa. Save this, that the contempt of the white man for the backward races of Africa may seem somewhat natural, since the masses of them are intellectually so inferior; whereas, the similar feeling which the Anglo-Indians have for the [18] Hindus is absolutely inexcusable, their intellectual evolution having, in some respects, gone much higher than ours. In both cases there is, back of all the antipathy, the sense of wrong done to the dark man, and the mere presence of the wronged one is a constant reproach and causes a pricking of conscience.

During that day and the following one, there were the usual receptions of visitors, Branch meetings and profitable conversations and discussions, and at 8 p.m. on the 15th (February) we moved on to Jamalpur, a great railway manufacturing centre. Mr. Edge and I were put up by Mr. Macdonald, F.T.S., a Canadian gentleman married to a half-caste lady. I lectured that evening in the railway company's public hall, to a large audience, all railway employees and many of them whites or Eurasians. I shall always remember Jamalpur for the insulting tone and vulgar violence of the language used by one of my auditors, a Methodist fanatic, who put questions to me after the lecture; it was the worst experience of this kind I ever had.

The daughter of Mr. Macdonald was an extremely interesting girl, as, in testing her psychic faculties, I found that she was a good psychometer. I made the following experiment with her. Her father and I had been talking about the process known among Hindus as Prâna-pratishthâ, by which the “senseless block of stone, wood or metal” becomes infused with the vital force of the Brahmins who, during a period of forty days, perform the ceremony over the image. I declared that it was very easy to prove that the vital [17] aura could be transfused from a man to an inanimate object. On our host expressing incredulity, I begged him to have brought a half-dozen or a dozen glasses of water, the tumblers to be of the same pattern and with nothing to distinguish one from another; they were to be placed together in the middle of the table; our host was to simply point with his finger to the glass into whose liquid contents I was to transfuse my aura; in other words, do the self-same thing which the Brahmins do to their images during the course of their forty days’ concentration of will-power. The glass being indicated, I was asked how I meant to give the promised proof. I said I should utilise the psychometric power of the young lady of the house; and thereupon asked the host to call her. When she came I asked her to be good enough to pass her hand horizontally and slowly over the glasses of water, and if she felt any influence from one different from that of the others, she was to tell us. Before she was called into the room I had held the chosen glass in the palm of my left hand, encircling the rim with my fingers; then closing my right fist, leaving the thumb projecting, I pointed the latter at the surface of the water, made circular passes with it, breathed upon the water with “mesmeric intent” and concentrated my will-power so as to saturate the glass and its contents with my prâna. All this the young lady was ignorant of, and not a sign was made after she entered the room to indicate the glass with which the experiment was connected. She passed her hand over the glasses, as directed, all being [18] alike inert to her, until she came to the glass which I had mesmerised. Instantly her hand was drawn to that tumbler with the same swiftness and directness as a suspended steel needle exhibits at the approach of the uncovered north pole of the magnet. I explained to my host that if he had brought me a dozen or twenty or fifty small brass or wooden idols from the bazaar, I could have given him the same proof of the reality of Prâna-pratishthâ as he had just then got from the simple experiment with the water-glasses. Ignorant missionaries and their backers who talk so flippantly about the “heathen in their blindness, bowing down to wood and stone,” are, presumably, unaware of the vivification that occurs in the image after it has passed through the mesmerising process. But I

have explained this matter fully in a previous chapter and only recur to it now for the information of those who are now getting their first introduction to the psychical science of the people of the East.

Mr. Edge and I had great pleasure in making the acquaintance of Mr. Elias, a local member of our Society, whose heart was honest and manners most agreeable. He was a half-caste, his father having been an Arab of Cairo, his mother a white lady. Mr. Edge was to have lectured on the 17th, but on that day was attacked by fever, so I had to take on his engagement myself. On the 18th at a T.S. meeting I admitted to membership Mrs. Elias and two of her three grown up daughters—to the great joy of Mr. Elias. In the evening we went to Monghyr, a [19] neighbouring town where I lectured. We returned to Jamalpur in a hackney carriage. On the next morning we left for Bhagalpur. Mr. Edge had a severe attack of fever in the train and went to bed on our arrival.

We had a very warm welcome, as usual at this place, where some remarkable psychopathic cures of disease which I made in 1883, had caused the Bhagalpur public to feel very friendly to me personally. Among these must always be remembered that extraordinary case of Badrinath Bannerji, a local Pleader, whose sight I restored in spite of his having been made blind by what the surgeons of the Calcutta Medical College had officially declared an incurable glaucoma. For the sake of new-comers into our reading circle let me briefly explain that this man was brought to me stone-blind in the year above mentioned; that after ten treatments of less than an hour each I restored his sight so that he could read the small type in a newspaper; that during a second tour of Bengal in 1885 I saw him again, blind; that within half an hour, by simple passes and breathings I brought back his sight; that on my third visit to the town in 1887 I again found him blind and again, after a half-hour's treatment, restored to him the blessed boon of vision. Now, in commenting upon my first restoration of his sight, in a former chapter of this series, Dr. Brojendranath Bannerji, L.M.S., graduate of the Calcutta Medical College (see Theosophist Supplement, May, 1883), after consulting all available medical history, challenged his professional [20] brethren to point to a similar case; and in Theosophist Supplement for August, 1887, a correspondent, after referring back to Dr. Brojendranath's surgical report of 1883, says: "After having been pronounced incurably blind by the first ophthalmic surgeons of Calcutta, the patient was made by Colonel Olcott to see to read ordinary type in a book or journal. This sight lasted six months and then gradually faded away. In 1885, when the President saw him again in Bhagalpur,

he was totally blind and had been so for eighteen months. In two treatments on the same day his sight was again restored, but again—this time after a whole year, however—was lost. When the President met him for the third time, on the 8th of June, this year, he again restored sight to the diseased eyes.” The writer proceeds to say: “It will be curious to watch this unique case, and it is a great pity the patient could not be systematically treated every day for a number of months, until it could be ascertained whether in those two most serious afflictions, glaucoma and atrophy of the optic disk, the transfusion of healthy aura (tejas) into the diseased parts would result in their resumption of normal function.” The writer cites the somewhat parallel case of Babu Ladli Mohun Ghose “to whom also, in the year 1883, Colonel Olcott restored sight in the left eye—a case of hypermetropia. He, too, lost the artificially renewed sight, but after having had it a much longer time; and it was again restored in part, so that the patient could make out letters 1/16 of an inch high”.

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The above observation by the writer in the Theosophist was very timely and sensible, for here is what I found on seeing Badrinath Babu for the fourth time, in 1893. The revived vision given by the treatment of 1883 lasted six months; after the second treatment, in 1885, it lasted eighteen months; and after the third treatment, viz., that of 1887, it lasted about five years. Badrinath had become blind again only about a twelve-month before I came to Bhagalpur in the course of my tour of 1893. Does it not seem as though we had now come upon a problem of the deepest scientific interest in the department of practical psychology? Assuredly it is one possessing the deepest interest to every practitioner of the healing art along either one of its psychopathic lines. The case may be stated thus: In the nervous system of A there exists a temporary stoppage of nerve vibration, which if allowed to take its course ends in complete and fatal paralysis: no drugs restore the vibration, no electric or galvanic current can give more than a temporary stimulus. But who is to determine the questions as to when the incurable or irremediable stage of paralysis is reached? The facts connected with the two cases of blindness above mentioned prove as clearly as anything could, that when all other methods have failed, when the most learned surgeons have exhausted their science and unconditionally acknowledge defeat, there is still an all-potent agent in Nature which can effect a cure and thus teach professional men not to prematurely confess defeat. This curative agent is the human nerve aura, and [22] the cure is effected by filling the void in A's system

with the strong current of B, a healthy man, who has learnt to concentrate his will and compel his vital current to flow through the exhausted nerves of the patient. The very first treatment of Badrinath gave him back his sight; then, for lack of a fresh stimulation of the weakened optic nerves, the induced vibration stops, the enfeebled nerve, like a watch run down, becomes inactive and blindness returns. Now, in the case of Badrinath, there were four experimental observations, the first three with intervals of two years, the fourth after an interval of six; in the interval between the first and the second he enjoyed clear sight half a year, between the second and the third it stayed with him three times as long, and between the third and the fourth, five whole years, that is to say, ten times as long as at first. It would seem then as if the Theosophist's writer was quite justified in saying that it would be interesting "to watch this unique case... until it could be ascertained whether... the transfusion of healthy aura into the patient's nerves would cause their resumption of normal function". I wish that cases like these might multiply, until the accumulation of proof that the psychopathic power exists should compel even the most ignorant dogmatist of the most influential Medical College to confess that there are laws of Nature which even a Medical Faculty is ignorant of. If I have recurred to this case from time to time, it is because I think it transcendently important, and as good a key as any to unlock one or more of the masked doors in Nature.

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But now to resume our narrative: Mr. Edge's fever raged all day and he was put in the professional charge of a kavirâj, a native medical practitioner, who follows the ancient Aryan systems of those two great medical writers, Sushruta and Charaka. As he seemed to be in for a prolonged siege of fever, his part of our tour had to be temporarily abandoned and I had to leave him in good hands, with our one servant to wait on him, and go on alone to Nilphamari. Despite my arrival at 4 a.m., our Branch members were at the station to meet me. But before I could go to bed I had to ride on an elephant to the town, where I was put up in a rest-house made of a bamboo frame, with a grass thatch, and walls made of bamboo chinks or screens; the whole giving the traveller about as much protection from cold wind, damp air, and rain as a bird-cage. As I had brought no servant with me I found myself in an uncomfortable plight. Nothing had been prepared for me to eat or drink, no servant would be available until the next afternoon, and nobody knew how to get anything for my comfort, though most willing. However, travellers get used to most things and I had too many visitors

and too much Society work to attend to to think of personal discomfort. At 6 p.m., in a pelting rain, I went to the school-house and lectured on a very high theme—which had been specially given me ten minutes before I went on the platform!

CHAPTER III

THE PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS

(1893)

WHEN it became known, in 1892, that I wished to retire from office, five offers were made me by kind friends to give me a home and support during the rest of my life; among them the Rajah of Pakur, then a stranger to me personally. From Bhagalpur my itinerary of the present tour took me to Rajmahal, where I stopped for the day and lectured, and thence to Pakur, this gentleman's place, where I was cordially welcomed by him and his Dewan, Babu Patiram. I slept at the station and lectured at the Rajah's High School, but I had so many engagements booked that I had to hurry away at 5.30 a.m., on the 27th (February), to Berhampur (Bengal), the seat of that once super-excellent Branch, led by Babu Dina Nath Ganguly, Government Pleader, and his colleagues, Satcori Mukerji, Kali Prasanna Mukerji, Nafar Das Roy, and others whose names are so well known in our Indian history and who got their inspiration originally, in 1882, from their then leader, the late Nobin Krishna Bannerji, one of the strongest and most devoted men [25] we ever had in the Society. On the present occasion I was to preside at the celebration of the Eleventh Anniversary of the Branch, an event to which I looked forward with pleasure. It is one of the delights of one's inspection tours to meet with Branches which are full of enthusiasm and anxious to do their uttermost to help on the movement; this compensates for the depression one feels when in contact with other groups whose interest is intellectual and fervor not yet aroused.

In India, it is, as I have often remarked, wonderful how much of the power for good and usefulness in a Branch depends upon having one strong man for leader. Let him be ordered by Government to another station and the ashes of indifference soon cover over the live coals of activity which his example had kept flaming. Only this very morning I have read in a Madras paper that the "Theosophical enthusiasm" in a certain large town was dying out since the departure of the gentleman who had headed the group at its formation and had

led it from good deed to good deed until now, making it one of the most influential centres in the Empire. This is unpleasant and yet nothing to be surprised at, since human society, the world over, is composed of masses and classes led by a few strong personalities. The more one mixes with public men and parties the plainer is this fact perceived. Our own movement has afforded ample proofs, and of a character that really were surprising: the Judge secession, for instance, a movement based on no more substantial foundation than falsehood and vulgar [26] ambition. As for the phase it now presents, that is beyond words to express; a fall into intellectual slavery that must be seen to be believed—and of people who were in search of the Higher Self, of that supreme wisdom which makes man a God in power after self-development, and the condition of which latter is the bursting of all trammels of servility, the rising inch by inch by struggle and self-reliance. Can the reader see, then, what it means to become an Adept, or wonder that such an evolution is so rare that the existence of such beings is to most men a mere intellectual surmise? Let us, then, prize those who show any quality of leadership in this great sociological movement, and make the most of them while they are fit and ready to work.

Berhampur was reached at 1 p.m., on the same day, and a most kind and brotherly address was read to me. The Branch public function came off at 7.30 the next morning, and Mr. Edge rejoining me during the day, we both lectured at the Theatre Hall in the evening to a large audience of both nationalities. The next morning I opened the T.S. Library and Reading Room and had the pleasure of announcing that that philanthropic lady, Maharani Surnomoyee, whom the late Queen Victoria so much respected and who was affectionately called by her compatriots the Lady Burdett Coutts of India, had given Rs. 300 towards the Library. My lecture that evening was on “Occultism, True and False” and, whether drawn by curiosity or not, to know something about that subject or only to see me, I cannot say, but there was scarcely a resident European [27] absent. My visit ended with this function and on the next morning Mr. Edge and I left for Calcutta, where Dr. Salzer had his usual welcome ready for us.

A strong fever attacked Mr. Edge and made him very ill during the next few days, but was finally broken up by Dr. Salzer with the 30th Dilution of Natrum Muriaticum (sea salt), in which the proportion of matter is indicated by 1 as the numerator, and about 100 ciphers as denominator! Not much from the allopathic point of view, yet it cured him, and what more could a bolus as large as an egg accomplish?

The Doctor and I bought tickets to a double wedding of Salvationists—"Captains" Satgun (Claydon) and Bala Bati (Bellamy) and Atmaran (Mottershead) and Nur Jahan (Knight), to be united in Salvation Matrimony under the Army Flag, Thursday, March 9th, at 7 p.m. in the Bow Bazaar Barracks. Four "Captains"—two of each sex—married by "Staff Captain Santoshan," with the "United Staff and Field Force to the front". This was the eccentric, not to say crazy, aspect of the affair, and no wonder it drew a packed and paying audience. But Dr. Salzer and I both lost sight of the outward farce and came away deeply impressed with the deadly earnestness of these people. Let anybody jeer as he may at the Salvationists, yet it cannot be denied that they are zealous, bold, and self-sacrificing to a degree in their work. I, for my part, have always respected them for their motives, and regard the Salvation Army as one of the most powerful agencies of our times for the restraint [28] of vice and the reformation of the submerged criminal class in Western lands. India affords them no such field for their exertions, for criminality and vice do not prevail there to the same extent. A nation evolved in such an intellectual atmosphere as the Hindus would not be satisfied with such branlike religious teaching as the Salvationists impart.

A very large and demonstrative audience listened to my lecture at Albert Hall on "Occultism," on the evening of the 11th, and the next day I sailed for Madras in the British India steamer "Malda". I found on board, the Surgeon, Pilot, Purser, Mail Agent, and other officers of the French steamer "Niemen" on which Mr. Keightley and Mr. Cooper-Oakley had been wrecked off the coast of Ceylon shortly before. From all I could gather from them, I did not derive a very respectful impression as to the management of the vessel at the time of the catastrophe: I was glad not to have been aboard.

From Calcutta to Madras is a run of less than four days, so we reached home on the 16th at daybreak, and my first task was to hunt through our old papers for historical bits for]. Then, by way of a change, came an attack of gout in my feet, a legacy left me by some ancestor who probably was more fond of old claret and burgundy than of vegetable food. But this did not hinder our beginning again the discussion of the Judge affair. Mr. Edge, who had been detained by illness, came on by another steamer five days later. I sent him to Poona [29] to lay the evidence before our respected colleague, Judge Khandalavala, and take his opinion, which was that the case should be proceeded with.

At the last Convention Mr. Walter G. Old gave some very instructive

experiments in thought-reading, and now again, in the presence of fifty or sixty visitors, he made others. In his case it did not seem like mere “muscle-reading,” but the perception of the agent’s thought. Writers upon these interesting psychical experiments have not made the mention they deserve of a series of demonstrations of the thought-reading power which were made at Yale University in the year 1873 or 1874 in the Sheffield School of Science, under the direction of Professor W.H. Brewer. The percipient was a young American named Brown, whom I met and once tested myself. It must be confessed that one of his feats excels any that have since been recorded by experimenters. At the Sheffield School a wire was carried from the cellar to the amphitheatre in the top story, with enough slack there to reach across the room. The thought transmitter, i.e., the person whose thought was to be read, was stationed at the cellar end of the wire and Brown held the other end upstairs. The gentleman formulated the thought, if my memory serves me—it is now nearly thirty years ago—that Brown should make a mark on a blackboard and then lay the piece of chalk in a certain place. Under the observation of the committee of scientists the latter held the end of the wire against his forehead, was seized with a nervous shivering, ran hither and thither, still (80) holding the wire, and finally went to the blackboard and did what was mentally ordered by the “agent”. Where is the muscle-reading here? Professor Brewer published a report of the experiments at the time and it was widely copied and commented upon in the press. Of course, even this wonderful test is far less important than the multitudinous feats of thought-transference that are recorded in the literature of clairvoyance, but for materialistic sceptics it is more satisfactory as having been made in a School of Science under the direction of University Professors, and with the substantial wire as a pièce de conviction. It is a comfort to such to have a wire to hang one’s ideas upon to ripen in the sun of common sense! Yet, what had the wire to do with the thing after all; is metallic wire a conductor of thought? What would Marconi say?

On the 28th I had a letter from Mrs. Besant telling me that she would be able to come out to India, which of course gave us all great pleasure.

A chance seemed to offer itself at this time to acquire the Mahâ-Bodhi stupa and some 3,000 bîgas of adjacent land by purchase from the Tikari Rajah’s estate, the presumed owners of the fee. The Honorary Pleader of the Mahâ-Bodhi Society at Gaya, Mr. Nund Kissore Lal, conveyed this idea to me in a telegram and I at once communicated with Dharmapala. A wealthy Burman was

said to be ready to give Rs. 1.00.000 if the shrine could be bought—so I was told by Dharmapala. Private negotiations were accordingly entered into and all was proceeding peacefully until the Government [81] of Bengal, or in other words, Mr. Cotton—whose son was engaged as counsel for the stubborn Mahant of Buddha Gaya—came to know of it. The next thing we learnt was that a peremptory order had been given to the European Manager of the Tikari Raj under the Court of Wards, that he should not sell the piece of property in question to the Buddhists on any consideration. This seemed to me an impertinent and unjust meddling in a perfectly blameless business transaction, and I could not help suspecting the motive which prompted the order. However, that chance was lost and the monstrous injustice of debarring the Buddhists of the world from owning their most sacred and most famous shrine was continued. Worse than that, the Saivite Mahant had allowed Buddhist images to be defiled, and had smeared some with forehead caste-marks as though they were Hindu idols: this after the Buddhists began to bestir themselves to regain possession of the shrine and to cover an empty pretext that Buddha Gaya was a Hindu place of worship. As I went farther and farther in the case I became thoroughly disgusted with the view it presented of religious hypocrisy masking private greed.

Meanwhile both Dharmapala and his legal adviser wrote so encouragingly that I determined to go over to Burma and see what the chances were for securing the purchase money. On reaching Rangoon, on the 11th of April, it did not take long to convince me that nothing was to be hoped for in that matter: the whole body of middlemen—Burmese merchants—in the rice [82] trade were just then in the grip of a European syndicate, and were in a way to lose all their savings. So, after stopping with our dear friend Mr. Moungh Hpo Myin twenty-four hours, I sailed for Calcutta in the S.S. “Canara”. After a three days’ run, I got there on the 15th and with Dharmapala went over the whole Mahâ-Bodhi question. Thence, by train the next evening to Bankipur, where our Gaya attorney met me at the house of Mr. Guruprasad Sen, the great lawyer, editor, and politician. Together we threshed out the case, agreed upon a course, and on the following day I returned to Calcutta. That same night I slept on board the P. & O. S.S. “Bengal,” which left for Madras early on the following morning. I reached home on the 25th after an absence of only sixteen days.

When we first settled at Adyar some of our leading Indian members urged us to buy the next estate to us on the western side, so as to have residential conveniences for friends when they came to town. It was a large mansion,

originally the residence of Lord Elphinstone when he was Governor of Madras, and around it a park of over an hundred acres. The price asked was very moderate and the money could then have been raised, for that was in the days when the worship of H. P. B. was active and there was always the off-chance of seeing phenomena. But the scheme did not recommend itself to my practical instinct and I refused. The property lay empty for some more years, but at last was bought by the Brotherhood of St. Patrick and made into an orphanage for boys, since which time the [33] work has been carried on usefully and philanthropically. Some of the Celtic Fathers came to see us shortly after my return from tour, and as I was American and could talk the brogue and sing Irish songs, we became great friends. From time to time the priests and their advanced pupils come over to read in the Western Section of the Library and are always welcome: How marked the contrast with most of the Protestant missionaries in our neighborhood who seem to prefer to keep aloof and silently condemn us instead of showing any good will. The fact is, they are bitterly disappointed over the failure of the Scottish Mission to crush us by the help of the odoriferous Coulombs, and it is galling, no doubt, to see the Society growing stronger and stronger and more and more influential Poor things! "O, Colonel Olcott," said a nice Protestant missionary lady to me once, after I had spent an evening with her and her husband, "why do they say such horrid things about you?" "Do they?" I answered. "Yes they do, and I think it a shame." "What do they say?" I asked. "O, I dare not tell you, but they are horrid." "Well," said I, "do you believe them, now that you have seen me?" "Certainly not in the least." "Then why worry yourself over childish slanders that do not convince even you, one of their own party? Let them go on; it amuses them, and I don't mind in the least."

Our second anniversary of White Lotus Day (May 8th) was celebrated at Adyar, Mr. Old and I delivering addresses and extracts being read as usual from the [34] Gita and The Light of Asia. Mr. Old then went up to my "Gulistan" cottage for a change, and I devoted the greater part of my time to an overhauling of old documents in search of material for my DIARY LEAVES.

On the 15th of May I went to the Bank of Madras with Mr. V. Coopposwamy Iyer, one of my co-trustees, and transferred the Government securities in my name to our joint account, thus relieving my mind of a great burden, for now in case of my death, the interests of the Society could not be compromised.

From New York I received by that week's foreign mail a draft for £38 for author's copyright on Isis Unveiled, the first payment that either H. P. B. or I had

had since leaving New York, though several editions had been issued. The money came just in good time for me to help our colleagues at Madrid, Paris, Stockholm, Amsterdam, and in India to meet some of their heavy expenses for Theosophical publications. I may add that it was also the last payment, for since that time not another dollar has been sent me by our very honorable publisher! I mention this for the information of colleagues to whom I would have gladly given further aid.

In the course of my writing of] I had now come to the problem of the authorship of *Isis Unveiled*, and was greatly puzzled to arrive at the reasonable explanation. There were so many points to consider that I gave them much anxious thought. What my conclusions were may be read in Chapters XII, XIII, and XIV, of the first volume, and the case [96] is so thoroughly argued that I must refer the reader to the book itself. One thing is certain, so far as I am concerned, I got my Theosophical education while helping her to write it.

As the World's Parliament of Religions was to meet at Chicago in the following September, and as it had been arranged that our Society should participate in it, I deputed the Vice-President, Mr. Judge, to represent me officially, and appointed Mrs. Besant special delegate to speak there on behalf of the whole Society. How great a success it was for us and how powerfully it stimulated public interest in our views will be recollected by all our older members. Theosophy was presented most thoroughly both before the whole Parliament, an audience of 3,000 people, and at meetings of our own for the holding of which special halls were kindly given us. A profound impression was created by the discourses of Professor G. N. Chakravarti and Mrs. Besant, who is said to have risen to unusual heights of eloquence, so exhilarating were the influences of the gathering. Besides these who represented our Society especially, Messrs. Vivekananda, V. R. Gandhi, Dharmapala, representatives of the Hindu Vedanta, Jainism, and Buddhism respectively, captivated the public, who had only heard of the Indian people through the malicious reports of interested missionaries, and were now astounded to see before them and hear men who represented the ideal of spirituality and human perfectibility as taught in their respective sacred writings. Said one Chicago editor: "We have been [96] for years spending millions of dollars in sending missionaries to convert these men, and have had very little success; they have sent over a few men, and have converted everybody." From a report which Mrs. Besant made to a London paper I cite the following concluding paragraph:

“The Theosophical Congress, as said one of the leading Chicago papers, was a rival of the Parliament itself in the interest it excited. The plan of the Department of Religion was a good one. Each body strong enough to hold one, had a congress of its own on one or more days, fixed by the committee; in addition to this, chosen speakers occupied one session in presenting the views of their body to the Parliament. The Theosophical Society was given two days for its congress, the evening of the second day being devoted to the presentation of Theosophy before the Parliament. The hall originally granted to it seated about 300 people, but it was so densely packed before the first meeting opened, that the managers gave us another hall seating about 1,200. This was promptly filled, and at each succeeding session the crowds grew, filling passages and packing every inch of room, until at our fifth session two adjoining halls were offered us, and we held two overflow meetings in addition to our regular session. The sixth session was the presentation of Theosophy to the Parliament, and some 3,000 people gathered in a huge hall. So intense was the interest shown that the management most generously offered us the use of the great hall for an additional meeting ^[87] on the following night, and it was packed with eager listeners. In addition to the Indian and Sinhalese delegates above named, the Theosophical Society sent from its European Section Annie Besant, Miss F. H. Müller, and Mrs. Cooper-Oakley; the American Section was represented by its General Secretary, Wm. Q. Judge, Dr. Jerome Anderson of San Francisco, Mr. George E. Wright and Mrs. Thirds, of Chicago, and Claude F. Wright of New York; the Australasian Branches delegated Mrs. Cooper-Oakley, who had been working among them for ten months, and who came direct from Australia to Chicago. Between the interest excited by the speakers and the far deeper interest excited by the subjects dealt with, the meetings were rendered thus successful.”

CHAPTER IV

MAX MÜLLER ON ESOTERICISM

(1893)

IN the compilation of my DIARY LEAVES I have now come to the point where I must discuss the date of the first teaching by H. P. B. of the theory of reincarnation. In the first volume of my O. D. L. I enter fully into the subject (vide Chapter XVII), citing passage after passage from her writings and mine to show that we—I, at any rate—were not then in possession of this most important key to the whole system of Eastern philosophy. Of course, it is no concern of mine why we were not taught it, and when I say “we” I mean myself and the personality whose physical body was functioning as the chief amanuensis of the Great Teachers. I do not believe that the mystery of the incongruity of the New York teachings of 1875 and the later Indian ones can be explained, at least to the satisfaction of those who attack the problem from the standing point of literary criticism: to those who have the power to lift the veil and study the question from the inside, this difficulty vanishes. But students limited to the physical plane, cannot be expected to receive as final the explanations of advanced pupils of the White Lodge. The conclusion to which I long ago came was that it must just be left as a mystery.

On the 7th of June documentary proof came to me that a certain “Dr. A. Martinez” who headed the newly formed group at Buenos Aires, and procured from me a charter under false representations, was the expelled “Dr. Alberto de Das” of Spain. His South American pseudonym was in reality the surname of a respected lady medium and clairvoyant whom he had got under his hypnotic influence. In our March number [Fourth Series] I give some interesting details about this picturesque confidence-man, whose latest public appearance has been at Washington, D.C., under the name of “Dr. Sarak”; and by the last American mail I have received the information that he had actually persuaded a credulous group—including two or three of our own members—to pay him \$500 for a charter from the “Esoteric Lodge of the Grand Masters of Thibet”! To what

absurd lengths will not human credulity go. My correspondent writes that the exposé in the March Theosophist had “blocked Count Sarak’s little game. The little company had already been initiated...in a back room where Sarak had set up an altar, and ranged around the pictures of his masters (a villainous set of faces) before which he performed in a white robe.”

The next step taken by this person was an astral attack on a certain lady who had taken part in exposing him. Our correspondent says: “She had a severe [redacted] blow or shock in the region of the solar plexus, and she would not go to bed alone at night, so a companion who was quite psychic stayed all night with her, and this lady plainly saw Sarak’s astral attempting to do some devilment. For a day and night Miss—fought off his influence.” Of course these statements must be taken for what they may be worth, but it is certainly true that this is the third or fourth case reported to me by the victims, where ladies have been persecuted and terrorised on the astral plane by men who had the power to function there and whose assaults were prompted by a spirit of revenge or lust. Some strange confidences are made to me in my travels and I feel it my duty to warn the reader that such things are possible, and that their safety can only be assured by their summoning to their aid all the will-power of which they are capable, on the lines laid down by Mr. Leadbeater, Mrs. Besant, and all other experts in these subjects. If my readers care to see what horrible risks are run by those who rashly cross the threshold between the physical and the astral planes, let them read the literature ready to hand, including the works of Des Mousseaux, Sinistrari, Eliphas Levi, Francis Barrett, H. P. B., and our own more recent writers. During my long foreign tours of 1900 and 1901 three cases of such combats on the astral plane came to my notice, and quite recently one of my dearest and most valued lady colleagues has reported to me her own similar experiences.

It appears from my Diary for 1893, that my time was fully taken up during the greater part of the [redacted] month of June, in hunting up materials for this historical retrospect. On the 21st of that month however I had word from Dharmapala to the effect that “two Burmese millionaires” would “advance the Rs. 1,00,000 to buy Buddha Gaya”; but my recent inquiries at Rangoon inclined me to receive the assertion with several grains of salt. My caution was warranted for a month later, I received from Moulmein, one of these two rich Buddhists an offer of the Rs. 1,00,000, if I “would buy the property for him,” that is, in his name and not that of the Mahâ-Bodhi Society.

The famous letter of the late Professor Max Müller denying the existence of any esoteric meaning in either the Buddhistic or Brahmanic Scriptures was received by me at Adyar on the 4th of July of the year under review. I have referred to it more than once in my writings but, now that the eminent Orientalist is dead and gone and can write no more on the subject, I think I had better quote from his letter (written at Constantinople, June 10th, 1893) his unmistakable condemnation of the views of all believers in an esoteric interpretation. Professor Müller says:

“Now with regard to your letter,—I can quite understand your feelings for Madame Blavatsky, particularly after her death, and I have tried to say, as little as possible of what might pain her friends. But I felt it my duty to protest against what seemed to me a lowering of a beautiful religion. Her name and prestige were doing, I thought, real mischief among people who were honestly striving for higher [47] religious views, and who were quite willing to recognise all that was true and beautiful and good in other religions. Madame Blavatsky seems to me to have had the same temperament, but she was either deceived by others or carried away by her own imaginations.

“There is nothing esoteric in Buddhism—Buddhism is the very opposite of esoteric—it is a religion for the people at large, for the poor, the suffering, the ill-treated. Buddha protests against the very idea of keeping anything secret. There was much more of that esoteric teaching in Brahmanism. There was the system of caste, which deprived the Çhudras, at least, of many religious privileges. But I do say that even in Brahmanism there is no such thing as an esoteric interpretation of the Shâstras. The Shâstras had but one meaning, and all who had been properly prepared by education, had access to them. There are some artificial poems which are so written as to admit of two interpretations. They are very wonderful, but they have nothing to do with philosophical doctrines. Again there are, as among the Sufis, erotic poems in Sanskrit which are explained as celebrating the love and union between the soul and God. But all this is perfectly well known. There is no mystery about it. Again, it is true that the Vedânta Sutras, for instance, admit of an Advaita and a Visishtadvaita interpretation, and the same applies to the Upanishads. But all this is open and nothing is kept secret from those who have passed through the proper education. Besides, in our time all MSS. are accessible, and the most important [48] Shâstras¹ and their commentaries have been printed; Where is there room for Esoteric doctrine? No living Pandit or Mahatma knows more than what is contained in

MSS. though I am quite aware that their oral instruction, which they freely extend even to Europeans, is very helpful towards a right understanding of the Sanskrit texts and commentaries... You can really do a good work if you can persuade the people in India, whether Buddhists or Brahmans, to study their own religion in a reverent spirit, to keep what is good and to discard openly what is effete, antiquated, and objectionable. If all religions would do that, we should soon have but one religion, and we should no longer call each other unbelievers and Giaurs and commit atrocities like those in Bulgaria in which the Christians were quite as bad as the Mahomedans. Nothing can be more useful than the publication of the old texts—critically edited and trustworthy translations. My ‘Sacred Books of the East’ have opened people’s eyes in many places. I found that at Constantinople. I am sorry to say I cannot continue the series. We [144] have lost £3,000, and neither the University of Oxford nor the India Office will vote more money, still, someone will come hereafter and continue the work.”

I think the best thing to be done is to leave Professor Müller’s views on Esotericism to be dealt with by the “living Pandits” themselves. We can only regret that the illustrious Western scholar should never have been able to visit India and to discuss this important question with able Indian Pandits who know that man’s consciousness is able to grasp the ultimate truth by functioning on a plane higher than that of which the dictionary, grammar, and encyclopaedia are milestones by which a man’s progress towards the attainment of knowledge is marked.

Mr. Judge and his party were guilty of a bitter injustice towards Mrs. Besant, and in his case, was added the sin of a base ingratitude. No one who had ever heard her defending absent friends who have been maligned, can have the slightest doubt that, with her, loyalty to those she loves or respects is an overmastering impulse. I have heard her publicly defending H. P. B. when she rose to great heights of eloquence. Being herself trustful and scrupulously honest, she did not believe it possible that Mr. Judge was not the mouthpiece of the Masters that he claimed to be, but, on the contrary, was deceiving her and others with cold cynicism. I recall these incidents when reading my Diary entry of July 25th (1893) where I note the receipt by that day’s foreign mail of angry letters from her to Messrs. Edge and Old, formerly members of the London [145] staff, but then transferred to that of Adyar. These young men had taken exception to some puerile views and misstatements of fact recently made by Mr. Judge, and their letters to friends in London had caused a great sensation and aroused in the

minds of the Judge party the bitterest resentment. Mrs. Besant was then at Home, and under the influence of the pervading sentiment among her friends—who, at the same time were Judge's—she read the letters in question; to myself she wrote in plaintive terms about their alleged defection and said that America would cut off my money-supplies if I kept the young men here. It was a sorry business that such a noble soul as she should have wasted sympathy over so ignoble a person. Messrs. Old and Edge do not seem to have been much influenced by her letters, for in the Theosophist for July of that year will be found their answer to and criticism upon Mr. Judge and his utterances, in an article entitled "Theosophic Freethought," which will repay the trouble of perusal.

My Diary now brings us to one of the most painful episodes in our Society's history, the defalcations and suicide of the then Treasurer and Recording Secretary, Mr. S. E. Gopalacharlu. It is not a pleasant thing to dwell on, and yet, being historical, I cannot gloss it over. He was a contributor to the Theosophist and to a few foreign periodicals, a member of the E.S.T., and while being quite an exemplary character, in the estimation of the public, he also enjoyed the confidence and esteem of his Theosophic colleagues. As Treasurer of the Society he had in his charge the money belonging (46) to several funds, the contents of which were kept in the Government Postal Savings Bank, and the pass-books were in his official name. Among these funds was one called the H. P. B. Memorial, containing nearly 4,000 rupees. At a certain time it was decided that this money should be transferred to the Indian Section account, and he was notified accordingly. Instead of handing over the money, however, he committed suicide and a subsequent examination of his books showed that he had been systematically defrauding the Society. To myself, as President; he had rendered false accounts and shown the pass-books of the Savings Bank in which the entries were falsified. In this way he had also deceived the official auditors who made the usual financial report to the Convention of 1892. His colleagues had been also deceived about his private life which we found had been the opposite of blameless. Besides robbing us he had obtained his wife's valuable jewels by false representations, had pawned them, and spent the proceeds in dissipation. He had also embezzled and spent the hard-earned savings of a relative; In a written statement discovered after his death, he declared his intention to kill himself with a dose of poison obtained at a designated shop, and wished us all to understand that he had deliberately cheated and robbed us, to procure the means of enjoying life as much as possible while the chance lasted. A more cynical,

heartless and selfish dying message could not be imagined. His defalcations amounted to nearly Rs. 9,000, a very small sum in dollars and pounds but a large one to [47] poor people like ourselves. On hearing the news Mrs. Besant, then in London, showed her characteristic unselfishness. She had just received a small legacy of £ 50, and this sum she cabled me. Miss Etta Müller, Mr. Keightley, and other generous friends started a subscription and ultimately the losses were all made good. Some of that class of people who are always wise after the fact, and always saying what ought to have been done, ventured the opinion that if we had only suspected Gopalacharlu's honesty we might have adopted precautions to prevent his stealing our money. But that is the very point, we did not suspect him; quite the contrary, for, as above stated, there was nothing in his life or conversation to make us withhold our full confidence. How often the thing happens that a man who has been a shining light of probity, perhaps a friend or relative of our own, suddenly gives way to a stress of temptation at a critical moment and enters the downward path. In my annual address at that year's Convention I said:

“Every year we read in the press of all civilised countries, of similar and far worse offences by trusted officers of the soundest banks and the most carefully managed public companies and private business houses. The fact is that the world's vast business is transacted on the basis of mutual confidence. In Sir Henry Maine's Ancient Laws, pp. 306-307, we read that, as regards the multiplicity and astounding complication and success of great frauds, [48] ““The very character of these frauds shows clearly that before they became possible the moral obligations of which they are the breach, must have been more than proportionally developed. It is the confidence reposed in and deserved by the many which affords facilities for the bad faith of the few, so that, if colossal examples of dishonesty occur, there is no surer conclusion than that scrupulous honesty is displayed in the average of the transactions which, in the particular case, have supplied the delinquent with his opportunity.””

There is no reason in the world why the Theosophical Society should expect to be more exempt than any other, from these misfortunes. Those of us who are its managers have just to do the best we can to protect its interests and then let the law of Karma work out its effects.

I will mention an incident of this period, not because of its own special importance, but for the sake of its general bearing upon the subject of the secessions and periods of unrest through which we have passed at different

times. In the year under review, two of our Parsi members of Bombay, who had been among our most active men, suddenly seceded and began a course of bitter newspaper attacks upon the Society. As they had been until then enthusiastic members, both of the society and of the Eastern School, their conduct was quite incomprehensible. But on the 14th of September I received from a mutual friend at Bombay, a letter written him by one of the seceders, saying that the reports and scheming of a certain person, a crony of (19) the late Treasurer, had driven him and his friend out of the Society. Now the point to observe is this: that there is nothing whatever in the management of the Society, the prosecution of its work or its treatment of its members, that affords a valid excuse for deserting and denouncing us; such faults and mistakes as there may be among the officers, are venial and as a general rule our work is well done and unselfishly. But in this body of ours as in all others in history there are a few individuals moved by ambition or personal spite, who plot to create trouble for the pleasure it gives them to make their neighbors suffer: jealousy and envy are most commonly the active motives. What happened in this Bombay case has happened in others, and when one comes to study to the bottom the great Judge secession, one finds these passions, with vanity added; the springs of conduct.

CHAPTER V

WELCOMING MRS. BESANT

(1893)

HAVING been suffering from nervous debility, a reaction from the excitement which I had been passing through, I went for a change to my cottage in the mountains for three weeks, and then sailed for Colombo, to arrange with the Buddhists for the reception of Mrs. Besant and for her lectures. I reached there on the 30th of October, and from that time onward had my hands full with a variety of business, such as inspecting schools, meeting committees, consulting with the High Priest, and explaining who Mrs. Besant was and what had been her public services. She and Countess Wachtmeister arrived on the 9th of November, late in the evening. From 2 to 8 p.m. a thousand people, including 200 of our boy pupils and 125 girls, had waited patiently for them and then dispersed. They landed at about 9 o'clock the next morning. At our headquarters, three engrossed addresses were read to them in the presence of a large crowd, and at the Sanghamitta School, where they were to be the guests of Mrs. Higgins, another address was read by the [5] prize girl of the school. Mr. R. C. Dutt, C.I.E., the respected Hindu publicist and historian, and other passengers breakfasted with us, and altogether a charming impression was made on our ladies by their reception in the Island. At 2 p.m. we took train for Kandy. We were escorted from the station to our lodgings by a great torchlight procession and the whole Buddhist population of the town lined the streets and made noisy demonstrations of welcome. At 8.30 p.m. Mrs. Besant lectured in the Town Hall on the subject of "The World's Great Needs". The large audience was deeply impressed and excited to enthusiasm by her eloquence, frankness of speech, and sympathy for the views and aspirations of the Sinhalese people. The next morning was devoted to a drive around the lake, visits to temples and a prize distribution at our local High School. We returned to Colombo by the 10.40 a.m. train and were given a garden party at the Sanghamitta School. Mrs. Besant lectured in the evening at the Public Hall to a packed audience. H. E. the

Governor and Lady Havelock, H. E. the Commander-in-Chief, and most of the influential Europeans and other inhabitants of the town were present. The audience listened with the closest attention to the lecture, and the applause at the end was vehement. There was great disappointment because of the impossibility of her giving a second lecture. The impression made upon the Buddhists maybe gauged from a remark that was overheard as the audience were passing out. "There is not much use," said [52] an enthusiastic Sinhalese man, with his eyes sparkling, "in our getting the priests to preach Bana to us when we can hear lectures like that"; and really the remark was justified, for I doubt if the basic Buddhist doctrine of Karma was ever more clearly or attractively expounded in the Island before. With these two lectures the great Indian tour of Mrs. Besant, 1893-4, was inaugurated and the success which crowned them was but a foretaste of that which followed her throughout.

On the 12th we went from Colombo to Galle by train. At all the principal stations the children of our Buddhist schools cheered her with their piping voices and swarmed like bees outside the door of her carriage. Flowers they brought—loose, in bouquets, and in wreaths. At Ambalangoda the children read an address to her, and at one or two other stations where the train made but brief stops, written addresses were handed in to her along with the tribute of flowers. Reaching Galle at 3 p.m. we had an enthusiastic reception at our Mahinda College, from the 200 or more pupils, and Mrs. Besant lectured to a very large mixed audience of Europeans and Sinhalese. In the evening, at our quarters, there was a display of fireworks and an exhibition of that weird and striking devil-dancing for which Ceylon is famous. We drove around Galle the next day; at 3 p.m. I lectured by request on "The Aims and Work of the Maha-Bodhi Society"; at 8.30 p.m. Mrs. Besant lectured in the great dining-hall of the Oriental Hotel. This closed our visit at Galle.

[53]

We rose on the morning of the 14th at 4.30 a.m. and took the train an hour later for Colombo. At Panadure, often miscalled Pantura—the place where occurred the famous controversy between Megittuwatte, the Buddhist champion, and the Reverend Silva, a missionary, in which the latter was completely worsted—we had arranged to stop over one train to enable the citizens to present an address to Mrs. Besant and to hear her lecture. Our local Branch there has a fine large school building, and in that the meeting was held and addresses were given by Mrs. Besant and myself. The journey was then continued and we reached

Colombo at 5 p.m. On the following day I took the ladies to pay their respects to the High Priest Sumangala, after which Mrs. Besant laid the corner-stone of a new school building that Mrs. Higgins was planning to build on a piece of land given her for the purpose by Mr. Peter de Abrew. This was the last public act of Mrs. Besant during her present visit to the Island, for the next day we crossed over to Tuticorin to take up the Indian tour proper.

CHAPTER VI

MRS. BESANT'S FIRST INDIAN TOUR

(1893)

AS mentioned before, the crossing from Colombo to Tuticorin by the small steamers running there, is, in bad weather, one of the most disagreeable experiences in sea-travel. This time, however, we sailed in sunshine and made the transit without inconvenience. On arrival at Tuticorin we were met by a deputation of Hindu friends with an address of welcome to Mrs. Besant and the usual gifts of flowers. A crowd gathering, she was induced to make an impromptu address on the platform at the railway station before the train left for Tinnevely. If my friend, Mr. Alan Leo, or any other astrologer, chooses to test his science by comparing his calculations with the results of the Indian tour thus commenced, I may tell them that Mrs. Besant put her foot on Indian soil for the first time at the hour of 10.24 a.m. on 16th November, 1893. The aspect of the heavens, however their calculations may come out, must have been very auspicious, for success followed her throughout her whole journey in India. We left for Tinnevely at 4 p.m. in a smart shower, had a rousing reception on arrival and were put up in a large, comfortable bungalow. The next morning we drove to Palamcottah, the busiest centre of Missionary effort in Southern India, and where they are favored with the presence of no less than three bishops of the Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches. Our rooms were crowded with visitors throughout the day but Mrs. Besant took some time for herself to dispose of a large amount of accumulated correspondence. In the evening she lectured splendidly on the great subject of "Life after Death," to a very large audience.

On the following day we drove to the great temple and visited the cocoanut tree which the Ceylon Buddhist Committee and I had planted in October, 1881, and which the Missionaries had falsely reported to have been torn up by the Brahmins on our departure after that memorable visit. We found it at this time a full-grown tree, a permanent monument to our success in creating a tie of brotherly sympathy between the people of the two races and two religions.

While at the temple the great collection of rich jewels used in decorating the idols on important occasions, was exhibited to us, and the state elephant was made to salute us in the usual way by raising his trunk and trumpeting: the temple band at the same time making as much noise as it could. At the house of my old friend V. Coopooswamy Iyer, alas! just deceased (in 1902), we were hospitably entertained and Mrs. Besant saw for the first time the native dance called kolattam [56] —a very innocent and not in the least exhilarating performance, in which a number of young women walk slowly around in a circle, swaying their bodies to right and left and keeping time to the music by striking together the sticks which they hold in their hands. Mrs. Besant's lecture that evening was on the subject of "Materialism," which, in my opinion, brings out as fully as any she has ever treated, the extent of her intellectual resources. Naturally it would be so for, after leading the materialistic party for twelve years with Mr. Bradlaugh and viewing the subject from every point of view, nobody could be more competent than she to explain the insufficiency of the materialistic hypothesis when tested by the larger knowledge of Nature which one acquires by study of the Eastern Philosophy and by experience on the higher levels of human consciousness. The eagerness to see and talk with her was so great that, although we were to leave Tinnevely in the middle of the day, she had to hold an improvised durbar on the next morning (Sunday, November 19), and at the close of it eleven persons joined our Society, of whom five were materialists whose beliefs had been quite upset by Mrs. Besant's lecture of the previous evening.

We left for Madura at 1.35 p.m., and arrived there at 7.30. The Rajah of Ramnad having kindly given the local Committee the use of his splendid house opposite the great tank, we were duly installed there. On the following day we were taken to the Meenakshi Temple and were shown its wonders by the Chief Priest himself.

[57]

I took the pains to point out to Mrs. Besant that panel in the wall-paintings around the inner tank which depicts the savage cruelties inflicted on the wretched Jain Diagambaras, who refused to be converted to Hinduism in the time of Kûna or Kubja Pandya, King of Madura, twenty-one centuries before Christ. There is an amusing feature of this religious episode of Southern India, which I have not mentioned before when alluding to this same picture. In the Hâlasya Mâhâtmya,² a Saivite religious work, we are told that it was agreed

between the Saivite sannyâsi, a youthful wonder-worker famed for his conversions, of heretics, and the principal Digambaras, that samples of their respective sacred books should be put to the test of ordeals by fire and water to determine which of them was the most sacred. The story runs that palm-leaf manuscripts of both parties being thrown into a hot fire, that of the Digambaras was consumed, but the other was not. Then, for the water test, specimens were thrown into the neighboring river and while the Buddhistic writings floated down stream and so on towards the sea, those of the Saivite sannyâsi went against the current as easily as though they had been propelled by diminutive steam engines! Of course, if we may accept the report of the Saivite historian, the superior holiness of the Hindu books was thus miraculously proven. After that, nothing could have been more natural than that [58] the victors should cure the recalcitrance of the vanquished by various benevolent punishments, such as the impaling of them on great, long, sharp spikes which transpierced the body throughout its whole length and came out at the top of the head or close up to the neck, or cutting off their heads and grinding them to pulp in the peculiar Indian oil-mill, duplicates of which have been seen by every visitor to India who has passed through the cocoanut-bearing districts. For how many thousand years the same pattern of mill may have been known in India no one can tell, but certainly the mills which one sees now do not differ in the least from that which was used in those far-distant centuries.

How pitiful it is, after all, that mankind have ever been so prone to receive as authoritative the teachings of their priests and books on the mere strength of psychical phenomena which may be manifested by the most corrupt and unspiritual men or women. Even in our day of progress in scientific discovery it seems impossible to prevent this deification of psychics who may pretend to supernatural relationships. After traversing many countries I find a great wave of psychism rushing over the world, an evil omen for the chances of true spiritual progress. Until phenomenalism has been relegated to its proper subordinate place we cannot hope much for the uplifting of mankind from the lower to the higher planes of knowledge.

Mrs. Besant gave two lectures the next day, one at 7.30 a.m., on “Karma,” the other at 6 p.m., on “The Evidence in Favor of the Existence of Mahatmas”.

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The public interest throughout India on this subject has always been acute; for, although every child knows that the Shâstras, especially the teachings of

Patanjali, affirm the fact that man can develop the Siddhis and make himself what is properly called a Mahatma, and their books and traditions teem with allusions to their existence, yet at this period of our residence in India, despite the reports about H. P. B.'s phenomena, and the testimony of eye-witnesses who had seen these Teachers, the Hindus in general could not yet believe that such men were in close relations with us white people from the West and taking part in the spread of the Theosophical movement.

On the next day there was no public function but a meeting of Theosophists was held at Mr. P. Narayana Iyer's house, where we dined in the native fashion off plantain leaves, sitting on the floor and using our fingers instead of knives or forks. At about noon on that day we left for Trichinopoly, arriving at 6.20 p.m. The Prince of Pudukottah, an F.T.S., met us at the station and took us to a small bungalow—not his own but hired for the occasion—which was somewhat thickly populated with some of those small creatures which Nature seems to have evolved to teach man to cultivate patience and forbearance. It rained heavily all the next day and Mrs. Besant and I made good use of the time in writing letters, but Countess Wachtmeister was unable to do anything, being laid up with a bad cold. At 6 p.m. Mrs. Besant lectured on "India, Past and Present," in a style so eloquent and pathetic [60] that it made the whole audience weep. Having myself lectured on the subject before, I was so moved by her discourse that I could hardly command my voice for closing the meeting. We idled at home the next morning, but in the afternoon the Prince came and took us to his house for a visit, after which he drove us to the Town Hall where Mrs. Besant lectured in her usual style. There was a great crowd and vociferous applause. The next morning at 7.30 I myself lectured to the College boys at the Town Hall and about noon we left for Tanjore, arriving at 2.20 p.m. Mrs. Besant lectured at the palace of, I think, the old Chola Dynasty, in the Durbar Hall, a great apartment with many pillars highly decorated, entirely open on one side to the courtyard; her subject being "India's Mission". Our rooms were crowded with visitors the next day, among them several from other towns who had come to hear the lecture. Mrs. Besant and the Countess were admitted to personal audiences with the surviving Ranees of the Tanjore Royal family who, like all the living representatives of extinct Indian Dynasties, are pensioners of the British Government. The Princesses being purdanashin, i.e., secluded from public gaze and cut off from all intercourse with male visitors, our ladies only were admitted to their presence; I had to remain outside the purdah and speak with the Queen through drawn curtains. At the conclusion of the audience each of us received a

present of a gold-embroidered shawl; mine being brought me and laid over my shoulders by a young prince who, at the same [61] time, gave me flowers and betel-nut (pan supâri) according to custom. Mrs. Besant's lecture on that day, Sunday, the 26th, was on "Theosophy and Science". On Monday we visited the great Temple, saw the colossal stone figure of a sitting bull, the emblem of Siva, and then went to the famous library, collected by a former Rajah of Tanjore, which, even after the pillaging it has suffered from at various times, still contains 23,000 palm-leaf and 12,000 paper MSS. and 7,000 bound volumes. In her lecture that afternoon Mrs. Besant again discoursed upon the "Insufficiency of Materialism," about which the note written in my Diary is that it was "the grandest argument I ever heard". So the reader may understand how the lecturer rose higher and higher each time that she developed this comprehensive theme. The very prevalence of materialistic tendencies which she found spreading in India under the prevailing system of collegiate education, seemed to stimulate her more and more to do her best to stem the tide.

Before leaving for Kumbakonam the next morning at 9.45, I lectured to the boys of Tanjore and formed one of those local Boys' Aryan Leagues with which, during those years, I studded India while making my tours. For I have always felt from the time of my first coming to the country that, if we wanted to create a permanent religious revival, here or in any other country, we must lay its foundation in the enlistment of the sympathy of the rising generation. This was the idea behind my educational movement among the [62] Ceylon Buddhists, the results of which have fully realised my anticipations. I have ever found the boys of India most responsive to kindly appeals to their innate religious instincts, and it is no exaggeration to say that if I could have devoted my whole time to this movement I could have organised a monster movement among the Indian youth. Wherever I felt I could do so I got the elders of a community to subscribe for a library for boys and my usual plan was to ask the boys themselves, at one of these public meetings, to look around them and tell me whom they wished appointed as members of an Advisory Committee; pledged to assist them as much as possible in forming their library, securing and furnishing their meeting room and holding themselves ready to advise when asked, but never to interfere with the liberty of the boys to regulate their own Society affairs. Such a policy as this is calculated, I think, to develop manliness and self-reliance among the youth and awaken a warm interest in their intellectual and spiritual welfare among their elders.

We were cordially welcomed on our arrival at Kumbakonam at 11.30, and towards the evening Mrs. Besant lectured to the usual multitude on “Theosophy and Modern Progress”. The College of Kumbakonam has done as much as any other educational institution in India to foster rationalistic tendencies among the young men of the community. The Professors—distinguished graduates of the Madras University and, so far as I have known them, men of great intellectual culture—have given the tone of materialistic [68] thinking to their classes; so that there is no place in India where it is more important that lectures by able Western Theosophists should be frequently given than here. Needless to say Mrs. Besant’s discourse fulfilled all the requirements of the situation. The chair was occupied by that true patriot, accomplished scholar, and universally respected retired Government servant, Dewan Bahadur Raghoonath Row. Since his retirement this gentleman has transferred his residence from Madras to Kumbakonam, and in his family mansion is passing the evening of his days in comfort and tranquillity of mind. Among Indian statesmen none has enjoyed more thoroughly than he, the confidence of the public, for his career as Minister (Dewan) of large native states and Revenue Officer of various large districts in British India, was untainted by the least suspicion of corruption or malfeasance.

Our party visited a most curious person the next day, a naked ascetic who has been persistently silent during the last thirty years. Throughout this whole period one family have maintained him in a small hut in their garden. He eats only when forced to by his friends, and not always then, for it is a common thing for him to fast seven or eight or ten days at a time. He has a divergent strabismus and is ceaselessly fumbling with his hands. Whatever he may do on the astral plane he certainly, on this one, is little better than a hibernating animal, and as we stood looking at him I could not help comparing his case with that of Mrs. Besant who, with all the religious fervor he could [69] possibly feel and as lofty aspirations for spiritual knowledge as he could entertain, was willingly putting her body to the greatest possible strain in travelling about the world, to increase religious knowledge and stimulate mankind to lift themselves up to the plane of a higher ideal than that of the work-a-day world.

In the afternoon Mrs. Besant lectured on “Adepts as Facts and Ideals,” and later in the evening the results of her two discourses were seen in the applications made to me by seven candidates for membership. On Thursday, the 30th, the last day of our visit, Mrs. Besant lectured at 7.30 a.m. in Porter Hall, on “Materialism,” and at 4 p.m., at the Vaishnava Temple, to three thousand people,

on “Hinduism and Theosophy”. We left for Trichinopoly Junction at 6.52 p.m., and found at the station on arrival very comfortable rooms awaiting us. Early the next morning, on trollies and with porters carrying the luggage, we crossed a breach in the railway, just made by floods, and got to Erode at 5 p.m. At Karur, an intermediate station, our local members met us with supplies of tea, milk, fruits, and flowers. At most of the principal stations throughout India the railway companies have comfortable accommodations for travellers, including restaurants and bath-rooms; so that one does not fare badly when his itinerary causes him to stop at such places. It was so at Erode and, after an experience of hastily-procured bungalows, sometimes comfortless and sometimes uncleanly, we appreciated what we found at Erode and gladly occupied the clean beds.

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The lecture that evening was given in a schoolhouse and in the audience were members of our Society who had come from towns not included in our programme, to enjoy the pleasure of hearing our great speaker. The next day we moved on to Coimbatore and got there at 9.35 a.m. There was a tremendous rush to see us and we were swept off to our quarters in a jubilant procession in which Hindu and foreign music were alternately played by two bands. A nephew of the Countess W., a Nilgiri tea-planter, embraced the occasion to come and see his aunt for the first time in years. At 4 p.m. we visited a Hindu club and had music and refreshments. Two hours later Mrs. Besant lectured in the Town Hall on “Theosophy and Its Teachings”. The crowd was enormous, and the police with great difficulty cleared the compound and secured us comparative quiet. The whole Anglo-Indian community of the place, including the Collector, the highest civilian officer of Government in a Revenue District, attended. Later in the evening there was a meeting of our members. At 8 o’clock, the next morning, Sunday, December 3rd, Mrs. Besant gave her great lecture on “Materialism” and I admitted to membership several candidates. We left at 2.30 for Bangalore, travelling all night, changing trains at Jalarpet, and reaching our destination at 6 a.m. on Monday, very tired and dusty. We had nice receptions at the station and house, a large, spacious and well-furnished mansion. Bangalore is the great source of supply of European fruits to South Indian stations, its [66] climate and elevation of between two thousand and three thousand feet above sea-level being favorable to their culture. A great variety of luscious apples, figs, strawberries, black-caps, oranges, prunes, and bananas were brought us, and at no place visited did we receive a more hearty welcome. Mrs. Besant’s lecture was given

in Mayo Hall, to a packed audience of the most cultured portion of the population, on "Theosophy and Ethics". It was a splendid effort and provoked a storm of applause. Early in the day we drove around the big tank, now full after the recent rains.

Warned by the size of her audiences, which not even the largest hall in Bangalore could accommodate, the Committee arranged for Mrs. Besant to speak out of doors the next morning. She spoke from a platform just large enough to accommodate us two, and as the weather was fine, a great concourse of people attended. The scene was so picturesque that the Committee had it photographed and a copy can be seen by visitors to Adyar. After the lecture she inspected two girls' schools established by Rao Bahadur A. Narainswamy Mudaliar, a wealthy and public-spirited citizen. From 12 to 2 she received visitors and at 4 p.m. held a conversazione at the Bangalore Club, where she answered, in her inimitable style, a multitude of questions on philosophy and science. We finished the day with a visit to the Maharajah's Palace. An excellent group photograph was taken at the Club, the second during the day, and a third, in which the group was exclusively composed of ourselves and the (67) members of the local Branch, was taken the next morning. At 4.30 p.m. on that day Mrs. Besant addressed a gathering of several thousand people in the large Crystal Palace in Lal Bagh, a lovely garden. It was a splendid picture for an artist. Her subject was "Theosophy and Science". The late Dewan, Sir K. Sheshâdri Iyer, one of the greatest statesmen India has produced in modern times, returned thanks on behalf of the audience in an address broken by sobs which were caused by the pathos of her peroration: In the evening I admitted eighteen persons into membership. The next morning H.E. the Dewan called with other high officials of the State, who vied with each other in assurances of personal regard and affection for one who had shown as great a love as any Hindu could for their native country. Eleven more candidates were admitted by me, and at 3 p.m. we left by train for Bellary, a journey which took us all night.

At 10 o'clock, when we were all sound asleep, we were aroused at Penukonda station by our local Branch members, with a welcome accentuated with flowers, a supply of milk, and other refreshments. We reached Guntakul Junction at 7 a.m. and Bellary at 10. At the Junction, committees from Bellary, Gooty, and elsewhere greeted us, and Pandit Bhavani Shankar paid his respects to the ladies. At Bellary the Hon. A. Sabhapathy Mudaliar, F.T.S., read the address of welcome to Mrs. Besant and gave it to her in one of those carved sandalwood

boxes for which Mysore is famous. A long procession with music took us to [68] the splendid house provided for us. We were waited upon by many visitors throughout the afternoon and at 6.30 p.m. the “Theosophy and Materialism” lecture was given with an eloquence which Mrs. Besant had not previously attained. I lectured to boys at 7.30 the next morning and aided them to form a society and choose their officers. Among the throng of visitors who came to see her during the day, Mrs. Besant was waited upon by a number of Hindu ladies, who gave her every mark of affection and respect. She lectured magnificently that evening on “Death and Life after Death,” in fact, as she became more and more steeped in the tide of love which surrounded her as she moved on from place to place, she seemed on each successive occasion to be aroused to greater fervor.

The next day, Sunday, was a busy one. At 7.45 a.m. we were photographed; at 8 the lecture on “India and Modern Progress” was given; at 1, three Hindu ladies were admitted to membership; at 3, more than a dozen men; at 4 there was a garden party at Mr. Sabhpathy’s; later, we visited the Sanmarga Sabha, and in the evening there were more admissions into membership. After dinner we went to the station and slept there so as to be ready for an early train the next morning for Hyderabad, the Capital of the Nizam. We reached that picturesque city—one which, more than any other in India, offers a suitable framing for the tales of the Arabian Nights—at 8 p.m.: a breakdown of an engine beyond Raichur, having caused a detention of an hour. On arrival we were received by [69] Mr. Dorabji Dasabhoy, a venerable Parsi member, with Mr. Bezonji, another Parsi, and many other colleagues. We were housed at Bashir Bagh, a splendid palace of the late Sir Asman Jah, ex-Prime Minister of the Nizam. Among the other articles of luxury in the three gorgeous sitting-rooms, was an entire parlor suite of pure crystal, upholstered in costly satin, which had cost, I am afraid to say how many thousand rupees. The rooms were crowded with expensive articles of furniture, big and little, to such an extent that I told the ladies it looked more than anything else like a toy palace. The psychological effect of all this useless luxury, on myself, was oppressive, after having lived outside the world of fashion so many years and been accustomed to such simplicity of surroundings. It was a positive rest to retire to the plainly furnished room given me as an office.

CHAPTER VII

THE CONVENTION OF 1893

(1893)

HYDERABAD, the Territory of the Nizam, is the largest of the Protected States of India, nominally enjoying an independent sovereignty and having about as much as an Arab horse who is ridden on a curb bit. Its ruler, the Nizam, a title which means "Regulator of the State," like all the other Protected Princes whose ancestors were kings, is allowed to do as he pleases until he pleases to do something which seems to jeopardise the welfare of his subjects and the stability of his State, when the military curb is tightened a little and the ruler is made to understand the difference between "protection" and "independence". The territory covers an area of nearly 100,000 square miles, with a population of about ten or twelve millions. The government is Muhammedan but the majority of the people are Hindus. It was erected into a separate kingdom in 1512 by a Turkish adventurer, and in 1687 became a province of the Mogul empire. After passing through many exciting and military changes, in which, at times, the English and French participated, peace and stability were finally secured by the military power of the East India Company, and since 1857 the State has been under the protection of the British authorities. The capital town, Hyderabad, to which our tour had now brought us, has a population of about a quarter of a million, mostly Muhammedans. Its walled area is crowded with buildings, among them some fine mosques and palaces surrounded by gardens of remarkable beauty. In the neighborhood there are large water tanks, one of which is twenty miles in circuit. Many of the streets are narrow and crowded with little shops in which, after the Eastern fashion, amidst squalid surroundings, are displayed goods of the richest and often the most artistic description. The Nizam maintains a small standing army, some of the regiments composed of Arabs and other wild warlike people, looking as though they had just been transplanted from the desert: a parade of these troops with the accompaniment of camels and elephants in the procession, is a most picturesque spectacle. I have been in no

town in India which shows so little trace of a veneering of Western civilisation over Eastern picturesqueness: at the same time I have seen none in which I should care less to reside, for one can feel in its atmosphere the preponderance of influences of the physical, over those of the spiritual plane.

On the morning after our arrival Mr. Dorabji drove with us through the city and took us to pay our respects to that good lady, the daughter of the late P. Iyaloo Naidu, whom the Society has every reason to hold in [\[72\]](#) honor. When I made the contract for the purchase of the Adyar property, it was Mr. Iyaloo Naidu who bought it of the former owner for me, and his widowed daughter who generously loaned a part of the purchase-money on the most liberal terms as regards interest. At 5.45 p.m. Mrs. Besant gave her first lecture at a public hall called Bashir Bagh, on “Theosophy versus Modern Science”. Her audience was mainly composed of Hindus and Europeans, Muhammedans as a rule not caring for lectures of our sort, nor being much in the habit of general reading. The next morning was devoted to the reception of visitors and to our usual desk-work. In the afternoon the lecture on “Death and Life after Death” was given at Secunderabad, the European civil and military suburb of the capital. The British Resident, Mr. Plowden, and the commanding Major-General Stewart, with their respective families, and many more Europeans, were present in the very large audience. The speaker treated her subject eclectically and with wise moderation, giving great satisfaction to all. On the next morning, Thursday, December 13th, we three—Mrs. Besant, Countess Wachtmeister, and myself—were photographed together and subsequently with a group of our local colleagues, in the palace garden. A T. S. meeting was held later and various candidates were admitted to membership. Our party visited a Sanskrit school at the palace of a Hindu Rajah, and on our way home called at the spacious house of Mr. Dorabji, who showed us every hospitality. In the evening at 5 p.m.

[\[73\]](#)

Mrs. Besant lectured at Bashir Bagh on the subject “Is Man a Soul”. I never heard more strenuous applause than that which followed it. We left at 8 p.m. for Rajahmundry, a coast port on the Bay of Bengal. Many people thronged to see us off and we were quite loaded down with gifts of fruits and flowers.

As I was sitting inside the railway carriage, a couple of Hindu gentlemen brought a person to introduce to me. He was a Hindu, but was dressed in a European suit so begrimed with oil and black stains that I knew in a moment he must be either an engine driver or an assistant; to make doubt impossible, he was

wiping his oil hands with a bunch of cotton-waste. His sponsors presented him to me as a Brahmin quite familiar with Sanskrit literature and the person himself corroborated this and said he had looked forward to a meeting with me with great pleasure because of what I had done for his country. He then made me an offer which amused us all greatly: he said that he was the engine-driver in charge of this train and would regulate the speed to suit our pleasure; if we wanted to go fast or slow I had only to say so! Fancy the making of an offer of this sort, by the driver of a mail train in Great Britain, France, or Germany.

We travelled all that night and all the next day until 8 p.m., when we reached our destination. A most picturesque-looking multitude, lit up by torches and fireworks, had gathered to await our arrival. One address was read to us in a pandal (palm-thatched shed) on the bank of the Godavery river, and another [74] en route through the city to our stopping-place, by representatives of the Vaishya (mercantile) community. The torch-lights borne at both sides of the procession threw into high relief the artistic and turbaned figures of the multitude and the fronts of the buildings; the whole forming a picture impossible to match in any Western country in these artistically degenerate days, when all the pretty costumes of the olden time have disappeared and are replaced by the vulgarly ugly dress of modern civilization. It is something really saddening to one with the least cultivated artistic sense to see this deadly monotony of ugly clothing in all the countries of the world, outside Asia.

On Saturday the 16th, at 7.30 a.m., Mrs. Besant lectured at Museum Hall on "Theosophy and Science," after which visitors thronged in upon her. I admitted fifteen candidates to membership and formed a new Branch of Vaishyas under the title of "The Gautama T.S." At 6.30 p.m. her second lecture of the day was devoted to "The Inadequacy of Materialism". On the next morning at 7.30 there was an address to students, by her, and I raised a fund for a Boys' Library after she had finished her discourse. During the day members and inquirers were received at Amiruddeen's Bungalow, our stopping-place. At 6.30 p.m. Mrs. Besant lectured on "Reincarnation in its Bearing on Social Problems," after which we were escorted by a torchlight procession to the house-boat on which we were to continue our journey parallel, to the Coromandel Coast. We left on the morning of the 18th [75] for Bezwada where we arrived at 1.30 and stopped until 7.30 p.m. Bezwada is a small place and it was rather amusing, after the monster audiences which we had faced hitherto, to see Mrs. Besant giving a magnificent lecture on the subject of "Pilgrimages of the Soul," in a lawyer's

office to an auditory numbering about seventy-five people. At the hour above-named we continued our journey, going by paddle-boat through two locks and across the Krishna river to what was then the terminus of the East Coast Railway. The great bridge, a noble engineering work which now spans that historic stream, was then in course of construction. We entered the train at the point above mentioned and travelled all night, the next day, and following night, reaching home, Adyar, on the morning of 20th December. Many friends met us at the station with handsome garlands and Adyar looked so charming that it is no wonder that it provoked the admiration of the ladies. For that matter, when is it not charming? Its beauties continually grow on one and from the terrace of the house, in whatever direction the eye turns, it sees nought but pictures of beauty.

The time being short before it would be necessary for Mrs. Besant to give all her attention to the preparation of her Convention Lectures, we proceeded at once to discuss with Mr. Sturdy, Countess Wachtmeister, and Messrs. Edge and Old, the points in the case of Mr. Judge as presented in the mass of documents which I had got together out of the Society's archives. The case, even on that ex parte view, was convincing enough [76] as to his guilt in a long-continued and deliberate scheme to deceive his colleagues and the public about his alleged intimacy with the Masters and his holding of a brief, as we might say, from them, to convey messages and express their wishes with respect to the private conduct of members and the management of the Society. And yet it was made much stronger when we came to compare facts with Mrs. Besant, for it then became as clear as day that he had been playing a double game of deception, and telling her one thing and myself the opposite. In fact, the further we went into the inquiry, the blacker became the case, and a point was finally reached where no further doubt as to his culpability was possible. As Mrs. Besant said at the Convention of 1894, in a review of the circumstances—referring to these very conferences between us before [above noted: "I looked into the mass of evidence which was in the hands of Colonel Olcott, but which, taken by itself, while arousing the gravest suspicion, was not sufficiently clear, definite, and conclusive to justify Colonel Olcott, or Mr. Keightley, the Secretary of the Indian Section, in taking action which would commit the Society. But it happened that within my knowledge there were other facts unknown both to Colonel Olcott and Mr. Keightley, which made the evidence which was in their hands complete and so rendered it, to my mind at least, convincing. What I knew by myself was not enough for public action, and what they knew themselves was not enough for certain action, though that was [77] stronger than mine; but all put together made

so strong a body of evidence that it became a duty to the Society that it should be placed before it, and that Mr. Judge, as its Vice-President, should be given an opportunity of definitely meeting the charges if he could, so that an end might be put to a position so painful to all concerned, and so dangerous to the reputation and the honor of the Society.”

Having reached this point we were all of the opinion that Mr. Judge’s connection with the Society should cease, both as General Secretary of the American Section and as Vice-President of the whole Society. He was, moreover, President of the Aryan Branch, T.S., of New York, which had full right of jurisdiction in questions of the private conduct of its members. My official responsibility in such private cases does not become active until the case reaches me on appeal from the decision of the General Secretary of a Section, to whose notice it comes officially through the officers of the Branch itself. But with the cases of misconduct on the part of a General Secretary or a Vice-President I have very much to do and am called upon to act as the terms of our Constitution provide. The step which Mrs. Besant took when the whole case lay before us, was one of which I strongly disapproved, as I regarded it unwarrantable on her part. That she was led into it through her then intense personal friendship for our delinquent colleague did not seem to me to excuse her action: she not only wrote to Mr. Judge, as I did myself, advising him to resign office—a fully warranted [78] proceeding on her part—but, and here is where the irregularity comes in, she sent him a copy of every piece of documentary evidence on which the case rested, these documents being strictly in my custody and only usable with my knowledge and consent. Mrs. Besant’s motive was of the highest, that of helping a beloved friend in great difficulty, to see all the cards held by the prosecution. Is it not inconceivable that after her having given this supreme proof of her personal friendship to him, Mr. Judge should have turned upon her later, when he found that two of our three Sections were in favor of his expulsion, and have done all he possibly could to destroy her influence, blacken her character (for instance, by the charge of her using black magic to harm him) and discredit her as a teacher? Our line of action having been made clear to us, the matter rested for the moment until Mr. Judge’s reply as to his proposed resignation should be received.

The Headquarters buildings now began rapidly filling up with delegates arriving from all parts of India. On the 21st (December) Mrs. Besant gave a public lecture at Victoria Town Hall on “The Dangers of Materialism,” to a vast

and enthusiastic audience. On that day I received from Mrs. Higgins, of Colombo, her resignation of the Principalship of the Sanghamitta Girls' School at Maradana, Colombo, in consequence of a disagreement between herself and the Executive Committee of the Women's Educational Society of Ceylon. It may be remembered that, on [79] arrival in the Island and her election as Principal, I inducted her into office at a public meeting of the Women's Society and made them pledge her that she should not be interfered with in her management of the institution. I did this because the women of Ceylon had never been associated together in any public work before, and as their domestic relations and house customs differed diametrically with those of Western women, I knew that it would be impossible for Mrs. Higgins to get on with these associated Sinhalese ladies unless she were given freedom of action. All had gone well for a time but, during my prolonged absence from the Island, their former wise policy was gradually changed and the result was this rupture.

On the 23rd, Mrs. Besant held a conversazione in the Convention Hall at Headquarters, among her audience being several of the most influential leaders of Hindu society. It will be easily imagined what ability must have been displayed in the questions upon the most difficult problems of philosophy, metaphysics, science, and religion by men of such a high grade of intelligence as Sir Muttuswamy Iyer, a Judge of Her Majesty's High Court, of Judicature, the Hon. V. Bashyam Iyengar, the leader of the native Bar, since knighted by the queen and raised to the Bench of the same Court, Hon. S. Subramania Iyer, to whom the same honors have also been given, Dewan Bahadur R. Raghoonath Row, one of the highest financial officers in Madras, and men of that stamp. I have attended many of these question-meetings and held [80] many myself in various countries, but have never heard these imposing themes so ably handled as I have in India. They are naturally skilled metaphysicians and logicians, an heredity behind them of an hundred generations having developed the acutest intelligence within these lines. And yet, among ten thousand high-class Brahmins one could hardly meet a single person capable of inventing the simplest of the ingenious contrivances for which patents are granted yearly in the United States and European Countries. These are the men who are lumped together in the mass of the population of India as "ignorant heathen" by returned Missionaries, when they go around begging for more money to carry on their hopeless religious propaganda.

On the next day I went to the station to receive Miss Henrietta Müller, the

renowned woman-suffragist, coming from Bombay for the Convention. She was, then, quite full of a scheme for taking our Bombay Branch under a sort of tutelage and installing as its Manageress a Swedish-American lady member of our Society; she proposing to take rooms for her and the Branch in a desirable quarter of Bombay. Her idea was that the lady in question should receive European and other inquirers and help the Branch to launch out into a more active propaganda than they had hitherto made. It turned out, however, that they were not willing to be dry-nursed.

Daily the delegates arrived by battalions, all the rooms in the house were crowded, and Mrs. Besant's [81] daily conversaziones were attended by large gatherings. She would sit on the floor, cross-legged, in the Hindu fashion, along with the others, on great carpets that I had had spread, and answer the hardest questions with a readiness and lucidity that was charming. The Convention met, of course, on the 27th as usual, at noon; but, at 8 a.m., Mrs. Besant gave the first of her course of four grand lectures on "The Building of the Cosmos," the theme this morning being on the agency of sound, i.e., vibration, in the outworking of the grand scheme.

Among the features touched upon in my Annual Address were the relationship of the E.S.T. to the Society, the activities of the year, a notice of the Chicago Theosophical Congress, a sketch of Mrs. Besant's first Indian tour, the Gopalacharlu defalcation, my work for Buddhism in Ceylon and in connection with the acquirement of Buddha Gaya and the other usual matters. The year 1893 was one of exceptional activity and the results supremely important. In Europe, the United States, Australasia, India, Ceylon, and Burma, very extensive tours were made, scores of lectures delivered, forty-eight new Branches chartered, the Chicago Congress held, new Indian centre formed, and such like activity kept up in many countries through-out the twelve months. I laid great stress upon the question of the future direction of the Theosophical movement after my death, because as the Society swells every year and invades more and more previously unreached countries it is a growing question as to [82] what shall happen when the original and only President it has had shall be removed in the course of nature, and whatever successor may be chosen must come into the management under totally different conditions. I think that, as nearly ten years have come and gone since then, and the number of our charters issued has increased from 352 at the close of 1893 to 656 at the close of 1901, and will probably reach the figure of 700 by the end of the current year, I had better

include in this historical narrative the opposing views of myself and of my respected colleague, Mr. Vice-President Sinnett, although his have been somewhat modified since that time and he has brought his own Branch, the London Lodge, within the European, now re-christened British Section. I quote from my address as follows:

“Results yearly prove the wisdom of the plan of dividing the Society into Sections, and I hope in time to be able to extend it over the whole world. Australasia and New Zealand are almost ripe for it, and in time. I hope to find some competent person with the requisite leisure to re-organise the Buddhist Section in Ceylon. But for the formation of the American and European Sections, the tie between Headquarters and those distant parts of the world must have been ruptured before now. My endeavor has been from the first to build up a federal league on the basis of our Three Declared Objects which, while giving all members and Branches the greatest latitude of opinion and choice of work, should yet be a compact working entity, with ~~(88)~~ the welding together of its units by the bond of a strong common tie of mutual interest and clearly defined corporate policy. The chief Executive has already become in great part, and must ultimately be entirely, the mere official pivot of the wheel, the central unit of its life, the representative of its federative charter, the umpire in all intersectional disputes, the wielder of the Council’s authority. As I gave autonomy to each Section as it came into being, so I mean to treat each future one, believing that our common interests will best be guarded by local administrators. I abhor the very semblance of autocratic interference, but I equally detest that principle of nullification which drives people to try to subvert constitutions under which they have prospered and which have proved in practice well fitted to promote the general well-being. This feeling has made me resent at times what seemed attempts to make the Society responsible for special authorities, ideas, and dogmas which, however good in themselves, were foreign to the views of some of our members, and hence an invasion of their personal rights of conscience under our Constitution. As the official guardian of that instrument, my duty requires this of me, and I hope never to fail in it.

“My respected colleague, Mr. A. P. Sinnett, and a few others hold views quite different from my own upon the subject of T.S. solidarity. They think that, after my death: ‘No successor should be elected as head of the Society all over the world, but it should drift into an organisation which would be much better ~~(84)~~ adapted to the proportions the Society has now assumed... Control of the

Presidential sort, as regards the Society as a whole, is an idea, in fact, that only be-longs to the infancy of such an organisation. Now that the movement has firmly taken root, it does not require that kind of nursing... At any given moment when the system... would be carried out—supposing that moment ever to arrive—the Presidents of the then existing, or chartered Lodges, would be the Parliament of the Society, and might have the opportunity of coming together in a conference once a year, at some time and place fixed by the General Secretary. Then it would be publicly notified that any bodies of people who, since the last period, had formed themselves into a Theosophical Lodge, could communicate with the General Council, and, if found to understand the ideas of our Society, be then and there recognised as having formed a new Lodge. Then the President of such a Lodge would take his place in the sectional Parliament or Council. The functions of the General Secretary would, of course, be reduced almost to a nullity, but the Presidents of Lodges could freely communicate amongst themselves, and if, from time to time, any co-operative action became desirable, could agree upon it.”

“While unconvinced of the superiority of this plan over the one in vogue, I have deemed it my duty to quote a few passages from a semi-private letter, that the views of a small group of able friends may be recorded at this stage of affairs. For my part, I cannot [85] see how a world-covering movement like ours could possibly be kept advancing without some official thread to string the beads of Sections and Branches upon, and without one general and various local central offices, from which official circulars and other documents should issue, a propaganda be directed, the results of Sectional and general conferences be communicated, and information of general interest be disseminated; one at which disputes might be decided and archives kept. The plan proposed seems to me one of segregation into units called Branches, of the fostering of exclusiveness, of the abandonment of the propagandist work whose fruits are the spread of the movement, of the destruction of the sense of moral responsibility to the Society as a whole, for industrious and altruistic work, of the sweeping away of our present constitutional limits; which keep the movement strictly within the lines of our Three Declared Objects, and of the rupture of the common tie of fraternity which makes every member feel a family interest in all that the Society does in every quarter of the globe. However, the plan is laid before you for your information and such consideration as it may deserve.”

The ten years of additional experience has only confirmed me in the opinion I

then expressed, and I am now satisfied that the Society will incur the risk of being divided up into fragmentary societies equal to the number of Sections that may exist at the time of my death, if the present excellent and very practical scheme of administration should be abandoned. I [86] cannot see for one moment how it could be dispensed with, and to my mind, the only real problem is to find a person for President who will administer his office with strict impartiality as between nations, sects, and political systems. He must live at Adyar, develop the library, keep up The Theosophist, push on the educational work, now so prosperous, in Ceylon and Southern India, and be ready to visit all parts of the world as occasion shall require, to weave the outlying Sections into the great golden web of brotherhood whose centre and nucleus is at Adyar.

Over four hundred delegates were fed at the Brahmin kitchens at the headquarters on the opening day and the Convention was the largest ever held up to that time. On the second day the Annual Group photograph was taken, after which Mrs. Besant gave her second lecture on Fire as one of the elements in the building of the Kosmos. At noon the Society's Convention re-assembled, and after the close of the session the Convention of the Indian Section followed. At 5 p.m. the Eighteenth Anniversary of the Society was celebrated in Victoria Town Hall before a monster audience. The speakers on the occasion were Messrs. Raghoonath Row, N. D. Khandalavala, Purunendu Narayana Sinha, the Countess Wachtmeister, Mrs. Besant, and myself. The morning lecture on the 29th was on "Yoga" and that on the 30th, the last of the course, on "Symbolism". The sessions of the Society and the Indian Section closed on the 29th. At 5.30 p.m. the late Mr. Sivasankara Pandiyaji lectured and [87] Mrs. Besant kindly gave an extra lecture in the evening at 8.30 on "Karma," a superb argument. The house began rapidly emptying after the morning lecture of the 30th. Mrs. Besant, Miss Müller and I went to a reception by Hindu ladies and gentlemen at the house of Rajah T. Rama Row, in Triplicane, where Mrs. Besant answered, with inspiration, questions about the use of Temples, Vedic Fire, Mantrams and the symbology of the Puranic story of the churning of the ocean by the Suras and Asuras. By the morning of the 31st the house was nearly empty. Mr. Sturdy, Miss Müller, and others left, and Mrs. Besant, the Countess, and I indulged ourselves with the pleasure of a drive along the superb Marina.

CHAPTER VIII

MRS. BESANT'S TOUR IN BENGAL

(1894)

ON New Year's day, at 4.30 p.m., Mrs. Besant lectured in the open air from a temporary platform on the Esplanade, Madras, to some six thousand people, on "India". It was a most eloquent address and immensely applauded. Our headquarters being at a distance of over five miles from the Town Hall, is not easy to reach for those who have no money to pay for vehicles; or rather I should say, it was not at the time of which I write: since then an electric tram line has been opened as far as Royapettah, which brings such visitors within three miles. The immense audience, largely composed of the class above mentioned, is thus accounted for.

At five o'clock the next day, a party consisting of Mrs. Besant, the late Mrs. Batchelor, Messrs. Edge, Bhavani Shankar, P. D. Khan and myself left in two canal-boats and with three servants, for a picnic to Mahabalipuram, the site of the ruins of the rock-cut temple city so famous in the history of Indian Archæology. We slept aboard the boats, reached the place [88] at 8 a.m. the following morning (Wednesday the 3rd), had early breakfast (Choda Hazri) at the fine Government Rest House and then visited the ruins. A Western person, especially an American, who is accustomed to nothing but the newest of things, is profoundly impressed by the sight of these temples, huge cars and elephants and other figures of life-size, carved out of the living rock, and especially when they have been brought to partial ruin by the action of the elements or the violence of man through many centuries, the sense of their antiquity becomes overpowering. Gradually the sea has encroached upon that part of the coast, so that what was once a stretch of arable fields and a collection of numberless dwellings is now but too near the point where, alike many another city throughout the world, they will be engulfed by Ocean and nought preserved of them but their names in history. Returning to the Rest House, we had luncheon and I then began writing one of the chapters of my "Old Diary Leaves," while

Mrs. Besant went with the rest of the party to see other ruins. At 4.30 p.m, we re-embarked and journeyed homeward all night. The primitiveness and discomfort of our boats were an amusing feature of the excursion. There being no deck in the hold we stretched our blankets on the bottom-planking between the boat's ribs, each of us lying on the slant. There was a half-ruinous roof overhead and for protection against the weather curtains of gunny-cloth so dirty and dilapidated as to be fit for a conspicuous place in historical Rag Fair. However, with easy consciences and [90] somewhat weary bodies, all minor troubles were forgotten; so we slept straight through the night, as we were poled over the shallow water of the Buckingham Canal, reaching Adyar at 11 on Thursday morning. That being Foreign Mail day we all had enough to do until it was time to go into town for Mrs. Besant to give her last lecture in Madras during the present tour, in Victoria Town Hall; her subject was: "The Insufficiency of Materialism".

On Friday afternoon I escorted Mrs. Besant and Mrs. Batchelor to the house of Dewan Bahadur Ragoonath Row, where a question meeting of Hindu ladies was held. The next day, on receipt of a cable from Ceylon, I notified the two Buddhist Bhikshus of the Râmanya Nikâya, who had attended the Convention, that they were recalled, and sent them off. On Sunday, the 7th, with Mrs. Besant, Countess C. W. and Bhavani, I sailed for Calcutta in the P. & O. steamer "Peshawar".

Leaving the party to receive the farewell greetings of friends and settle themselves in their cabins, let me go back a little and redeem a promise made in my chapter IV, in the issue of The Theosophist for November, 1901. As will be remembered, it was therein stated that just before daybreak on the 10th of February, 1892, I received clairaudiently a very important message from my Guru telling me, among other things, that a messenger from him would be coming and I must hold myself in readiness to go and meet him. Nothing more than this was said, neither [91] the name of the person nor the time of his or her arrival being indicated. In the absence of exact information, I jumped to the conclusion that the most likely person to be sent would be Damodar who, after a residence of seven years in Tibet would, presumably, and judging from his state of psychical development when he left us, be ready to carry out the Master's order in cooperation with myself. This surmise was communicated by me to the few friends whom I had told about the message, and I kept a travelling-bag packed a full year-and-a-half, so as to be ready to start at a moment's notice for

Darjeeling, the hill station from which Damodar went to Tibet and where he had left his box of clothes. Nothing more having been heard of the matter I had, naturally, come to think that I had, perhaps, been deceived as to the terms of the message and, finally, the preliminary arrangements for the projected tour of Mrs. Besant had driven the matter entirely out of my mind. So things remained until the early morning after our arrival at our third Indian station, viz., Trichinopoly, when the familiar voice again spoke as I lay in that state between sleeping and waking, and said: "This is the messenger whom I told you to be ready to go and meet: now do your duty." The surprise and delight were such as to drag me at once into the state of waking physical consciousness and I rejoiced to think that I had once more received proof of the possibility of getting trustworthy communications from my Teacher at times when I could not suspect them of being the result of [92] auto-suggestion. The development of Mrs. Besant's relations with our work in India have been, moreover, what, to me, is the best possible evidence that she is, indeed, the agent selected to fructify the seeds which had been planted by H. P. B. and myself during the previous fifteen years. She has swept away all vestiges of the mistrust as to our mission in India, such as was entertained by the great body of orthodox Brahmins, who looked on my colleague and myself as in fact secret agents for a Buddhist propaganda and the would-be destroyers of Hinduism.

The horoscope of Mrs. Besant, cast by Sepharial (Mr. Old), then a resident at our headquarters and a member of my staff, was published in *The Theosophist* for January, 1894, viz., when she was making her first Indian tour. It appears from that that she was born when the sign Aries $1^{\circ} 40'$ was rising, and Mr. Old gives a very lucid analysis of the character of a person born under such circumstances. But, as every student of astrology knows, a horoscope, to be worth anything, must analyse the combined influences of the various planets which modify the peculiar characteristics of the natal sign. Proceeding according to this method, Sepharial traces out, so to say, these focal influences and forms the following deduction:

"The remarkable features in the present horoscope are the presence of no less than six of the eight planets in cardinal signs, and the presence of cardinal signs of the angles of the figure. The latter circumstance [93] confers upon the subject a reputation which will outlast life; a fame which will be widespread in proportion to the concurrence of other significations in the horoscope. And in this case we find the circumstance amply confirmed by the singular feature first mentioned.

The majority of the planets being in cardinal signs denotes activity, aptitude, business capacity of the foremost order, nimbleness, ambition, perseverance. It gives a tendency to reforms and active administrations; makes the native fond of politics, foremost in his village, town, or even country, in social affairs and matters relating to the government of the people. It gives great executive ability; the power to overcome obstacles and to cut out a line of life for oneself; courting responsibility, active in the pursuit of one's objects, capable of command and leadership; yet often impetuous, forcing one's own way regardless of existing law and order; quick to anger but soon pacified; eager in intellect, acute in perception, apprehensive; fond of debate.

“The cardinal signs produce the most active workers of the world, the best business men and the most useful persons in the executive departments of social life.

“Three planets are in aerial signs and three in watery signs, hence the native lives equally in the mental and emotional aspects of her nature. The physical and purely spiritual are subordinate.

“If enquiry be made as to the astrological cause of Annie Besant's oratorical powers, it will be seen that Mercury is in Libra, a ‘sign of voice’ as we [94] technically term it, and Venus, the ruler of the 2nd House (governing language), is conjoined to Mercury, which confers singular eloquence and poesy of expression.”

In his concluding paragraph Sepharial says: “It may be asked if there are similar signs of sympathy between this horoscope and that of H. P. Blavatsky such as were seen to exist in the case of Colonel Olcott. To this we can answer, Yes. If reference be made to the horoscope of H. P. B.,³ it will be seen that the Ascendant is in close conjunction with the Moon in the present case and near to the place of Jupiter; while at the same time the Sun in the latter is on the place of the Moon in H. P. B.'s horoscope, a sure sign of sympathy between persons who are destined to meet one another.” He calls attention to the curious coincidence that Madame Blavatsky sailed for India in the 47th year of her age, and that in this identical year Mrs. Besant also came to India to continue in the same work.

Let us now return to our party on board the “Peshawar”. During the voyage from Madras to Calcutta we were favoured with very fine weather and a smooth sea. On the day after our sailing, by general request, Mrs. Besant lectured in the saloon on the subject of “Theosophy,” the Captain presiding. A pleasant incident

of the voyage was the meeting on board of one of our New Zealand members, the Hon. William McCullough, a Member of the Legislative [95] Council and a very intelligent and sympathetic gentleman. We anchored at Saugor, at the mouth of the Hooghly, on the evening of Tuesday, January 9th, and continued the voyage at 10.30 the next morning on the flood tide. This precaution has always to be taken by Captains of vessels bound for Calcutta for it is a most treacherous river, the ebb tide running very swiftly and various shoals and sandbanks lying concealed below the surface ready to engulf any vessel which barely touches their inward edges. Quite frequently it happens that ships which have just grazed the edge of the treacherous sandbank have been forced by the current against it so that they were hopelessly stuck fast and within a few minutes have turned over and been swallowed up. At the very time that I write the Calcutta public are barely recovering from their horror at the wreck of the "Deepdale," which touched a shoal and within two minutes had disappeared from sight. So that one may say that it is quite within the range of possibilities that a traveller who has come safely through the tempests of the Bay of Biscay, the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean, may be wrecked in this sacred, but remorseless, stream within eight hours' sail of his destined port.

We reached Calcutta after 6 p.m. when it was dark. Several hundred of the best people of the metropolis, including Sir Romesh Chunder Mitter, ex-Justice of the High Court, Hon. Rash Behary Ghose, of the Viceroy's Council, and the Hon. Norendronath Sen waiting for us on the jetty. There were numberless [96] flags, arches of greenery, gifts of flowers and enthusiastic people. We were driven to a nice house which had been engaged for our temporary occupancy. From 8 to 10 the next morning and in the afternoon Mrs. Besant received visitors and in the evening lectured to an audience of 5,000 on "India's Place Among the Nations". The Town Hall was crammed and the enthusiasm was wonderful. I was much interested with the testimony of three persons who came to me separately and told me what they had seen and felt during the speaker's lecture. The first one said that "he had heard a tinkling of silvery bells and smelt a peculiarly delicious perfume, like a combination of oriental spices, which had seemed to flow from her and fill the hall"; the second had seen about her a bright and shining light; the third had not only seen this but in that radiance the figure of a majestic, bearded and turbaned Personage, whose aura seemed to blend with that of the speaker in vibrations each one of which sent a thrill through her nervous system.

There were the usual two receptions on Friday, and between them A. B., the

Countess and I, submitted to the usual photographing; after 6 p.m. Mrs. Besant gave a splendid discourse on “Pantheism,” at the great mansion of Sir Romesh Chunder to an audience of a most select character. At 5 o’clock the next morning the two ladies and I drove to the Sacred River and saw a young Yogi, standing in the water, do some wonderful phenomena of the Hatha Yoga. I can’t say that we were very much edified with the [97] performance, nor with any of the other Hatha Yoga physiological wonders such, as for instance, the deliberate swallowing, inch by inch, of a dhoti the lower cloth worn by every unwesternized Hindu, which wraps about him two or three times and covers him from the waist to the ankles. In this feat it is first wet and then swallowed until only the end is left hanging out of the mouth; after which it is slowly and carefully pulled out again. Another bit of what I must call tomfoolery is the introduction into one nostril of a rather thick rope of twisted strips of thin cotton cloth, brought together at one end and worked into a short bit of string, which is forced up the nostril, and then brought out through the other nostril.

This seems incredible, yet I have seen it done myself as well as the “dhoti” performance. The object in view in all the series of exploits is, firstly, to make the Yogi’s will, by constant training and concentration upon a given point, strong enough to convert the bodily functions from involuntary to voluntary.

In the cases referred to there is the second object of cleansing the nasal passages, stomach and other internal cavities from accumulations of the previous twenty-four hours. This same training of the will brings, virtually, all the processes of the body under control, and after living long in India one comes to the point where not even the most sensational feats of the practitioner of the Lower Yoga, such as the abstention from food or drink for weeks, the allowing of oneself to be buried for a month or more and then [98] resuscitating oneself, the sleeping on a bed of sharp spikes, self-levitation, the walking on water, the holding of an arm vertically for years until it loses its flexibility and becomes like a wooden stake, the exposure of oneself without harm to the “five fires,” are able to astonish him. And yet what a terrible waste of time, and how ridiculously unprofitable, so far as one’s spiritual advancement is concerned, is all this physiological training. At 3 p.m. Mrs. Besant lectured on “Theosophy and Hinduism” at the Star Theatre to the usual overflowing audience. She then revised copy until 11 p.m., after which she wrote letters and then allowed her poor tired body to have some sleep. On Sunday the ladies and I attended a reception of Brahmos, i.e., members of the Brahmo Samaj, at the house of Dr. P.

K. Ray, a Professor in the Calcutta University and a man of scientific renown. In the evening Mrs. Besant lectured to another multitude at the Town Hall, but first held a reception at the house of the Hon. Mr. Ghose.

At 11 p.m. we left for Berhampore. This is an out-of-the-way station but the welcome that awaits any one connected with theosophic propaganda amply compensates for the trouble of getting there. After a night in the train we reached Azimgunge at about 9 a.m. From the railway station, the terminus of the short branch road from Nalhati Junction on the E.I.R., Mrs. Besant was carried in a tomjon, an uncovered arm-chair attached to poles which rest upon the bearers' shoulders, with an accompaniment of fluttering flags [99] and gaudily dressed mace-bearers, supplied by the local Jain branch of the T. S. We crossed the river in a house-boat and found an elegant carriage with blooded horses awaiting us which took us, at a smart trot, over the smooth road to our place of destination: our imposing turnout had been kindly supplied by H. H. the Maharanee Surnomoyee. We were very comfortably housed and most hospitably catered for. After a very interesting talk with the branch members we visited their reading Room and a Boys' Moral Training Society. The next morning there was the usual conversazione, after which we were left at liberty to catch up the arrears of our heavy correspondence and my literary work. At 6.30 p.m. Mrs. Besant lectured on "India, Past, Present and Future". Addresses were read to her by our Branch, the Hindu public of Berhampore (the old Brahmapuri) and the orthodox pandits, of whom twenty-five attended the lecture. The next morning, after the conference with Mrs. Besant, we were favoured with some remarkable juggling (or necromantic?) feats by a pupil of the late famous master of Djinnns, Hasan Khan, about whom I have often written in The Theosophist. His name is—if he be still alive—Pertab Chandra Ghose, of Chunta P.O., Pergunnah Sarail, in the Tipperah District of Bengal. I give the address for the benefit of whom it may concern, but warn Western curiosity-seekers that it will be useless to write him in any of their languages. Among his other wonders was the following: he took from us three watches, tied them up in paper and a bit [100] of cloth; attached to it a ticket with the name of R. N. Sen, one of the witnesses, written on it; then gave it into Mrs. Besant's own hands and asked her to throw it into the house-well. She did so and we saw it drop into the water with a great splash and sink out of sight. Presently he reproduced the watches, one done up in a separate package with the ticket on it, the other two loose; all perfectly dry. He then suddenly produced and handed us a box of sweets of a peculiar kind which are made in a village more than two hundred miles away from Berhampore. Like his master,

Hasan Khan, he pretended that these wonders were done with the help of certain elementals, or Djinns, over whom he has control. The lecture that evening was on “Theosophy and Modern Science”.

From 7.30 to 9 a.m. the next morning visitors were received; at 9 we visited Ranee Anarkali’s Tol, i.e., a Sanskrit school, where an address in that language was read to Mrs. Besant; then we had a drive and after that, desk-work during the rest of the morning. In the afternoon the students of Berhampore College came with an address, and at 7 p.m. our sweet orator lectured on “Reincarnation and Karma”. At 9 p.m. our busy day ended up with a special performance of the famous Indian drama, “Prahlada Charita,” given for us, and songs of welcome and farewell to Mrs. Besant were chanted. As it is not in the least likely that she has preserved her copy of the verses, and as they are likely to entertain our Western friends, I will give them as recited, First we have:

[101]

THE SONG OF WELCOME

“Welcome sister, the ever unfortunate mother India takes you to her bosom. Now she has nothing precious of which she can make a present to you; but she is ready to receive you with Shamit (sacrificial fuel), Kushahan (a seat made of sacrificial grass), Padya (water for washing the feet with), Arghya (respectful oblation) and sweet words.

“What has brought you sister, here? India is now lifeless. Here is now no chanting of the Vedas, no Tapobana (garden for practising religious austerities), no twice-born, no uttering of Mantras (mystical incantation) Now the cry of the famine-stricken people rends the sky.

“We, the inhabitants of Berhampore, give a garland of flowers round your neck; please take it, simple sister, with your characteristic affability.

“You are now a learned daughter of mother India, you are honoured throughout the world and your reputation is world-wide. We are glad to see you.”

And then:

THE FAREWELL SONG

“You have sacrificed, sister, all you had for the sake of your mother with the simple hope of infusing life into fallen India.

“You have seen the condition of India with your own eyes; the sons of India

look sullen [102] and gloomy. None has an iota of happiness here; the heart of every one is heavy with feelings of miseries.

“Sing, sister, the song of India’s miseries in your own country. The minds of famishing people can have no inclination to God.

“Sing the song of India’s glories with fresh energies; we would console our heavy hearts hearing that song from far beyond the ocean.

“Farewell sister, go to your own country with the blessings of 200 millions of people and distribute there with sound health the treasures of Aryan religion.

“The parting is embittering; do not fail, sister, to come here again with the remembrance of your fallen brothers.”

The next day, Friday the 19th, was our last at Berhampore and all its hours were fully occupied; in fact, to judge from my experience, very few idle hours fall to the lot of the theosophical propagandist. At 7 in the morning Mrs. Besant lectured on “Theosophy and Hinduism”; at 9 we three drove to Cossim Bazar Palace to pay our respects to the venerable Maharanee Surnomoyee, M. I. O. C. I.; then there were some admissions of members; then breakfast, after which there came an address from the students of the Berhampore College, our last public function in the place. We then left by carriages for Murshidabad, where we stopped at the Palace of the Nawab, my old friend, to make him a short call. His welcome [103] was, as usual, most cordial and he expressed his regret that we could give him only a short half-hour. Leaving him we then moved on to Azimgunge and so, by the branch road to Nalhati and from thence on all night towards Bankipore, Behar.

CHAPTER IX

MRS. BESANT'S TOUR IN THE UNITED PROVINCES

(1894)

AS already stated, Bankipore is one of the most sympathetic places in India to visit, by reason of the cultivated intelligence and heartfelt earnestness of our local colleagues. Mrs. Besant was quite prepared then, from what I had told her, to anticipate a pleasant and profitable visit at that station, and was not disappointed. The Committee had obtained from the agent of the Maharajah of Durbhanga the use of his local palace, one of a number that he owns in different parts of India; and there we were put up. I took the ladies to the echoing dome described in a previous chapter and they, with their poetical and mystical natures, were much impressed by that never-to-be-forgotten series of reverberations that come after the raising of the voice or the shuffling of a foot on the ground; if ever there was a place to which Tom Hood's famous verse would apply it is this.

“And over all there hung a shade of fear,
And sense of mystery the spirit daunted,

[105]

And said, as plain as whisper in the ear,
The place is haunted.”

If anyone doubts it let him pay a visit to this deserted grain-bin of Warren Hastings, at night, with a single lamp, and repeat sentences, sotto voce, as he tramps around the circumference of the floor.

At 6.30 p.m. Mrs. Besant lectured in the College Hall to a packed audience. The Principal introduced us and moved the vote of thanks at the close. It always fills my heart with joy to see the enthusiastic way in which the boys of our Indian Colleges receive theosophical lectures: their capacity for emotional

manifestations exceeds that of almost any Western audience, certainly more than any Northern one. Engrossed Addresses were presented to us in purple velvet cases richly embroidered in gold. As we were only going to spend two days in the station, the Committee had arranged for Mrs. Besant to give two lectures on the next day, Sunday the 21st, one at 2 and the other at 6.30 p.m.: the subjects were respectively, “The Evidences of Theosophy,” and “Theosophy and Hinduism”. At a public meeting called for the purpose I formed a Hindu boys’ society. There was a conversazione in the evening and after that, at 9.30, a visit to Professor James’ house. On Monday morning we left Bankipore at 7 a.m. and reached Benares at 12.30, changing trains at Moghalsarai. For one who has known of the intimate friendships between Madame Blavatsky and myself and Mrs. Besant and Upendranath Basu, Gyanendra Nath Chakravarti and some others, [106] it is hard to realise that we were once strangers, but in point of fact I introduced Upendra Babu to Mrs. B. on that morning at the junction named.

On arrival at Benares we were driven to the large house of that generous friend, Babu Kally Kissen Tagore. In the afternoon the Society held a special meeting at which Mrs. Besant was presented with a richly illuminated Address contained in an engraved Benares brass cylinder. In the evening she went with some friends for a sail on the Ganges by moonlight. She, with the Countess Wachtmeister, Bhavani, Upendranath and myself, went to visit H.P.B.’s old acquaintance of 1879, “Majji,” the Yogini who lived for many years, and until her death, at an ashram of her own on the bank of the Ganges. We drove to the Ganges bridge and from thence proceeded onward in a house-boat. At 4 p.m. Mrs. Besant lectured to an open-air crowd from the steps of the Town Hall, for the first time on the new subject of “From Atheism to Hinduism”: needless to say, it was an excellent discourse and received with enthusiasm. On the Wednesday morning, early, our whole party, sitting on the roof of a house-boat, were rowed slowly along the Ganges front of the city and saw the multitudes bathing. The magnificence and impressiveness of this sight have been described by me in a previous chapter. At 3 p.m. we met the leading pandits of Benares for discussion. We found that they disapproved of education for Hindu girls in general, especially for the virgin widows, of whom there are so many hundreds of thousands in [107] Indian society; on the other hand, they expressed their unqualified approbation of my Sanskrit libraries and schools and societies for Hindu boys. It was amusing to see the contrast between the appearance and views of Annie Besant, the champion, for so many years, of the uplifting and education of women, and the hard, stony conservatism of those fossilised pandits

who lived in the nineteenth century but thought within the lines of the Aryan doctrines of the earliest centuries of our era.

The lecture at the Town Hall that evening was given under circumstances of greater discomfort than any previous one of this tour. The arrangements for the admission and distribution of the audience were so faulty that, not only the hearers but the speaker, were wedged together in a stifling mass; the space which, by dint of great pushing and crowding was secured for our party on the platform, was not bigger than that occupied by an ordinary writing-table, and Mrs. Besant had to deliver her discourse from a fixed spot at the edge of the topmost step leading to the dais, about as big as the top of a man's hat. Yet, by dint of a stiffening of her body and an occasional friendly clutch by me at her dress to keep her from falling forward, she managed to get through her discourse with great acceptability. But really, this was too much for good nature, and so Upendra Babu, as President of our local Branch, issued, on the next morning, the following handbill: "In consequence of the great crowd we had at Mrs. Besant's lecture [108] last evening, gentlemen are requested to bring with them their invitation cards or procure admission tickets for to-morrow's lecture, from Babu Jadab Chandra Mitra, or at the gate of the Town Hall, between 4 and 5.30 p.m."

On Thursday, the 25th, we drove to Saranath, the site of the Deer Park where the Buddha gave his first great missionary discourse to the companions of his austerities who had deserted him when he, fainting from exhaustion, had accepted from the herdsman's daughter the gift of fresh milk, because they thought that he had failed in his ascetic training. The stupa as it stands there now, a ruin, is yet one of the most interesting places in the world for the student of religion to visit. And surely that was a memorable party which stood under its shadow that morning: Annie Besant, the destined resuscitator of Hindu philosophy in India, and I, who for thirteen years had been working in concert with the Buddhist nations of Ceylon, Burma, Chittagong and Japan, to revive the Arya Dharma of which the Tathagata had spoken the keynote on this very spot twenty-four centuries ago. Students of psychometry know of the existence in man of the faculty of what is called "conscious clairvoyance," that is, the employment of a more or less developed psychical vision during the waking state. They will understand, therefore, that it would be quite possible for either of us in that group who was endowed with this transcendental perceptive faculty, to have seen, by exercising it, the Akasic pictures which were focussed in and about [109] that spot. This actually happened, and one who was present interested

me beyond all expression by describing to me a scene in which an orange-robed Bhikshu of saintly appearance was addressing a gathering a little to the north of where the stupa now stands. We returned to town greatly pleased with our excursion. At 2 p.m. we went to the house of my old friend, Mokshada Das, where, from 5.30 to 7 p.m. a delightful question-meeting was held. On the next day we did much letter-writing and received many visitors. In the evening the promised lecture was given on the subject of "Hypnotism and Mesmerism in the Light of Theosophy", after which I admitted three candidates into membership. This closed our visit to Benares and on the next day we moved on to Allahabad. Several friends accompanied us to Moghalsarai and Upendra Babu went all the way. Mr. E.T. Sturdy and all the other Allahabad theosophists met us at the station, where Professor Chakravarti was introduced to Mrs. Besant and took us to his and the adjacent house, to put up.

Once in twelve years there is an enormous assemblage of pilgrims at Allahabad, the ancient sacred Prayag, who come to encamp themselves on the alluvial plain at the confluence of the two sacred rivers, Jumna and Ganges: they bathe in the streams, recite prayers, make ceremonies and go away in the conviction that their sins have been washed away. Not even the largest European or American cities have seen such gatherings, for we have it from the estimates of the Government [110] itself that provision has to be made for the surveillance, sanitation, policing and feeding of more than two million people; to be accurate, 23 lakhs—2,300,000. As we happened to arrive at the very time when this meeting, or as the name is, in the vernacular, this Magh Mela, was being held, we were, of course, taken to see it. We visited it on three separate days. One of our active members happening to be detailed for duty in connection with the event, he kindly procured us two elephants to ride upon and accompanied us himself in the capacity of cicerone. A.B., Chakravarti, our friend Suraj Narain, and I, mounted the first elephant, but the Countess positively refused to mount hers; she would give no reasons except that she didn't choose and rather than do it she would return to the house and let the Fair go. It was such a great pity that she should lose this most unique of spectacles that Suraj Narain finally commandeered an ekka, a little, two-wheeled, quaint-looking pony-cart, the shafts of which meet together over the horse's saddle and hook into some sort of iron contrivance which holds them in place; the wheels are about as small as those of a modern trotting-sulky; the passenger sits on a little cushioned board, perhaps 2½ feet square, and is sheltered from the sun by a canopy supported at the four corners by sticks of bamboo: altogether as quaint a vehicle as can be

found in any western Museum. This being arranged, we moved on over the plain, observing and enjoying all the novel sights that could be seen from our elevated position on elephant-back. The sagacious [111] beasts stepped with the greatest precaution through the masses of people who were crowded up to their very legs. It was almost as though they were wading through a stream of human beings. On every side, to great distances, stretched the swarthy multitude; the river banks were crowded with bathers; streams of people moved hither and thither to visit the camps of notabilities—rajahs and maharajahs, zemindars and talukdars, declaiming teachers of various sects, hatha yogis by the score, making a public show of their austere practices, some smeared with ashes and streaked with saffron caste-marks, some with their long dishevelled locks, supplemented with chignons of vegetable fibre built up into high dusty cones, like exaggerated rats' nests, on top of their heads, some lying on beds of spikes, some sitting in the different asans prescribed by Patanjali, some decorating their bodies after their baths, some with eyes closed as if in meditation, etc.,—but, with very few exceptions, each having spread on the ground before him a cloth on which the pious pilgrims could cast their alms of copper coin: pious humbugs, in short. But what struck me as the greatest humbug of all was the ostentatious self-exhibitions of gorgeously dressed gurus and family priests of Indian princes, riding on richly caparisoned elephants, in gaudy howdahs and with a flutter of flags of cloths of gold or silver or banners of bright-coloured silks, all gleaming and sparkling in the sun as the elephants of these trans-parently pretentious humbugs of spiritual guides (?) moved through the mighty sea of pilgrims, [112] seeing and being seen of all men. After we had had our fill of the show and had stamped into our astral brain a gallery of mind pictures that could never fade, we turned our elephants back towards our point of departure, threading our way cautiously through the thronging crowds. At the third visit we stood on the bank of the Jumna just in front of the Fort, looking across the stream and on to the plain at the mighty spectacle. Streams of people kept moving past us in both directions, types of many different races presenting themselves to view from moment to moment. Having seen many Indian crowds before, this Magh Mela only astonished me by the enormity of the multitude it had attracted; but to our ladies everything was novel; they not only saw but scrutinized, and the Countess suddenly recalled me from my species of reverie by saying to Mrs. Besant: “What a wonderful crowd. See, there is not one single drunken person, not one booth for the sake of liquor, not one fight. Every man's and woman's face wears the expression of innocent enjoyment, and one feels as though the common

sentiment of religious devotion was animating them all. Where else in the world, in any nation or town, have you ever seen so orderly and self-respecting a crowd as this?" Let the reader try to figure to himself that majestic spectacle before us of the plain covered with a multitude so vast as this, of brown-skinned people with their heads covered with white turbans, patches of colour being made here and there by groups wearing turbans of blue, yellow or red. If I should live fifty years more, I should never forget the impression made upon me by those elephant-riding gurus with their gaudy flags and richly dressed disciples crowding about them in the howdahs: it was such a travesty of religion.

At about sundown on the day of the first visit, January 28th, we were taken for a row on the Jumna and later in the evening there was a T.S. meeting held at which I admitted two candidates to membership. On the 29th there was office work during the day and a conversazione in the evening. At 6.30 on the next evening Mrs. Besant lectured at Mayo Hall on the "Insufficiency of Materialism". What its effect on the great audience was may be guessed from the entry in my Diary, that it was "the best and most fervent discourse she had yet given on the subject". On the 31st I finished writing my O.D.L. for the March Theosophist, and at 6.30 p.m., at Lowther Castle, Mrs. Besant addressed a large class of college boys who were being taught Theosophy by Professor Chakravarti and other elders. There was a conversazione at the same place on the following evening. On the 2nd of February, in the evening, Mrs. Besant lectured at the Railway Theatre on "Death and Life After Death," to a most unsympathetic audience. It had been pouring all day and the audience was small. For Countess Wachtmeister, at least, the day had its bright memories for she met, for the first time in twenty years, her elder brother, General the Marquis de Bourbel, of the Royal Engineers, whose services had been loaned to the Kashmir Durbar for the building of a Railway in that State. On the 3rd we visited the Kayastha Patshala, a long-established and successful school for the education of students belonging to the Kayastha or writer caste of Hindus. The next two days were principally devoted to the visits to the Magh Mela, and on the 6th we left at 9 p.m. for the world-famed city of Agra.

On arriving at Agra, on the 7th, much behind time because of the crowding of the road with extra traffic connected with the transport of pilgrims to and from the great Mela, we were cordially received by my old friend, Lala Baijnath, a most earnest, scholarly and independent man, who took us to his house and entertained us most hospitably. Mrs. Arnold, a cousin of Miss Emily Kislingbury

of London, (H. P. B's and my New York guest), came with her husband from Aligarh to see Mrs. Besant, and attended the conversazione she held that evening. On the next day the ladies saw, for the first time, that architectural wonder of the world, the Taj Mahal, so often described as "a poem in marble". Having seen it before, I was able to arrange for them an artistic surprise, by getting them to close their eyes and let me lead them through the arch of the entrance tower at one side of the gardens, and keeping them a little within the shadow, had them open their eyes and gaze on the picture of enchantment before them. The Taj is situated in a spacious garden of trees and flower-beds arranged with the finest taste of the landscape-gardener. From the place where [115] we stood stretched a long succession of narrow and shallow tanks of water, down the centre of which runs a single line of water-jets. This vista is broken at a distance of, perhaps, two hundred yards, by a large, raised, stone platform, stretching between the side-walks, from which visitors can have a comprehensive view of the landscape picture. Beyond it the water basins continue until they end at the raised promenade which runs all around the plinth on which stands the incomparable marble tomb of the Emperor Shah Jehan's favorite Queen, Mumtaz Mahal, and of himself; its exquisite forms relieved against the sapphire background of the cloudless Indian sky. Every traveller of cultivated taste brings away the same impression. But when we walked down the avenue and came to the mausoleum, the Countess and I noticed that Mrs. Besant seemed oppressed by a sense of sadness; she looked listlessly but with mournful eyes, at the marble pile. When we asked her the reason for her sadness, she said that she was almost overcome with the sense of the bloodshed that had occurred in past times in and around the fort, whose towering, embattled walls stood before us on the other side of the river, and then, behind all the beauty of this peerless building, she felt the wretchedness and almost heard the groans of the poor coolies by whose enforced labour it had been built. One of the most ruthless acts of cruelty in history is reported to the discredit of Shah Jehan: it is said that the design of the tomb was made by a great Italian architect whom he had called from his faraway [116] land to superintend the building. When it was finished and its beauty was exposed to the gaze of men, this bloody tyrant cast him into prison and had his eyes burnt out so that he might never duplicate a work of such perfection. One cannot get an adequate idea of the Taj from any of the photographs, pictures or carved models that have found their way to all parts of the world: it must be seen in its enframing garden and under the light of an Indian sun, or in the moonlight of a warm Indian evening, to know what it is really like.

Of course we were photographed at Agra as elsewhere, and after this incident of the morning of the 9th, the Countess and Mr. Sven Ryden, one of our Swedish members, went to see the Emperor Akbar's tomb at Secundra--the sepulchre of the greatest of all the Emperors of Hindustan, a sovereign who was tolerant of all forms of religious belief, diminished the cruel and oppressive taxes laid on his Hindu subjects by his predecessors, reformed the administration of the revenue, promoted commerce and improved the roads of the Empire, encouraged learning and literature, instituted schools in all parts of his dominions, was worthy of kingship and was one of those whose names are preserved in history. I have stood by the tombs of many kings in different countries and usually came away filled with disgust and honest indignation at the lies about their character written by sycophants, upon the marble. Especially I felt this at St. Peter's Rome, where I saw the magnificent monuments of popes and [117] kings who, if justice had been done, would have had their carcasses thrown to the dogs: men—

“Whose game was empires, and whose stakes were thrones,
Whose table earth—whose dice were human bones.”

Besides these moral dwarfs, the figures of Akbar and Asoka, Emperors of India, tower majestic.

Mrs. Besant's lecture that evening was on the “Evolution of Man,” a tribute, possibly, to Lala Baijnath's scientific and philosophical taste. At the close I formed the “Agra Hindu Students' Association” and got up a subscription for their library. On our return to the house our host read to Mrs. Besant and myself part of the MS. of an Advaita Catechism he was composing. We found it excellent: which is saying a great deal, for, confessedly this is a literary task of great difficulty. There is something so subtle, so metaphysical in the doctrine of Shankarâchârya that it is a most troublesome affair to compress it into a series of questions and answers which the average person, especially the young student, can comprehend. As I think I have explained before, the success of the First Edition of the Buddhist Catechism, in 1880, gave me the idea of publishing a similar synthetical work on each of the Eastern religions: my plan covering both Zoroastrianism and Islam, in addition to the three great schools of Indian thought. Of these, the Dwaita and Visishtadwaita Catechisms have been published, and even one of the Shin-shu school of Japanese [118] Buddhism; a Parsi gentleman has made an attempt at one of his religion but, although I have had my notes ready for years I have never had time, amid my official duties, to prepare the digest of Islam. The Advaita has never been brought to the point of

readiness for publication, so far as I know, although I have made two or three bargains with different Indian writers to complete it. I was, then, naturally very pleased to find that Lala Baijnath had so intuitively grasped the right theory of treatment, and I hope that, in time, his work may be published.

Early on the morning of the 10th we left Agra for Muttra, the holy place so intimately associated with the memory of Shri Krishna. It is only a three hours' ride, so we reached there in ample time for the second breakfast, which is as fixed an "institution" in India as it is in France. We were accommodated in a nice cottage belonging to H. H. the Maharajah of Bhurtpore. In the afternoon our friends took the Countess and myself in a rowboat past the whole river front of the city—a most picturesque panorama. We saw the place where Shri Krishna is said to have performed the sraddha ceremony for his uncle, and the high tower which marks the spot where the wives of Kamsa burnt themselves in suttee. In the evening Mrs. Besant lectured in the Garrison Theatre on "Death and Life After Death," to an audience composed mainly of English soldiers. Later, I broached to the Indian gentlemen present the idea of a boys' society and opened a subscription, which was continued at a meeting on (119) the next day and the society formed; after which Mrs. Besant gave a lecture which was translated into the vernacular, there not being enough English-speaking Hindus present to relieve her of that necessity. I, who had passed through the same ordeal more than an hundred times, could well sympathise with her; the more so as I was now a mere auditor and not the player of the leading part. Indeed, I felt sorry to see this gifted daughter of Minerva, from whose mouth leaps the crystal stream of heart-moving eloquence, when left to take her own gait, forced to give her discourse sentence by sentence, and each time wait for her words to be mutilated in the vernacular to bring them within the comprehension of this Indian audience. On the next morning we left for Delhi, the old capital of the Moghul Empire. We reached our destination at 5 p.m. and at 6 Mrs. Besant was standing before a huge audience in the Town Hall lecturing on that subject which invariably stirs the heart of the Hindu to its depths, "India, Past, Present and Future". It made a deep and lasting impression. Later, and when we were all more than ready for it, we had dinner in native fashion at the house of our friend and colleague, Dr. Hem Chundra Sen, who has carried on his broad shoulders, from the first, the foundation of the local Theosophical Branch which I laid at the time of my first visit to this place. On the next morning he took us for a drive to the Kutub Minar, a description of which will be reserved for our next chapter.

CHAPTER X

MRS. BESANT'S TOUR IN PUNJAB

(1894)

THERE are few spots on the earth's surface around which cluster so many memories of human strife and struggle, of wasted valour and triumphant savagery, of the conquest and destruction of kingdoms and the birth of new empires, as Delhi. For 45 miles around the fields are cumbered with heaps of splendid ruins, cities reduced to dust, palaces destroyed, tombs of conquerors eaten into by the tooth of time, and here and there, like jewels lying on a heap of rubbish, marble mosques and tombs of exquisite design standing as shining tokens of the high water-mark attained in art by successful soldier-chiefs who left behind them, in their triumphant progress towards a throne, a sea of blood and the moans of dying populations whom they had first despoiled of their last coin and then slaughtered. One who can read the records of the imperishable âkâsha and bring up before him the living pictures of past epochs must feel, if he has the least sympathy for the sufferings of his race, a crushing sense of sadness as he casts his mental gaze around him and contemplates [171] the tragedies of the past. But we do not have to evoke the pictures of the astral light to know something about the tragical events of the Province; the pages of history which record them are, one might almost say, of the colour of blood. During the first eleven, centuries of our Era there was a succession of Hindu dynasties; in the 12th began that of the Moslem invaders: Mohammed of Ghor, Kutub-ud-din, Altamsh, Queen Raziya, Jalâl-ud-din, Alâ-ud-din, Tughlak, Firoz Shâh, succeeding each other and each destroying, decimating, restoring, constructing and re-peopling. War was the normal state of things, peace the occasional. In December, 1398, during the reign of Mohammed Tughlak, the hordes of Timûr reached Delhi. The king fled to Gujarât, the army suffered a defeat beneath the walls, and Timûr, entering the city gave it over for five days to plunder and massacre. As the "Imperial Gazetteer of India" tells us, "Dead bodies choked the streets; and when at last even the Mughal appetite for carnage was satiated, the

host retired dragging with them into slavery large numbers both, of men and women.” In the 18th century the Persian invader, Nâdir Shâh, entered the city in triumph, and re-enacted the massacre of Timûr. For fifty-eight days the victor plundered rich and poor alike; “when the last farthing had been exacted, he left the city with a booty estimated at £9,000,000.” (op.cit., Vol. IV, pp. 192-3.)

In the last chapter the reader was brought, with our travelling party, under the kind guidance of Dr. [172] Hem Chandra Sen, to the foot of the Kutub Minar. This is a splendid minaret, or rather a Tower of Victory, erected in the 12th century by Kutub-ud-din, Viceroy of the Sultan Shâhab-ud-din who, on the death of his master, proclaimed himself an independent sovereign, and became the founder of the Slave dynasty. To him old Delhi owes most of its grandest ruins. The huge column in question is about two hundred and forty feet in height, forty-eight feet in diameter at the base and about nine feet at the summit. The shaft consists of five stories, enclosing a spiral staircase, and is crowned by a now broken cupola, which fell during an earthquake in 1803. At the junction of each storey with the one above it there is a boldly-projecting balcony; the material is red sandstone except at the top where thirty-six feet of the tower are built of white marble. Up to this point the surface is fluted, in the lower storey the flutes being alternately angular and circular; in the second, circular, and in the third angular only. Between the stories are richly-sculptured raised belts containing inscriptions in Arabic. The most superficial observer must be struck by the exquisite grace and symmetry of this enduring monument of the Sultan Kutub. Dr. Fergusson, the most celebrated of writers on Indian and Eastern architecture, says:⁴

“It is probably not too much to assert that the Kutub Minar is the most beautiful example of its class known to exist anywhere. The rival that will occur at once to most people is the campanile at Florence, [178] built by Giotto.” But he adds, “beautiful though it is, it wants that poetry of design and exquisite finish of detail which marks every moulding of the Minar.” There is a difference of opinion between Dr. Fergusson and Sir William Hunter, Editor of the Imperial Gazetteer of India, as to the original purpose of the monument, the latter saying that it “was doubtless as a Muazzam’s tower, whence the call to evening and morning prayer might be heard throughout the whole city”; while the other authority affirms that “the tower must not be looked at as if erected for the same purposes as those usually attached to mosques elsewhere. It was not designed as a place from which the muëddin should call the prayers, though its lower gallery may have been used for that purpose also, but as a Tower of Victory—a Jaya

Stambha, in fact—an emblem of conquest, which the Hindus could only too easily understand and appreciate.”

Around a great court in which the column stands are the ruins of a mosque, also built by the Afghan conqueror, largely of carved fragments torn from Hindu temples, but put together in the forms of what we call Saracenic architecture. Fergusson says that it “is, without exception, the most exquisite specimen of its class”. Bishop Heber, who once viewed the landscape from the same spot where Mrs. Besant and the rest of us now stood, thus describes what he saw: “A very awful scene of desolation, ruins after ruins, tombs after tombs, fragments of brickwork, freestone, granite and marble, scattered everywhere over a soil [124] naturally rocky and barren, without cultivation, except in one or two small spots, and without a single tree.” But as I am neither a newspaper nor an architectural expert, I shall not dwell upon the details of the rise and fall of empires around this historical spot. Suffice it to say that the first was that of the earliest Aryan immigrants into India, at least 2000 B.C., who called their capital Indraprastha, which is referred to in the Mahâbhârata, and the last, that of the British Raj. The thing that most struck me was that the exquisite mosques, tombs, palaces and towers, which met our eyes, should have been erected by conquerors whose military cruelties were inconceivably brutal. I cannot, however, leave the subject without a brief mention of the iron pillar to which the recent discoveries of Dr. J. C. Bose and others, as to the diseases of metals, lend additional interest. This column of malleable iron without alloy, which has stood in the open air, exposed to all the vicissitudes of the north Indian climate through fourteen centuries, is without rust or any sign of decomposition. From base to capital it is forty-three feet high, with a diameter at the bottom of sixteen inches and at the top of twelve inches, some twenty feet of the base being under ground; the capital is three and a half feet high, sharply and clearly wrought into the Persian form, and affords a most striking proof of the fact that in that far-distant age the Hindus achieved results in metal-working which have never been paralleled in the Western countries up to a very late date. Well may Fergusson say that “it opens our [125] eyes to an unsuspected state of affairs. It is equally startling to find that, after an exposure to wind and rain for fourteen centuries, it is unruined, and the capital and inscription are as clear and as sharp now as when put up”. One would naturally suspect that the ancients had the secret of some anticorrosive alloy, but General Cunningham, in India, and Dr. Percy, of the London School of Mines, had portions analysed and the substance was found to be pure iron without alloy. Madame Blavatsky touches upon this subject, as upon so many others, in that

most useful repository, Isis Unveiled. In Vol. I, pp. 210-11, she hints that the ancients, who had excelled in skill as metallurgists and lapidaries from an unknown antiquity, were acquainted with the workings of “that subtle power, which ancient philosophers called the ‘world’s soul’. In the East only and on the boundless tracts of unexplored Africa will the student of psychology find abundant food for his truth-hungering soul.” The reason, she says, is obvious. Nature’s finer forces can hardly be evoked in populous neighborhoods where manufactories and industrial works of various other sorts abound, poisoning the atmosphere with their chemical emanations, and the evil is increased by the outgoing auric currents of unspiritual multitudes. She tells us that “Nature is as dependent as a human being upon conditions, before she can work and her mighty breathing, so to say, can be as easily interfered with, impeded and arrested, and the correlation of her forces destroyed in a given spot, as though she were a man.” Not only [176] climate, but also occult influences daily felt not only modify the physio-psychological nature of man, but even alter the constitution of so-called inorganic matter in a degree not fairly realized by European science. Thus the London Medical and Surgical Journal advises surgeons not to carry lancets to Calcutta, because it has been found by personal experience “that English steel could not bear the atmosphere of India”; so a bunch of English or American keys “will be completely covered with rust twenty-four hours after having been brought to Egypt; while objects made of native steel in those countries remain unoxidized”. The fact is that we have many things to learn in regard to metallurgy, among them the secret of the tempering of tools of iron, copper and bronze to the degree of perfection possessed by the ancients. Our archæologists are just beginning to turn over some of the oldest leaves in the world’s history. On this very day of writing I have read in the periodical called Science Siftings, that Professor Flinders Petrie, probably the most renowned archæologist of the day, says that “the astounding feature about the recent Egyptian discoveries is that they entirely upset all the notions about Egyptian art which have hitherto obtained. Instead of the Egyptian art we know being but the beginnings, the initial strivings of a people to express themselves, that art is now shown to be debased and to have degenerated from an infinitely superior form many generations earlier. Some of the early, almost pre-historic, drawings are beautiful and perfect in design. The [177] detail in the figures on some of the earliest sketches is wonderful in its fineness, beauty and accuracy. Moreover, the writing on even the earliest forms is perfect. This would show that a state of high civilization existed in Egypt some centuries before the date often

assigned to the creation of the world". But exactly what Flinders Petrie is discovering now was discovered by Mariette Bey before him, as will be seen on referring to *Isis Unveiled*, I, 6. The mystery of the iron column at the Kutub Minar gives almost the irresistible conviction that its forgers of the 5th century had the secret of so controlling the pulsations of the ether, or world-soul, within it, as to preserve it from the chemical changes which attack all steel of modern manufacture. "This ancient steel," exclaims that famous American orator, Wendell Phillips, "is the greatest triumph of metallurgy, and metallurgy is the glory of chemistry."

Of course, the walls of the topmost chamber in the Kutub Minar are covered with names and inscriptions of various sorts left by visitors; so, as there was a vacant space just over the entrance door, I wrote there the name of our Society, after which we came away and returned to the city.

That evening, Feb. 13th, Mrs. Besant lectured again at the Town Hall on the subject of "Theosophy and Science". She treated the subject more satisfactorily than ever, as she went more into details in making her scientific points. The fact is that the latest discoveries of science are really fascinating for the student of [128] Theosophy, because every step in advance is made in the direction of the domain of ancient occult science. The latest announcement that I have seen is that someone has constructed a machine so delicate that he is able to prove the actual relationship between colour and sound, a subject which, I need scarcely remind our older members, has been often discussed by the writers of our Society. There is really but one step between the latest advance in wireless telegraphy and the phenomenon of thought-transference. We, old Theosophists, are like people standing on a rocky cliff and watching the waves dashing against its foot; the waves, in our case, are the assaults of the impotent critics of the Ancient Wisdom, that living rock of philosophy which stands firm and unshaken from age to age amid the fugitive changes of dogmatic theology. A quarter of a century has not weakened the position taken up at the beginning by our Founders but, on the contrary, we have yearly become stronger and stronger as sectarian barriers have been undermined by the advancement of science.

On the morning of the 14th, visitors were received and a question-meeting was conducted by Mrs. Besant; at 3.30 p.m. we left for Meerut, a short journey. Pandit Rama Prasad, M.A., President of the local Branch, and author of *Nature's Finer Forces*,⁵ with some fifteen others, met us at the station and we were comfortably housed.

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The next morning, after a question-meeting, I drove for several hours about the town with Babu P. C. Ghose, hunting for the house in which H. P. B. was entertained in the year 1856, or thereabouts, when on her way to Tibet; but I could not find it, as the gentleman who had been her host at that time was dead, and I could not find his son who could have served me as guide. There was a great rush at Mrs. Besant's lecture that evening on "Theosophy, Karma and Reincarnation," and a vivid interest was displayed by the audience. Later, I formed a Hindu Students' Society.

There was a question-meeting on the morning of the 16th, after which we breakfasted on Hindu food at a member's house. There we met Pandit Nundkissore, the owner of the famous copy of the Bîhmagrantham about which so many interesting things have been written in back numbers of this magazine. I think I have mentioned before that one of the most interesting facts about these "Indian sibylline books" is that no horoscopes can be found there of persons not born in India, so neither of us foreigners could get any information about ourselves. But how surpassingly wonderful it is that natives of India, whom the keeper of the books has never seen or heard of before, can come there, show their horoscopes, and then be referred to the volume in which they will find recorded their history and that of their families, sometimes to the extent of hundreds of minor details, and prophecies about their future. A heavy rain [188] fell that evening but Mrs. Besant had a good audience to hear her discourse on "Death and After," which subject she handled after a new and excellent fashion.

We left for Umballa the next day in the afternoon after a conversation-meeting and the admission of numerous members. Under the energetic management of our ever-zealous friend, Rai B. K. Lahiri and other members, the local Branch had acquired a commodious and well-ventilated meeting hall, where we held conversation-meetings and Society business was transacted. Owing to the exigencies of our tour programme we had to refuse invitations to visit the native states of Patiala and Jhind. After a short stay at this place we left for Ludhiana the next morning, the 19th, and reached there at 11.30 a.m. We were taken in procession with music, around the bazaars, under the escort of a big crowd. At 5 p.m. Mrs. Besant came before a multitude who were in such a state of excitement that they could not be reduced to silence and so, after a few moments of vain attempt to make herself heard, she was obliged to give it up. The crowds of Northern India, by reason of their racial types, especially their stature and

costume, make a much more picturesque ensemble than those of the South. Not only was the lecturing place filled, but the adjacent buildings and the walls of the enclosures were covered. An Urdu translation was made of the fragment of her lecture which she had given and then we came away.

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A conversation-meeting and correspondence took up the next morning, but in the afternoon the lecture of the day before was repeated at the same place, but under different conditions, for this time the committee issued tickets of admission and had a sufficient number of police sepoy in attendance to preserve order, so that the speaker could be heard, and all passed off well. We moved on to Jullundur at 1 o'clock the next day, after holding a morning conversazione and having our tiffin. At our destination we were taken from the station through the town in a procession with a band of musicians and a multitudinous body-guard. Mrs. Besant lectured to an audience of two thousand persons from a platform erected on the open ground, for lack of a hall large enough to hold all who wanted to hear her. A considerable number of Europeans were present, some, I must say, so ill-bred as to make us feel ashamed of our race. One particularly offensive person—a planter, I believe—had so little sense of propriety as to sit smoking into the faces of our ladies, with a huge audience of Hindus looking on. On various occasions I have seen such exhibitions of vulgarity, and once—at Dumraon—I remember a planter sitting through my lecture with a basket of soda-water in bottles, ice and a bottle of whisky, fuddling himself more and more every minute. On the evening of the Jullundur lecture it was decided that the Countess Wachtmeister should at once go to San Francisco, to attend the Annual Convention of the American Section and attempt to uncover the traps that Judge was going [132] to spring on that occasion. What she actually did there may be learned by consulting the Official Report of that Convention issued by the American Section.

Our next objective point was Kapurthala, the capital of the Native State of that name. H. H. the Maharajah sent his carriages to meet us at the railway and we were driven thirteen miles through a flat and rather uninteresting country, and, on arrival, were put up in the richly decorated guest-house. All native princes of all grades have such buildings for the accommodation of guests, and almost invariably they are furnished with more or less taste—sometimes very bad—in the European style. Some ruling princes go so far as to have horses, elephants and an armed body-guard in attendance on the guest, and all hosts try to set

before the visitor what they think is the most acceptable food, and drink—especially that—and, I am sorry to say, the use made of it is too often such as to impress the inhabitants of the Native State with a very poor idea of the self-restraint of the white race. The present and former Dewans of Kapurthala, Messrs. Mathura Das and Ramjus, son and father, and Sirdar Bhaktar Singh, C.I.E., the most active of the State officers, came and talked Hinduism with us. Although these men were all keen politicians, and of necessity, obliged to be ever on the alert in their official dealings with the British Resident, yet, when they came to see us they put aside every consideration of all other things and eagerly threw themselves into the discussion of religious problems. This is the side of Hindu character too little comprehended by foreigners, yet the solid foundation on which the national character, temperament and ideals are built. Our party had an audience with the Maharajah, who speaks English and French, a rare accomplishment in India, and who is almost equally well-known in London and Paris. He took us for a drive through the town and in the evening presided at Mrs. Besant's lecture on "Ancient Aryan and Modern Civilization," in a splendid Durbar Hall, profusely decorated and a fine place for public functions. I was struck with the appearance of the officers of State, who sat before us in rich and picturesque dresses and followed the speaker's eloquent discourse with close attention. We took leave of our audience on the next day and Mrs. Besant was invited into the interior of the Palace to see the Maharani. Just before our getting into the carriages to depart, an officer of the State presented to each of us, with the compliments of his master, a handsome Kashmir shawl. The Countess left us at Kartarpur, where we took train to the famed city of Amritsar, the chief town of the Sikhs. On our arrival we were driven to the Golden Temple, that lovely architectural creation, which, with its gold-plated domes that sparkle in sunlight and moonlight, stands at the centre of a great tank, and is reached and surrounded by a pure white marble causeway with handsome forged iron railings; this visit completed, we drove to the house that Miss Müller had taken for her temporary occupancy and passed the night there. That evening Mrs. Besant lectured to a packed audience in the theatre, on "Hinduism and Theosophy".

The next morning (the 24th) we left for Lahore and arrived at 10 a.m. A large delegation received us at the station and the Committee, by consent of the Maharajah of Kapurthala, lodged us in the spacious bungalow that he owns there. The Indian National Congress had held its Annual Convention at Lahore during the Christmas holidays and the huge circular pandal, or thatched shed,

erected for its use, was still standing; so Mrs. Besant lectured there to an audience of five thousand people. It says much for the penetrating quality of her voice that it reached the outermost circle of hearers. In conversation with her one would never think such a thing possible, for she speaks, usually, in a low, sweet tone, sometimes so low as to be heard with difficulty by a person somewhat deaf. Her subject was "Theosophy and Modern Progress". At 9 p.m. there was a conversation-meeting at the Town Hall—a fine room, brilliantly lighted. The next morning at 8 we drove to the Arya Samaj Mandir, where Mrs. Besant distributed prizes to a girls' school, one of the useful institutions founded by the late Swami Dayânand's followers. After this Mrs. Besant held a reception and we breakfasted with Mr. Justice P. C. Chatterji, a very cultured and enlightened man, very sympathetic to our work: he is the author of some valuable monographs on the Indian history of Buddhism. At 4 p.m. Mrs. Besant gave another splendid lecture at the Congress Pandal [185] to an audience as large as the one of the day before. Our work began at 9 the next morning and continued unremittingly until late at night. From 11 to 2 Mrs. B. held a durbar, after which she and I were photographed; at 4.30 we visited the house of Rai Bishambar Nath; at 5.30 she lectured on "Pantheism" to three thousand people; then went to the head-quarters of the Sanâtana Dharma Sabhâ, the representative of the orthodox portion of the Hindu community, received a complimentary address and gave an excellent one in return, which our old associate, Pandit Gopinath, interpreted. By this time she was completely worn out by fatigue, so I took up the running, holding a meeting from 9 to 10.30 p.m. at which I took into membership three of the most influential men of Lahore, one of them Mr. Durga Prasad, President of the Arya Samaj. The next day we were travelling towards Bareilly, and all the following night.

We reached Bareilly at 7.30 a.m. and had for our host Babu Priya Nath Banerjee, who showed us every kindness. It rained all day heavily but just before lecture time it cleared up and Mrs. Besant had a good audience in the Town Hall, where she spoke on the subject of "Theosophy and Religion". A disagreeable incident of the day was the receipt from London of letters which indicated, rather too clearly, that Mr. Judge had gained a pretty strong influence over the minds of some of our most important colleagues, among them some of Mrs. Besant's closest friends. Fortunately, however, this mood did not last when [186] the crisis came with Judge's secession and my consequent decision that the secessionists had expelled themselves from the Society.

The next day (March 1st) visitors were received and a conversation-meeting was held. Among the callers was a young Army officer whose father was Political Resident at Jeypore in 1879, when H. P. B. and I visited it under the amusing circumstances which I have previously described, during our memorable tour, and who was good enough to give us the use of elephants to visit the deserted capital, Amber, which stands in solitary splendor with its polished white palaces sparkling in the sun. At 5.30 p.m. she gave a lecture on "Man and His Destiny," so magnificent that in my Diary I call it "a Kohinoor among diamonds". Let the reader fancy what an intellectual banquet I enjoyed throughout this whole tour with this divinely gifted speaker.

The next day we went to Lucknow, arriving early in the morning. Messrs. G. N. Chakravarti and Pyare Lal joined our party and with Babu Upendranath Basu, who had been with us throughout the major part of the Northern tour, but had not taken so active a part in our work as to have called for notice in the present narrative, surrounded her with that sympathetic, vivifying atmosphere which her overstrained nervous system so much needed. They took her off to Pyare Lal's house for breakfast and she spent the day with them. Mr. E. T. Sturdy, F.T.S., formerly of New Zealand, but now here pursuing a course of [187] yogic exercises, passed the time with me in discussing the gravity of the situation caused by Mr. Judge's plot. We agreed that it was best that I should leave Mrs. Besant in charge of her Hindu friends, return to Adyar to prepare the papers in the Judge case, and rejoin her at Poona, she meanwhile visiting Cawnpore and Nagpur. She lectured that evening in the "Baradari," or Pleasure House of the former king of Oudh, which is situated in a splendid garden called the Kaiserbagh. The building and its encircling verandahs were closely packed by the audience. Her subject was "Man, His Nature and His Powers" and it was handled most ably and eloquently. In pursuance of the agreement between Mr. Sturdy, Mrs. Besant and myself, I left for Adyar at noon on the 3rd, the two seeing me off. March being the hottest month of the hot season in Northern India, I had to go through a severe ordeal on my journey. After passing Cawnpore the heat became terrific, a hot wind rising to a gale and carrying with it fine particles of sand from the desert plain through which we were passing, blew across our track and filled the railway carriage with dust which not only penetrated into every cranny and fold of my bedding, but made my brain become so surcharged with blood that, to prevent heat apoplexy, I kept it constantly wet with water from the washroom. The consequence was that I caught cold and my voice became hoarse. This [188] experience was continued throughout the next day, and more or less on the

following one, but finally on the 6th I reached Madras at 8 a.m. and never found my home more attractive and comfortable.

CHAPTER XI

IMPRESSIONS OF MRS. BESANT'S TOUR

(1894)

ONE must have been at Adyar and seen the beauties of our property to make allowance for my constant expressions of joy at returning there from distant travels. It is a place that never palls upon one; to residents as well as visitors, fresh beauties are always revealing themselves. From Lucknow to Madras is a stretch of 1,501 miles, and what that means in the hot season need not be told to one who has lived in India. But no sooner had I got settled into my home than I had a disagreeable experience. Mrs. Besant telegraphed me a request to rectify the bad impression made by an editorial notice of our tour, which appeared in the Theosophist for March, 1894 (p. 390). It must be confessed that the tone of it was objectionable, and all the more so because the article was written by either Mr. Edge or Mr. Old, who were in editorial charge during my absence, and who had been too long connected with Mrs. Besant in the relationship of junior students to an elder to warrant the magisterial air which they assumed. They said: "Her advocacy [140] of Hinduism, pure and simple, may be considered by some as not being in line with that which was expected of her as an exponent of Theosophy while lecturing under the auspices of the Indian Section of the Theosophical Society, and it is quite true that, however gratified the Hindus may be with the tributes paid to their traditions, literature and creed, the Muhammadans, Sufis, Parsis and Buddhists cannot feel them-selves to have been as warmly included in Mrs. Besant's professions. It must be candidly confessed that her lectures are not, as reported, in harmony with the broad eclecticism of the T.S., and on that account have been a source of disappointment to many of our most earnest members. To one but recently convinced of the beauties and truth of the Hindu faith we must, perhaps, excuse much of that exclusive fervour which would be out of place on any representative Theosophical platform; but that Mrs. Besant is whole-hearted in all that she undertakes is well-known, and if any doubt existed as to her belief in

the form as well as the spirit of Hinduism, the following statement would put aside all doubt in the matter: Mrs. Besant, as becomes a devout Hindu, bathed daily in the sacred Ganges at Allahabad during the Kumbha Mela. To her English friends, indeed, it would appear as something convincing in itself to see her in Hindu female attire, shoeless, lotah in hand, proceeding to the great water-fair upon the Ganges!” That the story was not true and that our young men took it over from some other publication without previous [141] enquiry, made their offence all the greater. Nor was it true that Mrs. Besant failed to make herself agreeable to the followers of other religions besides Hinduism; while her recent discourses upon the world’s great religions in which she has made a masterly presentment of the basis and spirit of each, have stamped her as, perhaps, the most eclectic religious lecturer of modern times. I contributed to the April (1894) number of our magazine an article on “Annie Besant’s Indian Tour,” in which I vindicated her impartiality and did justice to her splendid expositions of Theosophy as the basis of all religions, Hinduism included, and as to her right to hold and expound whatever might be her private views on her own responsibility, I remarked as follows:

“My duties as manager of the journey and chairman at all ‘Annabai’s’ lectures, together with the constant demands on my attention of the current local business of the Theosophical Society, prevented my writing for my Magazine even the briefest narrative of events. My willing coadjutors, Messrs. Edge and Old, were thus compelled to gather what facts they could from current Indian papers, and it is not to be wondered at that they got in this way some very incorrect and misleading ideas as to what Annabai said and did.

“In justice to them (my editorial assistants) I must say that the papers that we happened to see on our travels were full of most palpable errors, and nobody could have gleaned from them a true idea of what her lectures really contained. As regards the [142] question of her keeping within the constitutional limits of our Society’s policy, I do not see how there can be two opinions. True, she had declared herself virtually a Hindu in religion almost from the beginning of the Indian part of her tour. What of that? If she had chosen to declare herself a Mussalman, a Jew, a Christian, nobody could have ventured to call her to account. What could be more clear than our printed declaration that ‘no person’s religious opinions are asked upon his joining, nor is interference with them permitted’? And should Annie Besant be denied the liberty which is enjoyed as an acknowledged right by the humblest member? In all my fifteen years of

public speaking and writing, and all of H. P. B.'s writing and private conversation, did we even try to conceal the fact of our being Buddhists; and yet have we ever failed to do all we could to help people of all other religions to find their hidden ideals and to live up to them? Neither charge can be laid against us, and I, who have listened to A. B.'s discourses from first to last, with the sole exceptions of those at Nagpur, when I was temporarily absent from her on special business, declare that she said nothing about, or in defence of, her religious views that was not perfectly proper and perfectly constitutional. Her theme was ever Theosophy, and she ever declared herself a thorough-going Theosophist. While she showed that Theosophy was more fully and clearly taught, as she believed and as H. P. B. proved, in the Aryan Scriptures than elsewhere, she also said that it was equally the [148] indwelling soul of every religion the world had ever known. Those who heard her splendid lectures on 'Theosophy and Religion,' 'Pantheism,' 'Theosophy and Modern Science,' 'The Evidences of Theosophy,' 'The Evolution of Man,' and 'Man, His Nature, and Powers,' will bear me out in saying that she did ample justice to all the chief religions. She took no brief from us to conceal her private views on religion, and if anything of the kind had been compulsorily accepted by her, I should not have accompanied her on the journey; I do not enjoy the company of muzzled slaves. Dr. Salzer and other colleagues in the Society have publicly protested against the T.S. having been made responsible for Mrs. Besant's Hinduism: but the fact is that, in introducing her to her audiences, it was almost my invariable custom to warn the public that, under our constitution, the Society represents no one religion, and is not in the least degree responsible for the utterances of any of its officers or members upon questions of religion, politics, social reform, or any others about which people take sides. Unfortunately, the reporters had come there only to report what A. B. might say, and with few exceptions made no mention at all of my prefatory word of caution. But the audiences heard me, and that suffices. After sending the above to the printers, I received a copy of the Indian Mirror for March, in which A. B.'s last lecture in Calcutta was reported. The subject was 'Theosophy and Modern Progress,' and by good luck my introductory remarks were published. I quote [149] what follows: 'I wish again to impress upon your minds the fact that the Theosophical Society is a neutral body as regards religious opinion, that it has no creed to enforce, and that it is not responsible for the opinions of its members. What each person—he or she—is, it does not concern itself about, nor is the Society bound to accept their opinions, etc., etc.'"

My flying visit to Adyar being made for the purpose of searching through our records for documentary evidence in the case of Judge, I had a busy time of it during the five days of my stay. The result arrived at was the getting together of a large number of Judge's private letters to H. P. B. and myself in which he complains of his absolute inability to get into touch with the Masters and begs us to intervene on his behalf. Of course, this proved, beyond the shadow of a doubt, the falsity of the pretensions he had been making to his American colleagues and others, that he had been allied with those Personages for many years and was doing what he did under their instructions and with their approval. I need not go into the saddening details now, since the evidence was all summarised in my Annual Address of that year, and the original documents are still in my safe custody for anyone to read who may be entitled to do so.⁶

My work finished, I left home on the 11th (March) and at midnight on the 12th met Mrs. Besant and [145] Messrs. Sturdy and Bhavanishankar at Dhond Junction, whence we went on to Poona together; many friends met us at the station and our veteran colleague, Judge Khandalvala, took us to his house, which is a sort of ideal home. On the evening of the 13th Mrs. Besant lectured under a shamiana—a canvas canopy raised on poles—on “Theosophy and Religion”; besides which, of course, her hours throughout the day were well filled up with reception of visitors and the answering of numberless questions. On the 14th in the cool of the morning, she addressed a large gathering of students and adults in the Theatre, on “Education”. To my right, on the platform, sat the famous Ramabai, once so admired as an eloquent and learned lecturer on Vedânta, but not a Christian Missionary, whose speciality is the conversion of Indian widows under the pretext, as her chief Indian backers told me, of giving them a good non-Christian education. All India knows how indignantly her scheme was denounced by the late Mr. Justice M. G. Ranade, of the Bombay High Court, and other Hindu gentlemen whose names had been used on her prospectus, and left there until the conversion of a Hindu child-widow gave them such a shock as to make them repudiate all further connection with her Poona Widows' Home. I must say that I was painfully struck by the change in her appearance from what she was when H. P. B. and I met her fifteen years before at Bareilly. She was then a slim, graceful girl with an unworldly face, her dark eyes beaming with intelligence and her [146] appearance almost fairy-like, when she stood before the audience pouring forth a stream of eloquent exposition and vindication of the Vedânta; able even to lecture fluently in Sanskrit as well as in Hindi and

Gujarati: now she sat beside me a stout woman with a hard, uncompromising sort of expression on her face, the air—as I think I have elsewhere expressed it—of a hardworking American lodging-house keeper.

In the course of that day we visited that renowned Indian religio-political society, the Sarvajnik Sabhâ, whose officers received Mrs. Besant with every token of profound respect. At their request she allowed herself to be specially photographed for them and in excellent taste replied to the address which they presented to her. She and I were also photographed for the local Branch, and early in the evening, before nightfall, she lectured, in the open air, in the Hirabagh compound, on the subject of “Karma and Reincarnation”. In no part of India is a public speaker confronted by more highly-educated and intellectual audiences than in Poona. At 10.30 that night we left for Bombay, arriving there at 6 a.m. on the 15th.

The memorable tour of 1894-3 was now drawing to a close, but I was glad to see that our dear friend was showing but little sign of physical exhaustion; as for her mentality, that, of course, became brighter and brighter as her wonder-working brain was exercised. We were only in Bombay for the day as we were booked to be in Surat the next morning, but we were not left idle. At 9 a.m. we received addresses from the Bombay Branch and both replied. She lectured at 5.30 p.m. in the Novelty Theatre, to a crowded house, on “The Insufficiency of Materialism”. A host of reporters were present, none of whom gave a fair idea of her discourse. In fact, that was our experience throughout India, with but very few exceptions: they seemed unable to grasp her ideas and stumbled at the simplest Sanskrit words. At 10 p.m., after dinner, we left for Surat.

Arriving there at 9 the next morning, we drove straight to the Girls’ School established by our Branch, where Mrs. Besant gave out the prizes and made an address: I also spoke and headed a subscription for the benefit of the school. We were put up in a handsome guest-house of the Borah community. A conversation-meeting was held at 2 p.m., and at 5.30 Mrs. Besant lectured in the Town Hall to a very large audience, on that most interesting and important subject, “The Evolution of Man”. We dined in Hindu fashion at the Hindu Club, and during the afternoon were, of course, photographed. The picture that was taken of me represents me as seated in a chair, looking down at a group of dear little Parsi children at my feet. It makes me laugh every time I look at it, for it reminds one of a great white-haired ogre, engaged in picking out the child he means to have cooked for his lunch!

At 4 a.m. on the 17th we left Surat for Baroda, and reached there at 7. My dear old friend, Diwan [148] Manibhai Jasbhai, and other functionaries met us at the station. We were the guests of H. H. the Gaekwar and were lodged in one of his handsome houses. From 2 to 4 p.m. there was a conversation-meeting, then followed a visit to the Palace for a talk with the Maharajah Gaekwar which, as usual, he made extremely interesting by the pertinence and intelligence of his interrogatories. At 5 Mrs. Besant lectured on "Theosophy and its Teachings"; at 10 we left for Bombay, many friends seeing us off and Diwan Manibhai presenting Mrs. Besant with a pair of shawls.

We arrived at what the inhabitants are fond of calling *Urbs primus in Indis*, at 7 o'clock on Sunday morning. Our reception rooms were thronged with visitors, among them several old friends—like Prince Harisinghji⁷ and daughters, Pandit Shamji Krishnavarma, Mr. K. R. Cama, the respected leader of the educated Parsi community, his daughter and Miss Maneckji, his sister-in-law, one of the founders of the flourishing Victoria Girls' School. Mrs. Besant's lecture was given in the Novelty Theatre to an immense audience: her subject being "Theosophy and the Religions of India". Its reception by the mixed multitude of all sects was ample proof of the baselessness of the insinuation against her sectarian impartiality to which allusion has been made above.

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As the hours of her stay in India became numbered she was increasingly pestered with requests for interviews, often to answer questions of minor importance. Her good nature was such that she did her very best to gratify all, but there is a limit to all human endurance, and so some had to be refused. We went to her steamer with her luggage and arranged with the Chief Steward about facilities for her servant's cooking her Hindu food for her. In the afternoon she lectured grandly in the Novelty Theatre on "Modern Progress". At 9 p.m., after dining with our esteemed friends and colleagues, Mr. and Mrs. Gostling, she lectured on "Theosophy" in their drawing-room to an invited audience of 150 Europeans, among whom were some old acquaintances of H. P. B.'s and mine of 1879; among them some who had not withstood the ravages of time as well as myself. On the 20th (March) the local Branch held a farewell meeting and Mrs. Besant and I addressed the members. We then drove to the palatial family residence of the late Morarji Goculdas, where Mrs. Besant was garlanded and a costly sari of silk was placed around her shoulders; we then drove to the Docks and she embarked on the "Peninsular," attended by a throng of warm friends

who expressed their sorrow at her departure. I met on board our old Simla friend, Mr. A. O. Hume, and his daughter, Mrs. Ross Scott, all three T. S. members and friends of H. P. B. At 5 p.m. the ship sailed and bore away [150] dear Annie Besant and with her the heart of all India. So ended her first and most memorable and epoch-making visit to the land of the Aryas. I may, in closing the episode, reproduce in this connection portions of the account of her Indian tour which appeared in the Theosophist for April, 1894, and has above been quoted from.

“As regards the southern half of the tour, something was said in my Annual Address to the Convention, and I need not enlarge. In fact, as regards the entire tour it may be said that there was a monotony of exciting arrivals at and departures from stations; of generous, even lavish, hospitalities; of smotherings under flowers and sprinklings with rose-water; of loving addresses presented in tasteful caskets by Reception Committees; of chanted Sanskrit slokas, full of Eastern compliment and hyperbole, from both orthodox and heterodox pandits; of organisations by me of Hindu religious and ethical societies among schoolboys and undergraduates; of visits to sacred shrines and holy ascetics; of morning conversazioni when, for two hours, or even three sometimes, at a stretch, Annie Besant would answer, off-hand, the most difficult and abstruse questions in science, philosophy, symbolism, and metaphysics; of grand orations daily to overpacked and sweltering audiences which found no halls big enough to hold them, and so overflowed into the surrounding compounds or streets, sometimes by hundreds and thousands, and had to be driven away by the police; of processions in palankeens, by night [151] with torches, by day and night sometimes with bands of Hindu musicians, choirs of female singers and groups of bayaderes, making national music and dance, as though ours were a religious progress; of presents of Kashmir shawls by hosts and magnates who could afford to comply with the ancient custom of thus honoring scholars, that has come down from remotest antiquity; of rides on elephants through crowds of pilgrims; of floatings in quaint boats down sacred rivers, past holy cities like Benares, Prayâg and Muttra, to see the bathing multitudes and the waterside temples, houses, mosques, and tombs of dead potentates, sages, and ascetics; of formal meetings with pandits for discussions; of receptions at private houses, where we were made acquainted with the most educated and most influential personages of the great cities; this for five months on end; a rushing up and down and across the Great Indian Peninsula, a conscientious filling of engagements and strict keeping to the advertised programme; a series of meetings and partings with beloved old colleagues and new acquaintanceships formed with the later comers.

Over all, through all, and lingering with me like the strain of a sweet symphony dying in the distance, the recollection of the most splendid series of discourses I ever listened to in my life, and of intimate companionship during these sunny months with one of the purest, most high-minded, most intellectual and spiritually elevated women of our generation, or of any previous age, of whom I have read in history.

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“Unlike as H. P. B. and I were in many respects, we were akin more ways than Annabai and myself can ever be. My praise of her is not tinged with blind partiality. She is religious fervor and devotion personified, the ideal female devotee who in time evolves into the saint and martyr. With the modern Hindu practising his corrupted form of faith, she compares as Madame Guyon with her ‘Spiritual Torrents,’ does with the ignorant Christian peasant of Russia or Bulgaria. Her Hinduism is the lofty spiritual concept of the Bhagavad-Gîtâ; a splendid, perhaps unattainable, ideal. This may seem incredible to her old Secularist friends, yet one needs but read her Auto-biography to see how true it must be. She passed out of Christianity with bleeding heart and agony of regret; she stayed Secularist because that was the normal reaction to be expected in a mind so great as hers. Yet all those years she was but in a state, one might say, of spiritual suspended animation, existing as a flower may under the stone which presses it into the ground. Like the flower burgeoning out when the pressure is removed and sunlight can be drunk in, so she burst out of the iron cage of Materialistic Atheism the moment her Karma brought her within the sphere of the Eastern Wisdom and of its transcriber, H. P. B. As the lark sings in soaring, so Annabai’s heart is filled with the overwhelming joy of finding in the Secret Doctrine of Aryan philosophy all her intellect had ever craved, and in the Aryan religion even a greater field for devotion than she ever yearned for in the days of her youth.

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H. P. B. and I had none of this love of worship in our constitutions, though, I believe that, as regards the actual sentiment of religion, we were not more deficient than others. Of two paths which Shrî Krishna says must be followed in the seeking after Mukti, that of knowledge and that of devotion, H. P. B. and I, in this incarnation at least, have trodden the former; Annabai has trodden the one, but is now by preference treading the other; and, but for her controlling impulse of self-effacement and her sense of the duty she owes to the sin-burdened and

ignorant masses, she would, I think, retire to some quiet spot where she might commune with the Self and more speedily gain liberation. A more consistently religious woman I never met, nor one whose life is a more joyful self-sacrifice. My blessings attend her wherever she goes!

“If there was monotony in other things throughout the tour, there certainly was not as regards our lodging-places. At one station we would be quartered by the local committee in a palace, borrowed for the occasion from the local agent of some absentee rajah, at the next in a bug-haunted, uncleanly, mud-floored and mud-walled travellers’ bungalow, perhaps one where the wood of the doors had been eaten out by white ants or become so warped as to defy the tight shutting of them. The charpoys (bed-cots) were sometimes so soiled and full of animal life that we all preferred sleeping on the floor on mats; no hardship for either A. B. or myself, or, for that matter, for our dear companion, the [154] self-forgetting, loyal and humble-minded hard-worker for Theosophy, Countess Wachtmeister, although she usually resorted to her deck-chair, which she carried with her against such emergencies. Several times we put up at railway stations where the journey had to be broken to take another railway line; but in India that is no great hardship. To people of our simple tastes, it was pleasanter than to have to sleep in palaces full of costliest furniture, for one could not help grieving over the human misery with which the latter contrasted, and over the post-mortem fate of the owner, who was slaking his soul-thirst with the salt water of such empty splendor. Yet, let me say that, whatever the temporary habitation in which our friends lodged our party, it was given up to us in love, and the sense of that made us as happy in the most gorgeous koti as in the most humble bungalow. Our every wish was anticipated, our every imaginary want provided for; and if the memory of Annie, her lectures, talks, and sisterliness, is sweet to the members of the local Branches who entertained us, so, likewise, does she carry away a heart full of fraternal affection for the Hindu, Parsî, and Mussalman brothers she has left behind—but not forever.

“She and the Countess Wachtmeister landed at Colombo on the 10th November, 1893, from the P. and O. Steamer, Kaiser-i-Hind, and were welcomed at our local Headquarters with a triumphal arch, a hall charmingly decorated with flowers, addresses and a gathering of Sinhalese Buddhists, including our [155] own local members and their families. The next move was to the Sanghamitta School, where Mrs. Higgins gave us warmest welcome and unstinted hospitality during our stay. Public lectures were given at Kandy, Colombo, Galle and

Panadura.⁸ We crossed to India on November 15th, [landing on Indian soil at Tuticorin on the 16th] visited thirteen stations before reaching Madras, and stopped at Adyar until January 7th, 1894, when we sailed for Calcutta. Up to this time Annabai had given forty-eight lectures and addresses, including those with which she favored the Convention.

“At Calcutta she scored the greatest triumph, we were told, that any public speaker had had in the Metropolis. The Town Hall was packed to suffocation with a sitting and standing audience of 5,000, yet so complete was her command over their feelings that when she sank her voice to a half-tone of pathetic recitative, they listened in absolute silence to catch every word, until at the fitting moment their suppressed feeling found vent in torrents of applause. The description applies to each of her Calcutta addresses, and the comments of the local press and that of the whole Presidency prove the depth and permanency of the impression she made on the people—the high and the low, the educated and the uneducated. Her progress through Bengal and Behar was almost a [156] royal one in its exhibitions of popular fervor. She could not drive through the streets or enter a lecturing hall without having to pass through crowds who had gathered just to gaze at the champion of their hoary faith, the declared student of the old Aryan wisdom, and to salute her reverentially with joined palms held in front of their foreheads, as they have been taught to salute the Brahman and the true ascetic, from the earliest times to the present day. At Berhampur there was a great gathering of Nuddea and other pandits to greet her, and in their joint address to her in Sanskrit, they ingeniously paraphrased her married name into the honorific title of ‘Annavasanti,’ which means ‘the Giver of Nourishment to the whole world’. In this connection it may mean ‘the Dispenser of spiritual food’; and nothing could be more appropriate. Annapûrna is a name of Durgâ, the wife of Siva, and she is most fervently worshipped at Benares.

“Mrs. Besant accepted visits for discussions with or special addresses to the heterodox Brahmo Samâjists of Calcutta, and the heterodox Arya Samâjists and orthodox Sanâtana Dharma Sabhâ of Lahore, and by the eclecticism of her sentiments abated much of their baseless prejudice against our Society, and sowed in their hearts the seeds of kindlier interest.

“Various attempts were made to ‘draw’ her on the burning social questions of the day in India, but she wisely, and with my entire concurrence, refused to give out the crude opinions she would alone be able to express before becoming familiar with men and [157] parties, and the nature of their disputes. At the Arya

Samaj meeting at Lahore, however, she distributed the prizes to the girls of the Samaj school, and very strongly expressed her sympathy with every attempt to restore the standard of female education which prevailed in ancient Aryavarta. This same sentiment she gave utterance to in a number of her public discourses, in fact always in her lectures on 'India, Past and Present'. Her idea was, however, that in all matters of reform the lead should be taken by the Brahmins, and naturally would be if the caste could by any means be purified and brought back to its former status as the pure spiritual and moral exemplars as well as teachers of the nation. Her hope for the revival of the Aryan standards of moral and religious ideal lay in the beginning of the work of self-redemption in individual Brahmin families, here and there, and the consequent creation of new family foci into which might be drawn some of the souls of ancient sages and moral heroes who might now be seeking proper bodies in which to reincarnate themselves. This process, she admitted, must take long, very long, yet the result could never be hoped for unless a beginning was made, and the present was as auspicious an hour for that as any other in the future could be.

“One striking feature of A.B.’s tour was the daily conversazione above referred to, and memorable for the number of ‘assistants,’ the wide scope and profundity of their questions, and the manner of holding the meetings. Annabai almost always sat on a mat [158] or rug on the floor in Hindu fashion, and the visitors did likewise. It was, in fact, the only practicable way, for since often an hundred or two hundred persons were present, and no such number of seats were available, the choice was between all standing huddled together during the time of the meetings, or just sitting down in the national fashion, as the custom is in all gatherings of Indians unspoilt by Western influence.” Thus ends one chapter of the world’s history.

CHAPTER XII

THE JUDGE AFFAIR

(1894)

THE Judge affair was now approaching a crisis and something had to be done to relieve the strain and clear up the situation. On the 6th of February of the year under review, while we were at Allahabad, Mrs. Besant, as the result of the understanding at which we and our leading colleagues had arrived, handed me a formal demand that the accusations against Judge “with reference to certain letters and in the alleged writings of the Mahatmas,” should be dealt with by a committee as provided by Art. VI, Secs. 2, 3, and 4, of the then existing Rules: these provided for a trial of the President and Vice-President in the case of serious charges against their character having been made. A copy of Mrs. Besant’s demand for an investigation was at once sent to Mr. Judge without the expression of any opinion as to the validity or otherwise of the accusations. No specific charges having then been filed, this was merely a preliminary measure. From a motive of delicacy no question was asked him as to his guilt or innocence but in the exercise of my [180] discretion I gave Mr. Judge the option of resigning his office or submitting the case to investigation. The implication being, of course, that if guilty he would wish to quietly retire, or if innocent, to be brought before the committee, and thus set at rest, once and for all, the injurious rumors afloat. I naturally expected to get from the accused a letter of explanation, but instead of that he cabled a denial of his guilt and thus forced me to convene the committee and formally try the charges. Actuated by the feeling of an old friendship I wished to spare him the shame of publicity, but, by a strange error of judgment, and miscalculating the extent to which his strong personal influence on some of my most prominent colleagues would carry them in his interests, he, like the gambler, risked all upon the throw of the dice, and so brought his karmic punishment upon his own head.⁹ My first step was to issue an Executive Notice on the 27th of April, ordering a Judicial Committee to meet at [181] London on the 27th of June; my next, to serve official notices, with copies

of detailed charges and specifications, then drafted by Mrs. Besant as Accuser, and to make my arrangements to leave India in time for the meeting of the Committee. The foregoing facts with some necessary comments were embodied in the Executive Notice referred to and I added the following cautionary paragraph:

“To correct misapprehensions the undersigned has to state that in the opinion of eminent counsel (members of the Society) the trial of the charges against Mr. Judge does not involve the question of the existence or non-existence of the Mahatmas or their connection with the Society.”

After Mrs. Besant’s departure I remained a couple of days at Bombay, engaging my passage to London via Marseilles and then left for home. Reaching Madras on the 24th (March) my hands were full of official business until I had to leave. On my day of arrival a committee of two Japanese gentlemen, who were charged with the collection of data about the cotton-spinning industry, called and spent some hours with me. I think I have mentioned elsewhere how admirably organised these Japanese travelling committees are, the members invariably representing the theoretical and practical sides of the subject under inquiry. After an intercourse with the Japanese extending over the space of thirteen years, my admiration for their national policy of administration and the brilliancy of their individual capabilities in the fields [162] of industrial development have increased with the lapse of time. I am always more than glad to give such help as I can to further their wishes to get information in India.

On the 26th Dharmapala visited me on his way from America to Calcutta, via Japan, China, Siam, and Ceylon. With him were a young Japanese student named Shakyu and two priests. They stopped overnight with me and left the next day on the SS. “Manora”. On the 30th I wrote for the Theosophist an obituary notice of one of the most charming men I have ever met, the Rt. Rev. Paul Bigandet, Bishop of Ava and Vicar Apostolic, who died at about that time at the age of eighty-two, carrying with him the love and reverence of Christian and Buddhist alike. My personal acquaintance with him began during a visit to Rangoon in 1885: my second visit to him was in 1890. The impression which he made upon me is described in an obituary notice; although I have mentioned the thing elsewhere, yet I think it best, in this connection, to quote what I then wrote:

“His first greeting to me was enough to win a younger man’s heart: blending as it did the polished courtesy of the high-born gentleman with the self-respect of a conscientious priest. Our talk opened with some appreciative remarks of his

about my Buddhist Catechism, which he said he knew by heart and which gave a very full idea of Southern Buddhism. He was anxious that I should enlarge it in the department of Buddhist [189] doctrine. In return I urged him to write another work on Buddhism, as his Legend of Gaudama was out of print, and I felt sure the whole reading public would eagerly welcome another Buddhistic treatise written in the same loving spirit of tolerance. The good Bishop shook his head, pressed my hand kindly, and said: 'No, it cannot be done. My work is finished, and I must only think of the future life.' In vain I reiterated my importunity, even offering to myself pay the salary of a short-hand writer, who should write from dictation and live with him until it was finished. His answer was the same: 'Too late; some younger man—why not yourself—must do it: I am tired.' I kissed his hand on leaving; but he laid it on my head in blessing, and folding me in his paternal embrace, bade me farewell. Shall not we, who are not of his church, rather believe that he has passed into the Great Light which encompasseth all the petty barriers called human creeds, and shines through them all, but is limited by none?"

The disabilities and miseries of the poor Pariahs had long been tugging at my heart-strings and on the 10th of May of the year in question, I inspected a piece of ground in the village of Urur, quite near our Headquarters, where I had definitely determined to open a school for them at my own expense. A Committee of Pariahs called on me the following day and we agreed upon conditions that should govern the system of instruction that I thought it best to give them. I told the Committee that I would not consent [184] to attempting to carry the pupils beyond the elementary stage of education, my desire being to give them such better chance of getting on in life as even a partially educated man has over the illiterate: it was made clear in the discussion that even the acquired ability to read, write, and cipher would be a more distinct gain than the setting aside of a small fund in the Savings Bank, for with their literary acquisitions and the mental training they must go through, they could soon earn enough more than they could without the education, to create the Savings Bank funds themselves. The Committee were won over to my view, a suitable man of their community was nominated to me for Manager, and I promised to start the school as soon as possible.

The editing and publishing of a book of Mrs. Besant's first Convention Lectures in India, and an unusually heavy correspondence, occupied my time pretty fully throughout April and May; besides which I presided at the third

anniversary of White Lotus Day and wrote several chapters of] in advance, to leave with Mr. Edge, who was put in charge of Headquarters during my absence. By the 14th of May everything had been got in order and I left for Tuticorin and Colombo to begin my voyage to Europe. But, before reaching the latter port I had to pass through the most disagreeable experience of my life in the way of sea travel. The ship rolled full 40° and dashed everything about that was not fastened. I was flung from side to side in my cabin with my luggage and finally was obliged to take refuge on the deck. The [165] Indian coolies going over to work on Ceylon plantations, some hundreds of them, were all lumped together like a tin of worms for bait. However, we reached Colombo the next morning at 8 o'clock and Dr. English, then connected with Mrs. Higgins' Musæus School for Buddhist Girls, came off to see me and in the afternoon I landed and went to the old Sanghamitta School building in the Maradana Ward, where I was accommodated with bed and board.

At that time there was an acute quarrel between Mrs. Higgins and the Women's Educational Society, some of whose members were making her life a burden by interfering with her system of management. This was quite contrary to the understanding and agreement come to when I inducted her into the post of Lady Superintendent of Sanghamitta School, on her arrival from America. The fact is that the Sinhalese women, had never before been united in public work and the friction between them and Mrs. H. had, as I have previously stated, led to her organising a school of her own, while the backers of the Sinhalese women were disposed to run an opposition Buddhist girls' school and have open war between the two. My task on this occasion was to try to devise a basis of settlement of the quarrel and my time during the next few days was pretty well occupied with these details. The business was finally arranged on the 23rd, Mrs. Higgins to keep her boarders and continue her new school and the Sanghamitta School to be kept up for day scholars. This happy conclusion being arrived at, I bade [166] good-bye to all friends and that night slept aboard the "Peshawar".

We sailed at 8 a.m. on the 24th of May and the voyage was uneventful throughout; there being a monotony of fine weather with interludes of torture by heat in the Red Sea and the usual interesting breaks of the journey by calls at Aden, Suez, and Port Said. On the 11th of June we reached Marseilles where I was greeted by my good friends Dr. and Mme. Pascal, who took me to see the venerable scholar and mystic, Baron Spedalieri. We passed a couple of hours with him in agreeable and improving conversation and at 6.45 p.m. I left for

Paris by the “Rapide” train. I had a wretched night, what with crowding of the compartment, dust, etc., but my troubles were over at 9 a.m. the next morning when I got to Paris. Commandant D. A. Courmes welcomed me at the station and escorted me to the Hotel d’Angleterre where I found Mrs. Besant and Miss Müller installed, and met M. and Mme. Arnould and other French members of the Society. With Miss Müller I called that afternoon on Lady Caithness, Duchesse de Pomar, F.T.S., at whose palace one could see Theosophy set in a gilt frame. One could hardly fail to contrast its environment here of marble steps and thick Eastern carpets, and gilt furniture and priceless girandoles and regal luxury in general, with the impression it had made on me in so many homes of the poor in different countries: the frame was different but the Theosophy the same. The next morning I called on the great [187] sinologist, De Rosny, of the Sorbonne, who showed a real enthusiasm for me as though we had been colleagues for years. He implored me to stop over at least one day to meet the company of savants whom he would collect together at the rooms of the Société d’Ethnographie; but I had, regretfully, to refuse as I could not spare the time. At 3 p.m. I presided at Mrs. Besant’s lecture (in French) at Lady Caithness’ palace, where the gilded chairs were all filled by a brilliant company of society people, who were, or pretended to be, interested in knowing what this Theosophy was all about. At 9 that evening Mrs. Besant, Miss Müller, and I left for London.

The night transit between Paris and London is almost always disagreeable, especially if the weather in the Channel is bad. After a wearisome, sleepless night, we reached London at 6 a.m. on the 14th and went with Miss Müller to her house in Portland Place. Mrs. Elin White, of Seattle, now Mrs. Salzer, of Calcutta, who was stopping with Miss Müller, proved to be a charming acquaintance and we entered into a friendship which has survived to the present time. That evening I accompanied the ladies to a meeting of the Blavatsky Lodge at which I presided and was kindly welcomed—an agreeable surprise, for there had been so strong a pro-Judge feeling among the leaders of that Lodge that I could not help being sensible of the lack of cordiality which had been shown me for some time past. I mention this because of the sudden and radical change which followed on the development [188] of Mr. Judge’s tactics before the abortive Judicial Committee.

Of late years London has outvied Paris in the production of spectacular pieces at “Olympia” and “Earl’s Court”; the high-water mark of “La Belle aux Bois” and “Le Roi Carrotte” of the Parisian record having been reached and passed

under the direction of the two Kiralfys. In company with Mrs. White and, subsequently, with Mrs Cooper-Oakley and other ladies, I had the delight of seeing the spectacular production of "Constantinople," and can never forget the transcendently fine effect of combinations of color and movement on the vast stage where a thousand artists appeared at one and the same time. In comparison with it, I am quite sure that the most gorgeous Eastern pageant would appear tame.

One delight of this visit to London was the chance afforded for visiting my ever dear friend, C. C. Massey, with whom I spent some delightful hours on the 17th. On the 20th I left for Berlin via Harwich and the Hook of Holland. At the station, on arrival, I found my old friend, Dr. Hübbe-Schleiden, who met me with a most affectionate welcome and took me to his house in Steglitz, a suburb of the German Capital. There, with Dr. Göring, a great enthusiast for education and an ardent friend of Dr. Hübbe-Schleiden's, I sat up until 1 a.m. talking about things of mutual interest. The object of my visit to Germany was to reconstruct the old Society which was founded in 1884, at Elberfeld by Dr. Hübbe-Schleiden, the late Mme. Gebhard and [169] others, under the name of the Deutsche Theosophische Vereinigung. For hundreds of years there has been in Germany, a vast body of intellectual power of the higher order, enough to supply the world with working mental force, and it is only a question of how to get at it so as to turn it into the channel of Theosophical work, first within the limits of that country and then extending it to others. My friends at Berlin made me see that our Theosophical movement would have had a far better chance of speedy expansion but for the reaction in public opinion from the extreme enthusiasm for mysticism which characterised the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: things had then been carried to such farcical extremes that reaction was inevitable, so we must wait with patience until the turning-point is again passed and the pendulum swings towards spiritual ideals once more. At present Germany is a great industrial workshop, and German brain-power is being strained to enable the nation to gain first place in the savage competition that exists between the manufacturers of different nationalities. Much of the scientific research of the day is enlisted in the interest of commerce, as one can see in the announcement of important industrial discoveries from time to time. This is not to say that the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake and the unflagging devotion of gifted men to its acquirement is any less than before, but the trend of thought is more along the line of physics than on the higher level where Theosophy is to be studied. During the days, and for that matter, the nights, of my Berlin [170] visit, discussion

on the situation and its outlook went on constantly between us all, resulting finally in a meeting in Berlin on the evening of the 29th of June, at which forty persons were present, and in the forming of the new Deutsche Theosophische Gesellschaft, with Dr. Hugo Göring as President and Herr Benedict Hubo as Secretary. This business disposed of, I left on July 4th for London, via Hook of Holland, and reached my destination the same evening, becoming Miss Müller's guest at 17 Avenue Road, the house adjoining our European headquarters which she had taken over from Miss Cooper and kept for a time in order to accommodate the overflow from the other house.

CHAPTER XIII

THE JUDGE AFFAIR (Continued)

(1894)

AMONG the intellectual and scholarly men who have, since the beginning, belonged to the Society, a noted personage was the late Mr. C. Carter Blake, a zoologist and, I believe, a pupil and colleague of the late Professor Owen. In the course of his investigations of spiritualistic phenomena he became intimately acquainted with my dear friend, Miss Emily Kislingbury, at that time Secretary of the British National Association of Spiritualists and, by her intellectual and moral endowments, fully qualified for the post. What she sought in Spiritualism was not mere phenomena but such proofs of the existence of the soul as would form an impregnable basis for religious belief. The superficial studies of her colleagues and their quenchless thirst for mere mediumistic wonders did not give her what she sought, so, as I have reported in one of my earlier chapters, she came to New York to see the mysterious author of *Isis Unveiled* and was our guest [\[172\]](#) at the New York “Lamasery” for several weeks. On her return to London her broadened convictions of spiritual philosophy brought her more closely under the influence of Dr. Blake, and he, being a member of the Society of Jesus and acting under the orders of Father Galwey, brought him upon the scene, and the two together persuaded Miss Kislingbury that the truest ideal of Theosophy existed in Roman Catholic dogma! Finally convinced of the truth of this assertion, she, being a woman of supreme moral courage and transparent honesty, resigned her secretaryship and was received into the bosom of the Church. But meanwhile the first Branch of our Society, the “British Theosophical Society,” had, as above reported, been formed, and perhaps my readers will remember that Dr. Carter Blake showed the cloven foot at the original meeting for organisation (June 27, 1878), trying to persuade our friends to postpone the organisation because, as he alleged, we belonged, to the school of black magic. For this I expelled him and he remained for years an outsider, but was finally re-admitted at the request of H. P. B., as a repentant friend. This

by way of preface to the fact that on the 4th of July, of the year we are now reviewing, I called on him and found him in a deplorable state, physically speaking. At that time I did not know the grave fact that Judge had written him a letter in the K. H. script, but by a marvellous temporary forgetfulness of the part he was playing, had signed it with his own name instead of with the initials “K. H.” If I had had that document [178] in my possession, the fate of Mr. Judge would have been instantly settled as regards his connection with the Society. On the evening of the same day Mrs. Besant gave a splendid lecture at the Blavatsky Lodge, on “Symbolism, Idols, and Ideals,” the quality of which may easily be inferred.

On the following day the General Council met to begin the discussion of the merits of the case against Mr. Judge. There being at the time only three Sections in existence, the Council consisted of myself, Messrs. Keightley and Mead, representing the Indian and European Sections, and Mr. Judge, who, of course, did not vote: Mr. Keightley was appointed Secretary. An adjourned meeting was held on the 7th, when the President read a letter from Mr. Judge, stating that he had never been elected Vice-President of the T.S., was therefore not Vice-President, and consequently not amenable to trial by the “Judicial Committee” which, under the then existing Rules, was provided for in case the President or Vice-President of the Society should be found guilty of official misfeasance or malfeasance. Other points were raised by him which are so important as bearing upon the constitution and neutrality of the Society that I cannot permit myself to gloss them over with a mere summary notice; they will stand out for all time in our Society history as landmarks not to be for a moment lost sight of, so I will just reproduce here the official Report of the Council meeting, and that of its equal, the meeting of the Judicial Committee, into which it is embodied.

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The documents were issued by me in an Executive Notice, dated at London, 21st July, 1894 (Theosophist, September, 1894), as follows:

MINUTES OF A JUDICIAL COMMITTEE OF

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

HELD AT 19 AVENUE ROAD, LONDON, ON JULY 10TH, 1894

To enquire into certain charges against the

Vice-President

“Present: Colonel Olcott, President-Founder, in the chair; the General Secretaries of the Indian and European Sections (Mr. B. Keightley and Mr. G. R. S. Mead); delegates of the Indian Section (Mr. A. P. Sinnett and Mr. Sturdy); delegates of the European Section (Mr. H. Burrows and Mr. Kingsland); delegates of the American Section (Dr. Buck and Dr. Archibald Keightley); special delegates of Mr. Judge (Mr. Oliver Firth and Mr. E. T. Hargrove).

“Mrs. Besant and Mr. Judge were also present.

“A letter was read by the Chairman from the General Secretary of the American Section, stating that the Executive Committee of that Section claims that one of the delegates of that Section should have an additional vote on the Committee, in view of the fact that the General Secretary himself would not vote, or that an extra delegate be appointed.

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“Resolved: that a substitute be admitted to sit on the Committee in the place of the General Secretary.

“Mr. James M. Pryse was nominated by the other American delegates and took his seat.

“The Chairman then declared the Committee to be duly constituted and read the following address.

“ADDRESSES OF THE PRESIDENT-FOUNDER

“GENTLEMEN AND BROTHERS,

“We have met together to-day as a Judicial Committee, under the provisions of Section 3 of Article VI of the Revised Rules, to consider and dispose of certain charges of misconduct, preferred by Mrs. Besant against the Vice-President of the Society, and dated March 24th, 1894.

“Section 2 of Article VI says that ‘the President may be deprived of office at any time, for cause shown by a three-fourths vote of Judicial Committee herein, after provided for [in Section 3], before which he shall be given full opportunity to disprove any charges brought against him’; Section 3 provides that the Judicial Committee shall be composed of (a) members of the General Council ex-officio, (b) two additional members nominated by each Section of the Society, and (c) two members chosen by the accused. Under the present organization of the Society, this Committee, will, therefore, comprise the President-Founder, the General Secretaries of the Indian and European [176]

Sections, two additional delegates each from the Indian, European and American Sections, and two nominees of Mr. Judge; eleven in all—the accused, of course, being debarred from sitting as a judge either as General Secretary of the American Section or as Vice-President.

“Section 4 of Article VI. declares that the same procedure shall apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the cases of the Vice-President and President; thus making the former, as well as the latter, amenable to the jurisdiction of the Judicial Committee for offences charged against him. Under this clause, the Vice-President is now arraigned.

“In compliance with the Revised Rules, copies of the charges brought by the accuser have been duly supplied to the accused, and the members of the General Council, and the Sections and the accused have nominated their delegates respectively. I also suspended the Vice-President from office pending the disposal of the charges by this Committee.

“Upon receipt of a preliminary letter from myself, of date February 7th, 1894, from Agra, India, Mr. Judge, erroneously taking it to be the first step in the official enquiry into the charges, from my omission to mark the letter ‘Private,’ naturally misconceived it to be a breach of the Constitution, and vehemently protested in a public circular addressed to ‘the members of the Theosophical Society,’ and of which 5,000 copies were distributed to them, to all parts of the world. The name of the accuser not being mentioned, the [177] wrong impression prevailed that I was the author of the charges, and at the same time intended to sit as Chairman of the tribunal that was to investigate them. I regret this circumstance as having caused bad feeling throughout the Society against its Chief Executive, who has been the personal friend of the accused for many years, has ever appreciated as they deserved, his eminent services and unflagging devotion to the Society and the whole movement, and whose constant motive has been to be brotherly and act justly to all his colleagues, of every race, religion and sex.

“Three very important protests have been made by the accused and submitted to me, to wit:

“1. That he was never legally Vice-President of the T. S. That an election to said office of Vice-President has always been necessary, and is so yet.

“That he has never been elected to the office.

“That the title has been conferred on him by courtesy, and has been tacitly

assumed to be legal by himself and others, in ignorance of the facts of the case.

“The legitimate inference from which would be:

“That not being Vice-President, de jure, he is not amenable to the jurisdiction of a Judicial Committee, which can only try the highest two of the Society.

“2. That, even if he were Vice-President, this tribunal could only try charges which imply on his part acts of misfeasance or malfeasance as such official; whereas the pending charges accuse him of acts which are not those of an official, but of a simple member; hence only triable by his own Branch or Lodge (vide [178] Section 3 of Article XIII), at a special meeting called to consider the facts.

“3. That the principal charge against him cannot be tried without breach of the constitutional neutrality of the Society in matters of private belief as to religious and other questions, and especially as to belief in the ‘existence, names, powers, functions or methods of “Mahâtmâs” or “Masters”’: that to deliberate and decide, either pro or con, in this matter would be to violate the law, affirm a dogma, and ‘offend the religious feelings’ of Fellows of the Society, who, to the number of many hundreds, hold decided opinions concerning the existence of Mahâtmâs and their interest in our work.

“These points will presently be considered seriatim.

“At the recent (eighth) annual meeting of the American Section T.S. at San Francisco, in the first session of April 22nd, the following, with other resolutions, was unanimously adopted, to wit:

“Resolved: that this Convention, after careful deliberation, finds that the suspension of the Vice-President is without the slightest warrant in the Constitution and altogether transcends the discretionary power given the President by the Constitution and is therefore null and void.

“I now return to Mr. Judge’s protests:

“That he practised deception in sending false messages, orders and letters, as if sent and written by ‘Masters’; and in statements to me about a certain Rosicrucian jewel of H. P. B.’s:

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“That he was untruthful in various other instances enumerated.

“Are these solely acts done in his private capacity; or may they or either of

them be laid against him as wrong-doing by the Vice-President? This is a grave question, both in its present bearings and as establishing a precedent for future contingencies. We must not make a mistake in coming to a decision.

“In summoning Mr. Judge before this tribunal, I was moved by the thought that the alleged evil acts might be separated into (a) strictly private acts, viz., the alleged untruthfulness and deception, and (b) the alleged circulation of deceptive imitations of what are supposed to be Mahâtmic writings, with intent to deceive; which communications, owing to his high official rank among us, carried a weight they would not have had if given out by a simple member. This seemed to me a far more heinous offence than simple falsehood or any other act of an individual, and to amount to a debasement of his office, if proven. The minutes of the General Council meeting of July 7th, which will presently be read for your information, will show you how this question was discussed by us, and what conclusion was reached. To make this document complete in itself, however, I will say that, in the Council’s opinion, the point raised by Mr. Judge appeared valid, and that the charges are not cognizable by this Judicial Committee. The issue is now open to your consideration, and you must decide as to your judicial competency.

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“1. As to his legal status as Vice-President. At the Adyar Convention of the whole Society in December, 1888, exercising the full executive power I then held, I appointed Mr. Judge Vice-President in open Convention, the choice was approved by the Delegates assembled, and the name inserted in the published Official List of officers, since which time it has not been withdrawn. At the Convention of 1890, a new set of Rules having come into force and an election for Vice-President being in order, Mr. Bertram Keightley moved and I supported the nomination of Mr. Judge, and he was duly elected. It now appears that official notice was not sent him to this effect, but nevertheless his name was duly published in the Official List, as it had been previously. You all know that he attended the Chicago Parliament of Religions as Vice-President and my accredited representative and substitute; his name is so printed in his Report of the Theosophical Congress, and the Official Report of the San Francisco Convention of our American Section contains the Financial Statement of the Theosophic Congress Fund, which is signed by him as Vice-President, Theosophical Society.

“From the above facts it is evident that W. Q. Judge is, and since December,

1888, has continuously been, de jure as well as de facto Vice-President of the Theosophical Society. The facts having been laid before the General Council in its session of the 7th instant, my ruling has been ratified; and is now also concurred in by Mr. Judge. He is, therefore, triable by this tribunal for 'cause shown'.

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“2. The second point raised by the accused is more important. If the acts alleged were done by him at all—which remains as yet sub judice—and he did them as a private person, he cannot be tried by any other tribunal than the Aryan Lodge, T. S., of which he is a Fellow and President. Nothing can possibly be clearer than that. Now, what are the alleged offences?

“3. Does our proposed enquiry into the alleged circulation of fictitious writings of those known to us as 'Mahâtmâs' carry with it a breach of the religious neutrality guaranteed us in the T.S. Constitution, and would a decision of the charge, in either way, hurt the feelings of members? The affirmative view has been taken and warmly advocated by the Convention of the American Section, by individual branches and groups of 'Theosophical Workers,' by the General Secretaries of the European and Indian Sections in a recently issued joint circular, by many private members of the Society, and by the accused. As I conceived it, the present issue is not at all whether Mahâtmâs exist or the contrary, or whether they have or have not recognizable handwritings, and have or have not authorized Mr. Judge to put forth documents in their name. I believed, when issuing the call, that the question might be discussed without entering into investigations that would compromise our corporate neutrality. The charges as formulated and laid before me by Mrs. Besant could, in my opinion, have been tried without doing this. And I must refer to my official record to prove that I would have been the last [182] to help in violating a Constitution of which I am, it may be said, the father, and which I have continually defended at all times and in all circumstances. On now meeting Mr. Judge in London, however, and being made acquainted with his intended line of defence, I find that by beginning the enquiry we should be placed in this dilemma, viz., we should either have to deny him the common justice of listening to his statements and examining his proofs (which would be monstrous in even a common court of law, much more in a Brotherhood like ours, based on lines of ideal justice), or be plunged into the very abyss we wish to escape from. Mr. Judge's defence is that he is not guilty of the acts charged; that Mahâtmâs exist, are related to our

Society, and in personal connection with himself; and he avers his readiness to bring many witnesses and documentary proofs to support his statements. You will at once see whither this would lead us. The moment we entered into these questions we should violate the most vital spirit of our federal compact, its neutrality in matters of belief. Nobody, for example, knows better than myself the fact of the existence of the Masters, yet I would resign my office unhesitatingly if the Constitution were amended so as to erect such a belief into a dogma: every one in our membership is as free to disbelieve and deny their existence as I am to believe and affirm it. For the above reason, then, I declare as my opinion that this enquiry must go no farther; we may not break our own laws for any consideration whatsoever. It is furthermore my opinion that [188] such an enquiry, begun by whatsoever official body within our membership, cannot proceed if a similar line of defence be declared. If, perchance, a guilty person should at any time go scot-free in consequence of this ruling, we cannot help it; the Constitution is our palladium, and we must make it the symbol of justice or expect our Society to disintegrate.

“Candour compels me to add that, despite what I thought some preliminary quibbling and unfair tactics, Mr. Judge has travelled hither from America to meet his accusers before this Committee, and announced his readiness to have the charges investigated and decided on their merits by any competent tribunal.

“Having disposed of the several protests of Mr. Judge, I shall now briefly refer to the condemnatory Resolutions of the San Francisco Convention, and merely to say that there was no warrant for their hasty declaration that my suspension of the Vice-President, pending the disposal of the charges, was unconstitutional, null and void. As above noted, Section 4 of Article VI of our Constitution provides that the same rules of procedure shall apply to the case of the Vice-President as to that of the President; and, inasmuch as my functions vest in the Vice-President, and I am suspended from office until any charges against my official character are disposed of, so, likewise, must the Vice-President be suspended from his official status until the charges against him are disposed of; re-instatement to follow acquittal or the abandonment of the prosecution.

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“It having been made evident to me that Mr. Judge cannot be tried on the present accusations without breaking through the lines of our Constitution, I have no right to keep him further suspended, and so I hereby cancel my notice of suspension, dated February 7th, 1894, and restore him to the rank of Vice-

President.

“In conclusion, Gentlemen and Brothers, it remains for me to express my regret for any inconvenience I may have caused you by the convocation of this Judicial Committee, and to cordially thank Mr. Sturdy who has come from India, Dr. Buck, who has come from Cincinnati, and the rest of you who have come from distant points in the United Kingdom, to render this loyal service. I had no means of anticipating this present issue, since the line of defence was not within my knowledge. The meeting was worth holding for several reasons. In the first place, because we have come to the point of an official declaration that it is not lawful to affirm that belief in Mahâtmâs is a dogma of the Society, or communications really, or presumably, from them, authoritative and infallible. Equally clear is it that the circulation of fictitious communications from them is not an act for which, under our rules, an officer or member can be impeached and tried. The inference then is, that testimony as to intercourse with Mahâtmâs, and writings alleged to come from them, must be judged upon their intrinsic merits alone; and that the witnesses are solely responsible for their statements. Thirdly, the successorship to the Presidency is again open (vide Gen. Council [186] Report of July 7th, 1894), and at my death or at any time sooner, liberty of choice may be exercised in favour of the best available member of the Society.

“I now bring my remarks to a close by giving voice to the sentiment which I believe to actuate the true Theosophist, viz., that the same justice should be given and the same mercy shown to every man and woman on our membership registers. There must be no distinctions of persons, no paraded self-righteousness, no seeking for revenge. We are all—as I personally believe—equally under the operation of Karma, which punishes and rewards; all equally need the loving forbearance of those who have mounted higher than ourselves in the scale of human perfectibility.

“H. S. OLCOTT, P. T. S.”

Mr. G. R. S. Mead reported that certain Minutes of Proceedings by the General Council of the Theosophical Society were communicated to the present Committee for its information, and they were read accordingly, as follows:

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL
MEETING

HELD AT 19 AVENUE ROAD, LONDON, JULY 7TH, 1894

“Present: President, Colonel H. S. Olcott, Bertram Keightley, George R. S. Mead, and William Q. Judge.

“Colonel Olcott called the meeting to order, and Bertram Keightley was appointed Secretary.

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“Council was informed that the meeting was called to consider certain points brought up by William Q. Judge, and other matters, to wit:

“The President read a letter from William Q. Judge stating that in his opinion he was never elected Vice-President of the T.S., and was not, therefore, Vice-President of the T.S.; whereupon the President informed the Council that at the General Convention at Adyar, in 1888, he then, exercising the prerogatives which he then held, appointed William Q. Judge as Vice-President of the T.S.; and the name was then announced in the official list of officers of that year. That subsequently, at the General Convention in 1890, the last one of such General Conventions, said nomination was unanimously confirmed by vote on motion of Bertram Keightley, supported by H. S. Olcott; hence, that although the official report of the Convention seems to be defective in that it did not record the fact, and that Mr. Judge was thereby misled, the truth is as stated. The President then declared that W. Q. Judge was and is Vice-President de facto and de jure of the Theosophical Society.

“Another point then raised by Mr. Judge was then taken into consideration, to wit: That even if Vice-President, he, Mr. Judge, was not amenable to an enquiry by the Judicial Committee into certain alleged offences with respect to the misuse of the Mahâtmâs’ names and handwriting, since if guilty the offence would be one by him as a private individual, and not in his official capacity; he contended that, under our

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Constitution, the President and Vice-President could only be tried as such by such Committee, for official misconduct—that is misfeasances and malfeasances. An opinion of Council in New York which he had taken from Mr. M. H. Phelps, F.T.S., was then read by him in support of this contention. The matter was then debated. Bertram Keightley moved and G. R. S. Mead seconded:

“That the Council, having heard the arguments on the point raised by William Q. Judge, it declares that the point is well taken; that the acts alleged concern him as an individual; and that consequently the Judicial Committee has no jurisdiction in the premises to try him as Vice-President upon the charges as alleged.

“The President concurred. Mr. Judge did not vote. The motion was declared carried.

“On Mr. Mead’s motion, it was then voted that the above record shall be laid before the Judicial Committee, Mr. Judge did not vote.

“The President then laid before the Council another question mooted by Mr. Judge, to wit: That his election as successor to the President, which was made upon the announcement of the President’s resignation, became ipso facto annulled upon the President’s resumption of his office as President. On motion, the Council declared the point well taken, and ordered the decision to be entered on the minutes. Mr. Judge did not vote.

“The President called attention to the resolution of the American Convention of 1894, declared that [1888] his action in suspending the Vice-President, pending the settlement of the charges against him, was ‘without the slightest warrant in the Constitution and altogether transcends the discretionary power given the President by the Constitution, and is therefore null and void’. Upon deliberation and consideration of Sections 3 and 4, Article VI. of the General Rules, the Council decided (Mr. Judge not voting) that the President’s action was warranted under the then existing circumstances, and that the said resolutions of protest are without force.

“On motion (Mr. Judge not voting) the Council then requested the President to convene the Judicial Committee at the London Headquarters, on Tuesday, July 10th, 1894, at 10 a.m.

“The Council then adjourned at call of President.”

The following Resolutions were then adopted by the Judicial Committee:

Resolved: that the President be requested to lay before the Committee the charges against Mr. Judge referred to in his address.

The charges were laid before the Committee accordingly.

After deliberation, it was

Resolved: that although it has been ascertained that the member bringing the charges and Mr. Judge are both ready to go on with the enquiry, the Committee considers, nevertheless, that the charges are not such as relate to the conduct of the Vice-President in ~~(1888)~~ his official capacity, and therefore are not subject to its jurisdiction.

On the question whether the charges did or did not involve a declaration of the existence and power of the Mahâtmâs, the Committee deliberated, and it was Resolved: that the Committee is also of opinion that a statement by them as to the truth or otherwise of at least one of the charges as formulated against Mr. Judge would involve a declaration on their part as to the existence or non-existence of the Mahâtmâs, and it would be a violation of the spirit of neutrality and the unsectarian nature and Constitution of the Society.

Four members abstained from voting on this resolution.

It was also further

Resolved: that the President's address be adopted.

Resolved: that the General Council be requested to print and circulate the Minutes of the Proceedings.

A question being raised as to whether the charges should be included in the printed report,

Mr. Burrows moved and Mr. Sturdy seconded a resolution that if the Proceedings were printed at all the charges should be included; but on being put to the vote the resolution was not carried.

The Minutes having been read and confirmed, the Committee dissolved.

H. S. OLCOTT, P.T.S.,

President of the Council.

AN APPENDIX

STATEMENT BY ANNIE BESANT

Read for the Information of Members at the

Third Session of the European Convention of the T.S., July 12th, 1894

I speak to you to-night as the representative of the T.S. in Europe, and as the matter I have to lay before you concerns the deepest interests of the Society, I

pray you to lay aside all prejudice and feeling, to judge by Theosophical standards and not by the lower standards of the world, and to give your help now in one of the gravest crises in which our movement has found itself. There has been much talk of Committees and Juries of Honour. We come to you, our brothers, to tell you what is in our hearts.

I am going to put before you the exact position of affairs on the matter which has been filling our hearts all day. Mr. Judge and I have agreed to lay two statements before you, and to ask your counsel upon them.

For some years past persons inspired largely by personal hatred for Mr. Judge, and persons inspired [181] by hatred for the Theosophical Society and for all that it represents, have circulated a mass of accusations against him, ranging from simple untruthfulness to deliberate and systematic forgery of the handwritings of Those Who to some of us are most sacred. The charges were not in a form that it was possible to meet, a general denial could not stop them, and explanation to irresponsible accusers was at once futile and undignified.

Mr. Judge's election as the future President of the Society increased the difficulties of the situation, and the charges themselves were repeated with growing definiteness and insistence, until they found expression in an article in The Theosophist signed by Messrs. Old and Edge. At last, the situation became so strained that it was declared by many of the most earnest members of the Indian Section that, if Mr. Judge became President with those charges hanging over him unexplained, the Indian Section would secede from the T.S. Representation to this effect was made to me, and I was asked, as well known in the world and the T.S. and as a close friend and colleague of Mr. Judge, to intervene in the matter.

I hold strongly that, whatever may be the faults of a private member, they are no concern of mine, and it is no part of my duty, as a humble servant of the Lords of Compassion, to drag my brother's faults into public view, nor to arraign him before any tribunal. His faults and mine will find their inevitable harvest of suffering, and I am content to leave them to the

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Great Law, which judges unerringly and knits to every wrong its necessary sequence of pain.

But where the honour of the Society was concerned, in the person of its now second official and (as he then was thought to be) its President-elect, it was right

to do what I could to put an end to the growing friction and suspicion, both for the sake of the Society and for that of Mr. Judge; and I agreed to intervene, privately, believing that many of the charges were false, dictated and circulated malevolently, that others were much exaggerated and were largely susceptible of explanation, and that what might remain of valid complaint might be put an end to without public controversy. Under the promise that nothing should be done further in the matter until my intervention had failed, I wrote to Mr. Judge. The promise of silence was broken by persons who knew some of the things complained of, and before any answer could be received by me from Mr. Judge, distorted versions of what had occurred were circulated far and wide. This placed Mr. Judge in a most unfair position, and he found my name used against him in connection with charges which he knew to be grossly exaggerated, where not entirely untrue.

Not only so, but I found that a public Committee of Enquiry was to be insisted on, and I saw that the proceedings would be directed in a spirit of animosity, add that the aim was to inflict punishment for wrongs believed to have been done, rather than to prevent future harm to the Society. I did my utmost to prevent a public Committee of Enquiry of an official (1893) character. I failed, and the Committee was decided on. And then I made what many of Mr. Judge's friends think was a mistake. I offered to take on myself the onus of formulating the charges against him. I am not concerned to defend myself on this, nor to trouble you with my reasons for taking so painful a decision; in this decision, for which I alone am responsible, I meant to act for the best, but it is very possible I made a mistake—for I have made many mistakes in judgment in my life, and my vision is not always clear in these matters of strife and controversy which are abhorrent to me.

In due course I formulated the charges, and drew up the written statement of evidence in support of them. They came in due course before the Judicial Committee, as you heard this morning. That Committee decided that they alleged private, not official, wrong-doing, and therefore could not be tried by a Committee that could deal only with a President or Vice-President as such. I was admitted to the General Council of the T.S. when this point was argued, and I was convinced by that argument that the point was rightly taken. I so stated when asked by the General Council, and again when asked by the Judicial Committee. And this put an end to the charges so far as that Committee was concerned.

As this left the main issue undecided, and left Mr. Judge under the stigma of unproved and un rebutted charges, it was suggested by Mr. Herbert Burrows that the charges should be laid before a Committee [194] of Honour. At the moment this was rejected by Mr. Judge, but he wrote to me on the following day, asking me to agree with him in nominating such a Committee. I have agreed to this, but with very great reluctance, for the reason mentioned above: that I feel it no part of my duty to attack any private member of the T.S., and I think such an attack would prove a most unfortunate precedent. But as the proceedings which were commenced against Mr. Judge as an official have proved abortive, it does not seem fair that I—responsible for those proceedings, by taking part in them—should refuse him the Committee he asks for.

But there is another way; which I now take, and which, if you approve it, will put an end to this matter; and as no theosophist should desire to inflict penalty for the past—even if he thinks wrong has been done—but only to help forward right in the future, it may, I venture to hope, be accepted.

And now I must reduce these charges to their proper proportions, as they have been enormously exaggerated, and it is due to Mr. Judge that I should say publicly what from the beginning I have said privately. The President stated them very accurately in his address to the Judicial Committee: the vital charge is that Mr. Judge has issued letters and messages in the script recognizable as that adopted by a Master with whom H. P. B. was closely connected,¹⁰ and that these letters [195] and messages were neither written nor precipitated directly by the Master in whose writing they appear; as leading up to this there are subsidiary charges of deception, but these would certainly never have been made the basis of any action save for their connection with the main point.

Further, I wish it, to be distinctly understood that I do not charge and have not charged Mr. Judge with forgery in the ordinary sense of the term, but with giving a misleading material form to messages received psychically from the Master in various ways, without acquainting the recipients with this fact.

I regard Mr. Judge as an Occultist, possessed of considerable knowledge and animated by a deep and unswerving devotion to the Theosophical Society. I believe that he has often received direct messages, from the, Masters and from Their chelas, guiding and helping him in his work. I believe that he has sometimes received messages for other people in one or other of the ways that I will mention in a moment, but not by direct writing by the Master nor by his

direct precipitation; and that Mr. Judge has then believed himself to be justified in writing down in the script adopted by H. P. B. for communications from the Master, the message psychically received, and in giving it to the person for whom it was intended, leaving that person to wrongly assume that it was a direct precipitation or writing by the Master himself—that is, that it was done through Mr. Judge, but done by the Master.

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Now personally I hold that this method is illegitimate and that no one should simulate a recognized writing which is regarded as authoritative when it is authentic. And by authentic I mean directly written or precipitated by the Master himself. If a message is consciously written, it should be so stated: if automatically written, it should be so stated. At least so it seems to me. It is important that the very small part generally played by the Masters in these phenomena should be understood, so that people may not receive messages as authoritative merely on the ground of their being in a particular script, Except in the very rarest instances, the Masters do not personally write letters or directly precipitate communications. Messages may be sent by them to those with whom they can communicate by external voice, or astral vision, or physic word, or mental impression, or in other ways. If a person gets a message which he believes to be from the Master, for communication to anyone else, he is bound in honour not to add to that message any extraneous circumstances which will add weight to it in the recipient's eyes. I believe that Mr. Judge wrote with his own hand, consciously or automatically, I do not know, in the script adopted as that of the Master, messages which he received from the Master or from Chelas; and I know that, in my own case, I believed that the messages he gave me in the well-known script were messages directly precipitated or directly written by the Master. When I publicly said that I have received since H. P. Blavatsky's death, [1877] letters in the writing H. P. Blavatsky had been accused of forging, I referred to letters given to me by Mr. Judge, and as they were in the well-known script, I never dreamt of challenging their source. I know now that they were not written or precipitated by the Master, and that they were done by Mr. Judge, but I also believe that the gist of these messages was psychically received, and that Mr. Judge's error lay in giving them to me in a script written by himself and not saying that he had done so. I feel bound to refer to these letters thus explicitly, because having been myself mistaken, I in turn misled the public.

It should be generally understood inside and outside the Theosophical Society,

that letters and messages may be written or may be precipitated in any script, without thereby gaining any valid authority. Scripts may be produced by automatic or deliberate writing with the hand, or by precipitation, by many agencies from the White and Black Adepts down to semi-conscious Elementals, and those who afford the necessary conditions can be thus used. The source of messages can only be decided by direct spiritual knowledge or, intellectually, by the nature of their contents, and each person must use his own powers and act on his own responsibility, in accepting or rejecting them. Thus I rejected a number of letters, real precipitations, brought me by an American, not an F.T.S., as substantiating his claim to be H. P. B.'s successor. Any good medium may be used for precipitating messages by any of the varied entities in the occult world; and [199] the outcome of these proceedings will be, I hope, to put an end to the craze for receiving letters and messages, which are more likely to be subhuman or human in their origin than superhuman, and to throw people back on the evolution of their own spiritual nature, by which alone they can be safely guided through the mazes of the superphysical world.

If you, representatives of the T.S., consider that the publication of this statement followed by that which Mr. Judge will make, would put an end to this distressing business, and by making a clear understanding, get rid at least of the mass of seething suspicions in which we have been living, and if you can accept it, I propose that this should take the place of the Committee of Honour, putting you, our brothers, in the place of the Committee. I have made the frankest explanation I can; I know how enwrapped in difficulty are these phenomena which are connected with forces obscure in their working to most; therefore, how few are able to judge of them accurately, while those through whom they play are always unable to control them. And I trust that these explanations may put an end to some at least of the troubles of the last two years, and leave us to go on with our work for the world, each in his own way. For any pain that I have given my brother, in trying to do a most repellent task, I ask his pardon, as also for any mistakes that I may have made.

ANNIE BESANT

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(The above statements as to precipitated, written and other communications have been long ago made by both H. P. Blavatsky and Mr. Judge, in *Lucifer*, *The Path*, and elsewhere, both publicly and privately.—A.B.)

Note by Colonel Olcott: I cannot allow Mrs. Besant to take upon herself the entire responsibility for formulating the charges against Mr. Judge, since I myself requested her to do it. The tacit endorsement of the charges by persistence in a policy of silence, was an injustice to the Vice-President, since it gave him no chance to make his defence; while, at the same time, the widely-current suspicions were thereby augmented, to the injury of the Society. So, to bring the whole matter to light, I, with others, asked Mrs. Besant to assume the task of drafting and signing the charges. —H. S. O.)

STATEMENT BY MR. JUDGE

Since March last, charges have been going round the world against me, to which the name of Annie Besant has been attached, without her consent, as she now says, that I have been guilty of forging the names and handwritings of the Mahâtmâs and of misusing the said names and handwritings. The charge has also arisen that I suppressed the name of Annie Besant as mover in the matter from fear of the same. All [200] this has been causing great trouble and working injury to all concerned, that is, to all our members. It is now, time that this should be put an end to, once for all, if possible.

I now state as follows:

1. I left the name of Annie Besant out of my published circular by request of my friends in the T.S. then near me, so as to save her and leave it to others to put her name to the charge. It now appears that if I had so put her name it would have run counter to her present statement.

2. I repeat my denial of the said rumoured charges of forging the said names and handwritings of the Mahâtmâs or of misusing the same.

3. I admit that I have received and delivered messages from the Mahâtmâs and assert their genuineness.

4. I say that I have heard and do hear from the Mahâtmâs, and that I am an agent of the Mahâtmâs; but I deny that I have ever sought to induce that belief in others, and this is the first time to my knowledge that I have ever made the claim now made I am pressed into the place where I must make it. My desire and effort have been to distract attention from such an idea as related to me. But I have no desire to make the claim, which I repudiate, that I am the only channel for communication with Masters; and it is my opinion that such communication is

open to any human being who, by endeavouring to serve mankind, affords the necessary conditions.

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5. Whatever messages from the Mahâtmâs have been delivered by me as such—and they are extremely few—I now declare were and are genuine messages from the Mahâtmâs so far as my knowledge extends; they were obtained through me, but as to how they were obtained or produced I cannot state. But I can now again say, as I have said publicly before, and as was said by H. P. Blavatsky so often that I have always thought it common knowledge among studious theosophists, that precipitation of words or messages is of no consequence and constitutes no proof of connection with Mahâtmâs; it is only phenomenal and not of the slightest value.

6. So far as methods are concerned for the reception and delivery of messages from the Masters, they are many. My own methods may disagree from the views of others, and I acknowledge their right to criticize them if they choose; but I deny the right of anyone to say that they know or can prove the non-genuineness of such messages, to or through me unless they are able to see on that plane. I can only say that I have done my best to report—in the few instances when I have done it at all—correctly and truthfully such messages as I think I have received for transmission, and never to my knowledge have I tried therewith to deceive any person or persons whatever.

7. And I say that in 1893 the Master sent me a message in which he thanked me for all my work and exertions in the Theosophical field, and expressed satisfaction therewith, ending with sage advice to [202] guard me against the failings and follies of my lower nature; that message Mrs. Besant unreservedly admits.

8. Lastly, and only because of absurd statements made and circulated, I willingly say that which I never denied, that I am a human being, full of error, liable to mistake, not infallible, but just the same as any other human being like to myself, or of the class of human beings like to myself, or of the class of human beings to which I belong. And I freely, fully and sincerely forgive anyone who may be thought to have injured or tried to injure me.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

Having heard the above statements, the following resolution was moved by Mr. Bertram Keightley, seconded by, Dr. Buck and carried nem con:

Resolved: that this meeting accepts with pleasure the adjustment arrived at by Annie Besant and William Q. Judge as a final settlement of matters pending hitherto between them as prosecutor and defendant, with the hope that it may be thus buried and forgotten, and

Resolved that we will join hands with them to further the cause of genuine, Brotherhood in which we all believe.

The following important results have come out of the above enquiry: “(a) The absolute neutrality of [200] the Theosophical Society in all matters of personal belief, and, the perfect right of private judgment in religious, mystical, and other questions have been authoritatively and permanently declared by Executive affirmation, endorsement by the General Council, and confirmation by a Judicial Committee organized under the provisions of the Society’s Revised Rules, and composed of Delegates chosen by the existing three Sections as possessing their respect and confidence; (b) The authoritative and dogmatic value of statements as to the existence of Mahâtmâs, their relations with and messages to private persons, or through them to third parties, the Society or the general public, is denied; all such statements, messages or teachings are to be taken at their intrinsic value and the recipients left to form and declare, if they choose, their own opinions with respect to their genuineness: the Society, as a body, maintaining its constitutional neutrality in the premises.

“As to the disposal of the charges against the Vice-President, the report of the Judicial Committee gives all necessary information: the public statements of Mrs. Besant and Mr. Judge contained in the Appendix showing how the case stands. No final decision has been reached, since the defence of Mr. Judge precluded an enquiry into the facts, and it would not be constitutional for one to be made by any Committee, Council, or Branch of the Society. To undertake it would be a dangerous precedent, one which would furnish an excuse to try a member for holding to the dogmas of [204] the sect to which he might belong. Generally speaking, the elementary principles of tolerance and brotherliness which are professed by all true Theosophists, teach us to exercise towards each other a generous charity and forgiveness for displays of those human imperfections which we all equally share.”

In view of my long and intimate acquaintance with Mr. Judge, all this revision of events is most disagreeable and I write without a shade of animosity, but since 1894 over 300 new Branches have been formed by us and our thousands of new colleagues are entitled to know the essential facts about the Great Secession of Mr. Judge.

Further consideration of this matter must be postponed until next month. ¹¹

H. S. OLCOTT

CHAPTER XIV

THE FOURTH EUROPEAN CONVENTION

(1894)

OF course, this result satisfied nobody but Mr. Judge, and his most intimate friends, since it disposed of no charge and postponed the day of reckoning. The European and Indian Sections seethed with discontent, and our members in Australasia, not yet sectionalised, unmistakably made it known that they thought Mr. Judge should be expelled. When one looks back at the matter one cannot wonder that the pettifogging tactics adopted by the accused should have disgusted the outspoken Mr. Oliver Firth, who was one of Judge's own selected members of the Judicial Committee; until then he had been a warm friend of his, but when the Committee rose he expressed to me his indignation and from that time forward had no respect for the gentleman. If I had decided any otherwise than I did and the Committee had failed to support me, the doom of the Theosophical Society, as a free body, would have been sealed, and I am persuaded that even the commotion and trouble caused by Mr. Judge's subsequent line of action was not too high a price to [206] pay for our defence of the letter and spirit of the Society's Constitution.

Yet what a pitiful aspect did Mr. Judge himself present when taking refuge behind a technicality! Look at the moral side of the matter. An ambitious man, clutching at the chief office in our organisation, for a time bolstered up his influence by sending forged letters, purporting to be from our Teachers, which were calculated to consolidate and increase his authority by enlisting the services of his guileless dupe, Mrs. Besant, and other of our most influential colleagues, and thus create a power behind him that should seat him for life in my vacated chair. Now that I am reading over all the pamphlets, circulars, and articles of the period to gather the materials for my permanent narrative, the affair assumes a loathsome aspect. For, this chicanery was so useless. From the beginning until now I have ever been ready to relinquish my office to any better man whom our Teachers would accept, and to drop into the ranks and do any work needed: Mr.

Judge could have had the Presidentship for the asking, if such had been the wish of the Society. But it was not the mere executive function that he wanted; his childish ambition was to be taken as the veritable successor of H. P. B., as the out-giver and transmitter of spiritual teachings, the visible agent of the Great White Lodge: that was the cause of his downfall and his lasting disgrace. Supposing that his scheme, to be referred to his Branch for trial as a private individual, had been realised, and the [207] constitutional point above defined had been over-looked, what should we have seen? The childish farce of a whitewashing, a declaration that his character had been washed as clean as lambswool, and the ground cleared for the carrying out of his ambitious schemes. That he was personally guilty of the forgeries of documents, the lies told to and the deceptions practised upon myself and others, cannot for a moment be doubted.

The individual, then, by his behavior, had besmirched the character of the Vice-President and officially-proclaimed successor to the Presidentship, and what that would mean to the Theosophical Society as a body needs no seer to prophesy. His offence was ten times worse than would have been any lapse from the standard of good conduct by him as a man; say, for instance, some addiction to drink, play, or women; for in history there have been hundreds of instances of great rulers, legislators, captains and civilians whose private characters fell short of the ideal, but whose public services were undeniably splendid. In this case his offence struck at the very foundation of our belief in the existence and relationship with our Society of those great Personages, whose evolution from the body of humanity affords the model to follow after and the ideal of human perfectibility to aspire to. To say that such behavior in the second, and potentially the first, leader of the Society, could be overlooked or forgiven, is incredible; and this is the fatal mistake made by Dr. Buck and Mr. Judge's [208] other backers who thought that one who had done such splendid service in our movement should be forgiven everything. Not thus does the inexorable Law of Karma adjust the scales of human evolution. It would have been pleasanter to me to draw the veil of silence between us and the past, but the writer of history has no choice left him but to record facts and let time settle the question of reputations. Not even a river of tears shed by sympathetic friends can wash out one entry in the Book of Chitragupta, although the man may create an enormous credit balance in his favor by change of life, thought, and conduct.

Besides the facts cited by me above to prove that Mr. Judge's plea that he

never, was Vice-President was false, I can refer the reader to the fact that, in a circular issued by him at New York, March 15, 1894, i.e., immediately after his receipt of my official letter giving him the option of resigning office or standing trial, he says; "The charge is made against me as Vice-President: I have replied as an individual and shall so continue, inasmuch as in my capacity of Vice-President my duties are nominal, have once been exercised by communicating to the Society as required by the Constitution, the resignation of the President, and once by acting for the President at [in Chicago." In short, he had accepted the office and performed its duties to the extent of my demands upon him.

So that he himself contradicts his own plea. Again, in his circular of 3rd November, 1894, a pretended [209] E. S. T. document, but sent me by himself without exacting any pledge of secrecy, he says (p.8), reviewing the prosecution against him and alluding to Mrs. Besant: "She wrote me that I must resign the office of successor to the Presidency, the hint being that this was one of the things Master wanted me to do." Then he answers with the following petty quibble, which he, moreover, italicises, to give it additional force: "The fact was I had no such office and there was no such thing to resign. The Master knew it, and hence he never ordered it." This is a sheer insult to the common sense of the persons to whom the circular was addressed. Of course, we have no such title as "Successor to the Presidency," and what audacity it was to drag in the name of the Master as approving his point and supporting him by not answering Mrs. Besant's letter! But there was such a thing as President-elect, whose term would begin when mine ended, and this he admits in so many words in the circular of March 15th, saying: "I have been elected to succeed Col. Olcott as President of the Society and have been officially declared his successor by him." Where would this tergiversation in morals have ended if Judge had not cut short the whole thing by his secession, so secretly planned, so successfully carried out? It is doubtful if he would have resorted to that if the sentimental finale of the Judicial Committee's meeting had been accepted as a settlement, for Mr. Judge's ambition was most certainly not to give himself freedom to work up a rival Theosophical Society, leaving the original [210] one intact and able to hold its own, but to take over into his own keeping all the results of the work done by H. P. B. and myself during the nineteen years since the Society was formed. However, the question of the Session will come before us in its due time and we need not anticipate.

As I had contracted with Messrs. Putnam to bring out the first volume of my], I

had brought with me from India the various relics of H. P. B.'s early magical phenomena which were to be photographed for illustrations, and as the delegates to the forthcoming Convention of the European Section were gathering, I was asked to exhibit these curios and give a familiar talk about my reminiscences of the olden time.

From Spain there came with Señor Xifré a charming lady who had been Superioress of a Roman Catholic Convent, but, becoming converted to Theosophical views, had relinquished her position and returned to civil life. To do this required, as anyone will see, great moral courage, and one and all of us felt a deep respect for her on account of the brave way in which she had, for the sake of conscience, faced the persecutions and actual dangers of her situation.

The Convention of the European Section, the fourth, met on the 12th in the Lecture Hall of the Headquarters, 19 Avenue Road, at 10 a.m. Delegates and members from India, America, Spain, France, Holland, Switzerland, Poland, and Italy, besides Edinburgh, Dublin, and a number of the chief towns [211] of England, were present. I took the chair and Mr. Mead was elected Secretary of the Convention, with Messrs. H. T. Edge and the Hon. Otway Cuffe as Assistant Secretaries; the Scandinavian group of fourteen Branches, not then organised as a Section, were represented by Mr. W. Kingsland, and the Deutsche Theosophische Gesellschaft by Mrs. Cooper-Oakley. Besides Mr. Bertram Keightley, its General Secretary, the Indian Section was represented by, Babu Parbati Charan Roy. The proceedings of the Judicial Committee were read for information and then an able report of the year's Sectional history was read by the General Secretary. Certain things were said in it that are so good, so applicable to our present conditions, that I will quote the following paragraph:

“Until quite recently I was under the illusion that I should be able to present you with somewhat of a statistical report, but on viewing the materials before me I find that just as we have no creed and no dogma, so also we have but the loosest of orthodoxy in organisation and methods of work. We seem to try all things in our common endeavor to seek that which is good. So many men and women, so many opinions and ways of work; so many Lodges, so many different methods of study and propaganda; so many groups of Lodges, so many sub-sections and federations—all of them, however, happily tending to union—striving, though oftentimes with many of failure, to reach to solidarity and a practical realisation of brotherhood, which is the child of that Theosophy to which we all aspire [212] and for which we should be prepared to offer up an

eternal sacrifice of all personal comfort and pleasure.”

As to the failure to furnish statistical matter for the compiler’s use, I can speak feelingly for, as remarked in my last Annual Address, our Records have been kept in such a loose-jointed way by a succession of amateur workers, that the task of bringing order out of chaos is most difficult. The point made by Mr. Mead about there being as many different methods of study and propaganda as there are Branches and groups is correct, but I do not see how we can ever hope to remedy it save by substituting for the present perfect eclecticism and freedom of action, which is the palladium of our personal liberties, a despotic system of autocratic interference of which a complete example is furnished by the pretended successor of Mr. Judge and H. P. B., who rules at Point Loma. We must only try to walk the middle path and gradually create among us a habit of orderly management of business: until this is done our statistical table will not be as accurate as it should. But we will all endorse Mr. Mead’s assertion that “There are not a few instances of Lodges which are the veritable common homes of the members; where perfect harmony and friendship and comradeship reign in spite of intellectual and social differences. This is real work done, better far than all our writing and speaking and arguing--something real and realised, a drawing nigh to Wisdom. On the other hand the war of personality continues here and there, for the time checking the growth of a Lodge [218] and hindering the spread of Theosophy—but in this Dark Age we cannot expect too much of overdriven human nature and must wait and hope and try again and again.”

Some of our earnest Indian members are just now (1903) beginning to organise federations of Branches speaking a common language, for instance, Tamil, and included within a certain geographical area: such a meeting was held at Gooty and another will shortly be held at Madura. Mr. Mead admirably summarises the scheme of a federation as it was originally successfully tried in the North of England:

“Nine Lodges and two Centres have combined together with the object of arranging lectures on Theosophy and of promoting communication between the various Lodges and Centres of the districts and generally forwarding the Theosophical movement. The Federation has quarterly Conventions held in different cities, where the members of the Federated Lodges meet together and unite for mutual help and common effort. Lodges exchange lecturers and lectures and a network of personal friendship and co-operation has been established over the North of England that might well be copied throughout the

Society wherever possible. The constitution of the Federation is as free from officialism as possible and a Secretary discharges all the duties necessary.”

Mr. Mead touches upon a matter which should be well understood among us, in its general application. He says: “The great obstacles to progress in Spain are [214] reactionary Jesuitism and its antipodes, materialistic liberalism. Theosophy holds the middle ground between these extremes and in that consist its strength and recommendation.” This defines the present acute condition of affairs in Italy and the theory of the necessary reaction from dogmatic orthodoxy to bellicose rationalism perfectly explains the state of things among the educated Indian classes which we have been combating since our first arrival here in 1879. The first object of revolt is the gaining of liberty, the use inevitably made of it by enfranchised thinkers is to study the bases of their ancestral creeds, and the ultimate outcome is, in the case of every person of naturally religious temperament, to take back the religion of their childhood, but now as a living and beautiful thing instead of a theological mummy.

CHAPTER XV

AFTER THE CONVENTION

MRS. BESANT, having contracted with an Australian Manager to make a lecture tour throughout Australia and New Zealand (?), with the special understanding that she should be free to lecture on Theosophy, gave a farewell lecture at the Blavatsky Lodge on “The Meaning of Devotion,” and on the following Wednesday left for Australia; Mr. Bertram Keightley went with her as a fellow-passenger as far as Colombo. Mr. Judge and Dr. Buck got off for New York on Saturday, the 21st, and I bade them farewell at Euston Station.

On the previous evening I went with Mrs. Besant to Bow Street to officially close the Women’s Club which, it will be remembered, had been started with a capital of £ 1,000 given to H. P. B. for this philanthropic object. The experiment had proved a failure, probably because its moral tone was too high and there were no male fellows, potential lovers, to fill in the time with courtships and kisses. We had a very pleasant evening, however, and the girls were amusingly enthusiastic over my singing of some Irish songs—things that they could very easily understand, being on their own intellectual level.

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On the 22nd I went to Ramsgate to lecture and had a large audience despite a rainy evening. Whether the result of a low barometric pressure, or not, I cannot say, but I note in my Diary that the questions put and answered after the lecture were unusually stupid. Returning to London the next morning, I got through a lot of office-work and in the evening attended a meeting of the London Lodge at Mr. Sinnett’s house, at which I met a number of my oldest friends in Theosophy.

On the 30th of the month I went to Liverpool and lectured. It was at this meeting that a red-headed Irishman convulsed the audience by expressing his views about my lecture on “Reincarnation,” and flinging at me what he expected to be a staggering question: “Misther Chairman, Sur, I’d loike to ax Colonel Olcott a quistion. Here he’s been talkin’ to us a lot of sthuff about rayinkyarnation, but what does he know about it, at all? Can he till me fwat I wuz in me last birrth: wuz I Julius Cæsar or a moommy?” Of course a roar of

laughter rewarded him, but, keeping a solemn face and looking towards his corner of the hall with an expression of bland benevolence, I replied that the gentleman had put so profound a question as to make it clear that he was a thinker who went to the bottom of things; that I made no pretence to seership, and could not, like some of my colleagues, look behind the veil to the past, I could only judge from analogy. As the gentleman had kept so quiet throughout the evening, I might have been [277] warranted in supposing him to have been a mummy in his last previous birth; but now that he had broken out in his martial way we might imagine it possible that he had been that great Roman General, Julius Cæsar. The audience seemed to appreciate the joke, and the questioner, like a true jolly Irishman, finding the laugh turned against him, was silent and, I passed on to the next question.

Southport was my next stopping-place and there I gave a private lecture to our members and their friends and answered questions. Next, on the 1st of August, I moved on to Manchester, and at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Larmuth, F.T.S., held a parlor talk with a roomful of company. The next morning was devoted to visitors and after luncheon I went to Bradford where our dear friends, Misses Pope and Ward, entertained me. At the lecture in the evening I found in the audience one gentleman whom I had met in Japan in 1889, and one who was on the steamer with me going to Sweden in 1891. On the 3rd I went to York, where a lecture was given in the evening to an appreciative audience on "Theosophy and the Theosophical Society". Middlesborough, the great iron-manufacturing centre, where was held the quarterly Conference of the Northern Federation previously alluded to, was my next station. I presided at the meeting and addressed the delegates of nine Branches and two Centres; after which I moved on to Harrogate, and at 10 p.m. reached the hospitable house of our colleague, Mr. Goode, a retired Purser of the P. & O. Company's [278] Service. My lecture on the following evening was, by request, on "Theosophy and Buddhism". In the course of a drive into the country a couple of days later, my host took me to one of those quaint old hostelries made familiar to us by writers on English country life, but the like of which is not to be found in all my own country. It was called the Clap Gate Inn. On the old creaking sign outside was painted this gem of poetry:

This gate is free,
And hinders none,
Refresh and pay,

And then pass on.

The, common-room is quaint to a degree, with old oaken settles near the fireplace and opposite, a stone-flagged floor, small window panes and a general air of cosiness that makes it easy to imagine how the place must look of a cold winter night with a bright fire burning and the cheerful landlady, Mrs. Mary Ann Brown, serving out to each bucolic customer his favorite tipple.

Leeds was my last halting-place during this short tour before leaving for Ireland. I lectured at that place on the evening of the 7th, was put up by Mr. W. H. Bean, F.T.S., and on the 8th took train for Holyhead, from whence I was to cross the Irish Channel to Dublin. I reached the Irish capital at 9.30 p.m. and was taken straight to the local headquarters at 3 Upper Ely Place, where I held a conversation-meeting from 10 to 11 and then was free to remove myself to the chummery of the genial Bates brothers, whose house-keeper [219] was the daughter of my old friend, Mrs. Londini, of Liverpool. On the next morning I had a reception for visitors at headquarters, took tea with Mr. and Mrs. Dick there later, and at 8 p.m. lectured on "Theosophy" at the "Antient Concert Rooms". My return passage to London, via Holyhead, was stormy and thoroughly disagreeable, equal to that one had to endure in bad weather between Colombo and Tuticorin. However, I got safely to Avenue Road before midnight, glad enough to get to bed.

On the afternoon of the 11th I called by appointment on Sir R. H. Mead at the Colonial Office, to discuss the obnoxious "Quarter-Mile Clause" in the Ceylon Education Bill. This, as my readers may know, was an ingenious trick of the Missionary party to prevent Buddhist villagers from opening, schools within a quarter of a mile of any existing Christian school: as all the best sites had been occupied by them already it amounted to an exclusion of the Buddhists from their own villages for school purposes, and left them the option of erecting their buildings away from a convenient centre or of sending their children to schools where they would be taught that their religion was idolatrous paganism, infinitely inferior to Christianity. Sir Richard Mead and I were old acquaintances, my first interviews with him dating back to 1884 when I was settling the difficulties of the Sinhalese Buddhists with Lord Derby and the Colonial Office. A more genial and fair-minded official than Sir Richard it would be hard to find.

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For over a year Maskeleyne and Cook had been coining money at their theatre in the Egyptian Hall with a disgraceful libel on the Theosophical Society and H. P. B., introducing into their play, "Modern Mystery," a number of very clever illusions and imitations of psychical phenomena. Among these was an aërial suspension. A man is made to lie upon a board apparently suspended in mid-air; Maskeleyne walks around him and waves a drawn sword above and below the plank to show that it is neither suspended by hooks from the ceiling nor supported by props beneath: an illusion of course, but by what means done I cannot say. Another illusion was the apparition of a man dressed in Oriental garb, coming out of a dark background, and illuminated by gradual degrees by some hidden light which produces what was meant to be the effect of a radiant aura: there is also the phenomenal dropping of letters or written messages, composed in the sight of the audience, by a man dressed up to represent our dear H. P. B., but who spoke with an Irish brogue. In collusion with her was a person called "Professor" something, who was supposed to be a learned German chemist, with no moral principle to speak of; a rich young woman figures as the selected dupe of the conspirators. My name was brought into the dialogue, it being intimated that they could not depend on my standing by them if I should discover their trickery, but the representative of H. P. B. said that they could use my name for some time yet and that it behooved them to hasten the [221] plucking of the pigeon in question. Altogether it was a revolting spectacle, and made one wish that he might have the offenders in some breezy place "out West" where a good cowhiding could be indulged in with the consent of public opinion. I had a mind to take legal proceedings for defamation, but by advice of counsel abstained, as the chief party aggrieved was dead and the Society would have no standing in Court as a legal entity. I am not sure but that, after all, this libel with its run of a year and more, and its audiences numbering many, many thousands, did not do us on the whole more good than harm; and so let it pass into oblivion along with the many other futile attempts to harm us and check our irresistible movement.

CHAPTER XVI

THE BUDDHIST BOYCOTTING BILL

(1894)

THE contrast, between the dense, murky, depressing atmospheres of London, Sheffield, Birmingham, and the other great cities of England and the country about them is so vivid as to be impossible of conception to one who has not personally visited them. How well I remember the sort of horror that came over me when I first awoke one morning and looked out of the window into the smoke-laden atmosphere of Sheffield; I could scarce believe my eyes and instinctively consulted my watch to see whether I had not, by mistake, arisen before sunrise, It was from some such experience in London that I went, on the 14th of August, down to Maidenhead to visit Miss Müller at her country place. I had left behind me the clouds and darkness of the metropolis and came into a sunlit, gloriously fresh landscape picture where one could realise some fore-taste of paradise in living, the birds singing in the trees, the high-bred cattle and sheep, browsing in the emerald meadows, and the flowers sending out their sweet scent into the air. However, the change was but a [228] momentary one and then came the undesired return to town and its official drudgery.

My conference with Sir Richard Mead at the Colonial Office and my presentation of the Protest and Appeal of the Sinhalese Buddhists and of the Convention of School Managers (held at Colombo, June 16, 1894), who had appointed me their special delegate to bring the matter of their grievances before Government, resulted in my receiving from the Marquess of Ripon, K. G., then Secretary of State for the Colonies, a letter of a very encouraging character and, in fact, the matter was satisfactorily settled and was reported to me at the T. S. Convention of 1894 by Mr. A. E. Buultjens, then General Manager of Buddhist Schools under my supervision. The question was of too much importance to be passed over in this narrative with the brief mention made of it last month. It was a covert blow at the whole Buddhist educational movement, which would have been fatal but for the vigilance and courage of Mr. Buultjens and our Buddhist

committee, and the benevolent sympathy shown by Lord Ripon, though himself a Roman Catholic in faith. It was the twelfth clause of the Education Code of the Department of Public Instruction, amended in 1892 and the two successive years in such a way as to prejudicially affect the registration of Buddhist schools to a very serious extent. The text of the clause in question, with the amendments introduced for the first time in 1893, printed in italics, is as follows:

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“Excepting in towns with special claims, no application will, as a general rule, be entertained for aid to a new school when there already exists a school of the same class within two miles of the new school, without some intervening obstacle, unless the average daily attendance in the new school for one year prior to the date of application for aid exceed 60 in a boys’ and 40 in a girls’ school. But in any case, however large the attendance, no new school will be aided within a quarter of a mile of an existing school of the same class, excepting in towns with special claims as aforesaid.”

I feel it necessary to dwell at some length upon this question because it shows what serious obstacles have had to be surmounted by the Sinhalese Buddhists, in their fight against their ill-wishers, to secure the right to educate their children without sending them to schools organised by the enemies of their religion with the avowed object of drawing them away from their ancestral faith. The Sinhalese are not so intellectual as the Hindus, but I maintain that they deserve the greatest credit for the persistence with which they have, since 1880, kept active the educational movement which I helped them to start at that time. Mr. Bultjens, in the temperate appeal which he made to Lord Ripon for justice, and which it was my privilege to present to the Colonial Secretary, explains the working of the Twelfth Clause as follows:

“Immediately after the publication of the Draft of the Code for 1893, a petition signed by over 2,000 leading Bhikkhus and laymen praying for the rescission [225] of this quarter-mile Clause, otherwise known as the Buddhist Boycotting Bill, and for the adoption of the principle of Local Option was presented to the Legislative Council in November, 1892, and the Hon. the Colonial Secretary then promised to give it his consideration. But as your Lordship may see from the correspondence annexed, no redress of the grievance was granted. On the contrary the Hon. the Colonial Secretary (in No.4) refers to paragraph 11 of the Code, which does not affect the question at issue, since as a matter of fact schools are annually opened and registered as grant-in-aid schools. Thus

according to the 'Administration Report of Public Instruction,' the increase of newly registered schools was from 971 in 1891 to 1,024 in 1892; so that paragraph 11 did not apply to the 51 new schools registered in that one year. In the third paragraph of the letter No.4, the Hon. the Colonial Secretary practically asks the Buddhists to open schools away from the Centres of population, leaving them the alternative either to educate their children under hostile religious influences or to keep them illiterate...

“When every effort failed to prevent the rescission of the new rule from the Code, and the clause became law, the Director of Public Instruction was requested by letter at least to save from the operation of the clause four schools which had been opened before the clause came into operation in 1892. But even in this, justice has been denied, and the villagers were compelled by the Director to pull down the [226] buildings of three schools and to erect them away from their old site. The total cost for the erection of the three new schools was Rs.1.000, and the Director has not even offered compensation for the injury done, but the expense has been entirely borne by villagers. Only after the buildings had been pulled down were two of the schools registered, that is to say the Director of Public Instruction compelled the removal of the school from the village Nugegoda to the village Kirillapone, and the removal of the school from the village Karagampitiya to the village Nedimala. It is needless to point out to your Lordship that a Government official could hardly have selected a better method than this of practically bringing before the villagers an object-lesson of the character of the British Government for justice and religious neutrality.

“The effect of the operation of the quarter-mile clause is by no means over, and your Lordship’s special attention is directed to the cases of the Weragampita and the Kurunegalla schools which, though opened prior to 1892, up to date remain unregistered. The entire Buddhist community is roused by a sense of the injustice done to these two schools, and your Lordship’s kind interference is prayed on behalf of this question, for we fear that the Director may be influenced still more by the powerful missionary bodies to introduce fresh clauses into the Code calculated to hinder the people of the land from the registration of their schools.”

In a letter to the Director of Public Instruction, Ceylon, dated September 19th, 1892, Mr. Buultjens says:

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“2. The Buddhist public are grateful for the principle of absolute religious toleration publicly proclaimed by the Government, and relying on that pledge they have of late years opened a large number of schools in several provinces, and completed the erection of buildings before the new clause came into operation.

“3. In many localities—especially towns—where all the other denominations have hitherto opened schools it is virtually impossible to establish a new school in any desirable place without infringing the new clause.

“4. To open schools far away from the centres of population would be courting failure, whilst leaving the other sects in pre-emptive possession of the best sites.

“5. The Buddhist schools are essentially the life of the Buddhist nation, and experience has proved that on the whole the Buddhists are reluctant to send their children to the schools of the other denominations, owing to the difference of doctrines taught in them.

“6. The greater portion of the revenue is obtained from the taxes paid by the Buddhists, and it seems unfair that money so raised be expended on more than 1,000 schools of other denominations, whereas less than 30 Buddhist schools have hitherto been registered; even granting that this is largely due to their own ignorant neglect of Departmental rules.

“7. The Buddhists do not attempt proselytism, but claim the right to open schools wherever they can [278] secure a sufficiently large attendance of children of their own faith, and they do not ask for any privilege to open schools in villages where those of another faith predominate... I beg also to submit that the principle of Local Option would be very readily accepted by the Buddhists as a clause in the Education system.”

Every intelligent Western reader will see what a cunning and, at the same time, illegal scheme it was to make the new clause retroactive, so as to not only bar the way against the opening of new Buddhist schools in villages already pre-empted by the Christian Missionaries, but also to compel the Buddhists to tear down and move away schools actually established before the Act went into effect. However, with the progress of time, matters have been mended, a rather more tolerant spirit is being shown and, very recently, Mr. D. B. Jayatilaka, our present General Manager of Buddhist schools, was appointed a member of the Government Board of Education. According to his last Annual Report to myself there were 132 registered schools and 26 applications for registration were

pending; the grants earned during the year footed up to Rs. 31,390-0-7: at the same time the expenditure was Rs. 42,509-1-7. This deficit is the burden which presses upon our self-sacrificing Buddhist colleagues: how great it is can only be appreciated by those who are acquainted with the average poverty of the Sinhalese people.

My time was partly occupied during the next few days with the preparation of photographs from the [229] mementos of H. P. B.'s early New York phenomena which were to be engraved for my].

On the 20th of August Lord Ripon wrote me to call on him on the following Thursday afternoon, and at the appointed time received me very kindly at the Colonial Office; he hoped that the good Sinhalese, for whom he expressed a kindly feeling, and whose efforts to promote the education of their children he thought very praiseworthy, might get out of their difficulties. I asked him if he had any message to send to the people of India, among whom his memory was so affectionately preserved. He said: "Yes. Tell them that I shall never forget them nor lose my interest in all that concerns their welfare. I have the happiest recollections of my stay in that country." On the same evening I presided at a meeting of the Blavatsky Lodge and bade the members farewell. On the following morning I went to Albert Docks, and embarked on the P. & O. mail steamer "Peninsular": many friends saw me off.

CHAPTER XVII

AUSTRALASIAN SECTION FORMED

BEGINNING with some stormy weather we soon settled down to a voyage of smooth seas and bright skies. A few hours' detention at Gibraltar enabled us to go ashore and look around. At Malta we had more time and availed ourselves of it to visit St. John's Church, which is surely one of the most interesting religious edifices in Christendom. The floor is paved with tombstones bearing the names, arms, and epitaphs of the knights of St. John and Malta, of various nationalities, who took part in the Crusades and other wars. I was much interested in reading among them nearly all the Portuguese names that are so familiar in Ceylon, the Pereiras, de Silvas, Fernandos, De Mels, etc., etc., the families of none of which supplied Crusaders but which simply bought of the holders of those patronymics, for agreed sums in hard cash, the right to bear them along with the nobiliary prefix of "don". After an uneventful voyage we reached Bombay at daylight on the 15th of September.

One of the last things that I did in London was to officially adopt a scheme of international correspondence devised by Mr. Oliver Firth, F. T. S., of Bradford, ^[281] England, and by him called "Hands across the Seas," and to recommend its plan to all Sections and Branches. Properly speaking, this duty would belong to the Corresponding Secretary of the Society, but in our case it was impracticable, H. P. B. having been our Corresponding Secretary from the beginning, and in respect to her memory, the resolution having been taken not to choose a successor to her. Mr. Firth's scheme was in the nature of a substitute and a very useful and practical one, too. To carry it out I appointed Mrs. Cooper-Oakley to the office of "Federal Correspondent," defining her duties to be "to answer inquiries from strangers or unattached members of the Society living in parts of the world not yet brought under the Constitutional supervision of a chartered Section, and to aid them in obtaining our literature and forming permanent relations of correspondence with willing members or Branches". I appointed Messrs. Firth and M. U. Moore, of London, as assistants. The advantages of such a regulated system are too obvious to require dwelling upon. Scattered over the world are many isolated members-at-large who have near them no Branch nor Centre with which they can correspond, and so are, perforce, driven to confining themselves to the reading of books and magazines, without the possibility of getting solutions to the questions which arise in the course of study. To such

persons the creation of a correspondence agency is a real boon.

Among the exasperating petty annoyances that I had to undergo at the time of which I am writing, [237] was a scheme for removing the T.S. Headquarters to some other place and selling the Adyar property: a visionary scheme, propounded at a time when I was in disfavor among my London and New York colleagues who had got tired of me as President and were not disposed to regard my opinions or preferences. To settle effectually this question I issued an Executive Notice on the 27th of September containing the following points:

“1. That the Adyar Headquarters property was only bought after all parts of India had been visited, and the comparative advantages of many sites had been carefully studied.

“2. That the Founders were encouraged to purchase it by the superior Advisors whom they recognised as authoritative.

“3. That the undersigned has seen no other site at the same time so pretty, healthful, geographically convenient, commodious, and cheap. The sole annual expense is within Rs. 40, for taxes, for which sum per mensem it would not be possible—so far as the undersigned knows—to hire a Headquarters one-fourth as suitable for our purposes. And wherever we might be, it is doubtful if any smaller sum than we now spend would suffice to pay wages, horsekeep, repairs, etc.

“4. That, for the foregoing and other reasons, the undersigned, Managing Trustee for life of the T.S. and responsible for the safe custody of the archives, library books, and other property, will not—unless circumstances entirely change—sell the Adyar property [238] nor remove the T.S. Headquarters to any other country or place.”

A reception was given me at our Bombay headquarters with the usual exchange of addresses and the bedecking with garlands; a lecture on “The Ideals of Theosophy” followed at the Novelty Theatre on the afternoon of 17th September, and I left for Madras by the mail train of that evening. A great mass of editorial work and correspondence had to be disposed of during the first days after my return. On the 24th His Holiness the Swami of Sivagangam Mutt, a very important guru of the Advaitis, came to visit me, with forty followers tramping after the palanquin in which he was carried, after the old Hindu fashion. It was a most picturesque scene when the procession filed up through our leafy avenue towards the house. He was most gracious in the lengthy

conversations which were held between us, and spoke with great appreciation of the collection of manuscripts in our Oriental Library. When he left us—at 3 p.m. the next day—he gave me a red shawl, two limes and some red rice, adding his blessing.

By the foreign mail of that week I sent to the Trustees of the British Museum my copy of the Proclamation of Secretary Stanton offering \$100,000 as a reward for the capture of Wilkes Booth, the assassin of President Lincoln, and his accomplices, Surratt and Herold, together with the photographs of the three conspirators attached to the document. This was a great rarity, perhaps the only copy that had been preserved during [284] all those years. On the morning after Lincoln's assassination, the Secretary of War telegraphed me to New York to come to Washington and assist in the attempts to capture the fugitive assassins and prepare the evidence for the trial when it should come off. I was at that time Special Commissioner of the War Department, and so under the direct orders of Mr. Stanton. On my arrival he associated me with two other officers as a Military Commission, and so the document in question came officially into my hands.

On the 30th of September the cooking class was begun at the Pariah school which had been opened, sixteen children were taught curry-making, Mr. Ryden and I tasted the result and the teachers and pupils had a hearty meal: the class has been kept up ever since.

By the 1st of October the entire sum embezzled by the late Treasurer had been made good to the Society through the generosity of members, and the deficits in the H. P. B. Memorial, the Olcott Pension, the Subba Row Medal, the Headquarters, and the Permanent Funds, together with the sum stolen out of my private account, were transferred to those accounts respectively from the Suspense Account which I had created for the intermediate custody of the subscriptions until the deficit had been made good. The whole amount so generously contributed was a trifle over Rs. 9,000. About this time I devised and superintended the alterations in the room intended for Mrs. Besant's occupancy when she should be at Adyar.

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Meanwhile Mrs. Besant had safely reached Australasia and was carrying everything before her. The Melbourne Argus, Age, and Herald spoke in enthusiastic terms of her lectures on Theosophical subjects and said that large

and appreciative audiences were crowding the halls where she spoke. The Age said that “Mrs. Besant, with her charming fluency and her impressive style kept the audience in the most rapt attention during the whole evening”; the Herald described one of her discourses as “more of a poem than a lecture—an ethereal kind of epic, such as Shelley might have recited after a course of training as a platform orator”; as one paper put it, “she drew a magic circle round the audience and they continued under the influence of the spell from start to finish.” In a racing community like that the closing phrase was only to have been expected. The whole tour was a phenomenal success, and for this, large credit is due to Mr. Smythe, the famous Australian Manager, who possessed that in-born tact which enables the manager of public entertainments to know exactly how to create and keep alive popular interest in the matter which he has in hand. She made her acceptance of the offer of the tour conditional on her being allowed to discourse on Theosophical subjects and, beyond doubt, did more than any other agency to draw the attention of the pleasure-loving Australians to these high themes. On the 25th of October she sent me the following official notification:

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“DUNEDIN, N. Z.,
25th October, 1894.

“Acting under your authority, I have arranged with the Branches in Australasia to form them into a Section, and they have accepted the proposal of Mr. J. C. Staples as General Secretary for the coming year. Later it is hoped that there may be two Sec-tions, Australia and New Zealand, but for the present they unite to form the Australasian Section. Will you therefore kindly confirm this action, and give them the authority and privileges as to Lodges, Charters, Diplomas, etc., enjoyed by other Sections.”

It will be remembered that Mr. Staples came to Adyar in December of that year, on his way out to take up the appointment of General Secretary. How admirably he performed its duties is known to all who are acquainted with the history of our Society, and if one cares to learn how lovingly his memory is preserved one need only ask the first member of an Australian Branch whom one may chance to meet.

CHAPTER XVIII

W. T. STEAD ON H. P. B.

(1894)

A PARAGRAPH in the October “London Letter” in the Theosophist about the completion of Mr. Stead’s first volume of Borderland, reminds me to put on record my sense of appreciation of the substantial service rendered to psychical science by that quarterly publication. It certainly was one of the most important agencies for the dissemination of correct ideas as to the interrelation between this world and the frontiers of the next. It covered a field not previously occupied, one on which the students of physical and those of transcendental science could meet and co-operate. In his forecast for the second year of his magazine, Mr. Stead, in rebuke of those who showed more zeal than care in pushing on research into the higher planes of consciousness said:

“Borderland is not to be surveyed and mapped out in a year, and students must not be in too great a hurry.” His main conclusion as to the results of the first year’s work is that “whatever else may be dubious it is becoming tolerably clear that the new faith will [200] have the persistence of the individual after death as its chief corner-stone, and a demonstration of the almost undreamed of potentiality of the complex congeries of personalities that make up our Ego, as its chief contribution to human thought”.

It occurred to me when compiling the present chapter that it would be instructive to look up the first volume of Borderland (year 1894) and see what was the drift of public opinion about this class of research at the time when Mr. Stead drew it out by his prospectus of July, 1893. It was sent to a large number of prelates, men of science, and other persons of distinction. The instructive fact was elicited that the religious, leaders of the Roman Catholic and Protestant denominations, who had the greatest reason to collate all possible proofs of the survival of man after death, and should have, more enthusiastically than others, welcomed the advent of the phenomena of spiritualism, clairvoyance, thought-projection and transference, hypnotism, and the whole range of phenomena

associated with the experiments of magic, of both colors—since the teachings of the Churches would thus find experimental corroboration—for the most part expressed their strong disapproval, even their scorn for such studies.

Nothing could have been more disdainful than the tone of the Archbishop of Canterbury—not to Mr. Stead, for he disdained a reply—but to a mutual lady friend, to whom, at her request, he wrote his opinion. Other bishops and clergy regarded all such [299] phenomena as the work of the devil; the Roman Catholic Bishop of Nottingham wrote that “no one holding the Catholic faith can doubt that the attempt you propose to make is grievously unlawful, and fatally dangerous to souls. The intelligence which uses your hand (Mr. Stead was then very successfully experimenting with automatic writing), and of which you are not conscious, is no other than the Devil, and if you continue such unlawful intercourse with the unseen you will necessarily be misled to your ruin by the enemy of God, the murderer of souls and a liar from the beginning.” Father Clarke, S. J., has views equally reactionary as to these researches. He says: “We expose ourselves thereby to be tricked and made fools of by beings of a superior nature to ourselves, and our bitterest enemies. Under the tempting bribe of a revealed knowledge of our condition after death, we are liable to be cajoled by spirits whose one object is to deceive us, and, *sub specie boni*, to divert our minds from Truth and from God.” What nonsensical chatter, what a mumbling of the shrunken spectres of mediæval monkish teaching!

But, on the other hand, Mr. Stead got encouraging replies from some clerics and many laymen, professors and others. Mr. Balfour, now Prime Minister of Great Britain, replies: “If, as I do not doubt, the intention and effect of this undertaking will be to promote a strictly scientific investigation into this subject, it cannot be otherwise than useful. You will, of course, be overwhelmed with unverified stories and vague [240] surmises, but these you will doubtless be able rigidly to exclude from your pages.” Another and greater statesman than he, and his predestined successor in the Premiership, now [1903] Viceroy of India and Baron Curzon of Kedleston, but then plain Mr. G. N. Curzon, M.P., displays that same brave declaration of opinion and capacity for grasping special fields of knowledge, that have been so conspicuously shown since his coming to India. He writes to Mr. Stead:

“I entirely sympathise with your projected publication of a quarterly review dedicated to the examination of so-called spiritual or supernatural phenomena. The existence and reality of such phenomena appear to me to be as amply

demonstrated by reliable evidence as are many of the axioms of exact science; and if your magazine can succeed in displaying, analysing, correlating, and popularising this evidence, you will perform a great public service by carrying conviction home to the public mind.

“You may also be able, by slow degrees, to dissipate some of the suspicion in which the area of Borderland is enveloped, arising from the peculiar and unsatisfactory conditions under which many of the phenomena take place. I allude to—

“(1) Their capricious, irregular, and fortuitous manifestation.

“(2) The apparently imbecile character of many of the so-called spiritual communications.

“(3) The unscientific nature of the media of communication commonly employed.

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“(4) The general impression that such studies have an unsettling and mischievous effect, and can only be pursued at the cost of peace of mind, sometimes of bodily health also.

“Your review will also be useful in facilitating that co-operation with others in which many inquirers would like to take part, without the preliminary difficulties now attendant upon any such action.”

Some of the replies, as for example, from Professor Ray Lankester; Professor Fitzgerald, Trinity College, Dublin; and others, were bitter, scornful, and sometimes insolent, but as futile as had been those of their colleagues of previous generation in checking research. Spiritualism, hypnotism, astrology—yes, even that—have gone on with ever-increasing power and expansion, while as to Theosophy, so far from its having been checked, the number of our Branches since the date of Mr. Stead’s circular has doubled, having been at the close of 1893, in number 352, and at the close of last year [1902], 714! It is a pity that Mr. Stead’s other imperative public engagements should have forced him to abandon the publication of Borderland after issuing only four volumes, and having made it one of the most widely circulated quarterlies in the world.

With the lapse of time the popular conceptions about Madame Blavatsky are undergoing that slow but sure change which marks the universal law; the stories to her discredit are being forgotten, the recollection of her personality is being thinned to a [242] shadow, and little by little there is rising in its place, and showing

bright against the screen of the past, the luminous figure of the sage who taught us and the guide who showed us the path upward and encouraged us to break through the obstacles that lay across its mouth. In an article on “Colonel Olcott’s Madame Blavatsky,” in his *Borderland* for October, 1894, the epoch of which we are writing, Mr. Stead, with clear insight and almost prophetic forecast of the results of her work, says things so notable that I feel I shall be conferring pleasure upon my readers in quoting him at some length. None of H. P. B.’s intimate friends will approve of the coarse terms in which she is spoken of as to her personality, but we may forgive much to a man who, without being a Theosophist or her declared follower, has so magnanimously analysed the causes and growth of her influence. He says:

“In this sketch I have no intention of reviving the controversy about the sliding panel and the Coulombs. If everything be true that Dr. Hodgson and the Psychological Research Society say about her, it only heightens the mystery, and adds to the marvel of the influence which Madame Blavatsky undoubtedly has exercised, and is exercising, at the present moment. For the most irate of the sceptics cannot deny, and will not dispute, the fact that the Theosophical Society exists, that it is far and away the most influential of all the associations which have endeavored to popularise occultism, and that its influence is, at the present time, felt far and wide in many lands, and in many Churches. The [248] number of pledged Theosophists may be few, although it is probably greater than most people imagine. But the Theosophical ideas are subtly penetrating the minds of multitudes who know nothing about Theosophy, and are profoundly ignorant of all the controversies which have raged round Madame Blavatsky.

“This is eminently the case with the doctrine of reincarnation, and with the altered estimate which the average man is beginning to form of the mystic teachers and seers of India. Reincarnation may or may not be true. Whether true or false, it has, until the last decade, been almost unthinkable by the average Western. This is no longer the case. Multitudes who still reject it as unproved have learned to recognise its value as a hypothesis explaining many of the mysteries of human life. A few admit that there is nothing in reincarnation antagonistic to the doctrine of Christ, and that it is quite possible to hold firmly all the great verities of the Christian revelation, without rejecting the belief that the life of the individual, upon which judgment will be passed at the Great Assize, is not necessarily confined to the acts done between the cradle and the grave, but may be an existence of which such a period is but one chapter in the

book of life. Altogether apart from the question of the actual truth of the doctrine, it is indisputable that the sympathetic recognition of the possibility of reincarnation has widened the range of popular thought, and infused into religious speculation some much-needed charity. And this, which is unquestionably a great achievement, [244] will ever be associated with the name of Madame Blavatsky.

“Still more remarkable has been the success with which this remarkable woman has succeeded in driving into the somewhat wooden head of the Anglo-Saxon, the conviction—long ago arrived at by a select circle of students and Orientalists, of whom Professor Max Müller may be said to be the most distinguished living representative—that the East is, in matters of religious and metaphysical speculation, at least entitled to claim as much respect as the West. That indeed is stating it very mildly. ‘The snub-nosed Saxons,’ as Disraeli used to love to describe the race which made him Prime Minister, are learning somewhat of humility and self-abasement before the races whom, by use of material force, they have reduced to vassalage.

“Down to quite recent times the average idea of the average Englishman— notwithstanding all the books of all our pandits—has been that the Hindus were benighted and ignorant pagans, whom it was charity to subdue, and a Christian duty to attempt to convert. To-day, even the man in the street has some faint glimmerings of the truth that these Asiatics whom he despises are, in some respects, able to give him points, and still leave him far behind. The Eastern sage who told Professor Hensholdt that the West studied the stomach, whereas the East studied the soul, expressed strongly a truth which our people are only beginning to assimilate. We are learning at last to respect the Asiatics, and in many things to sit at their feet. And [245] in this great transformation, Madame Blavatsky again figures as the leading thaumaturgist. She and those whom she trained have bridged the chasm between the materialism of the West and the occultism and metaphysics of the East. They have extended the pale of human brotherhood, and have compelled us to think at least of a conception of an all-embracing religion, with wider bases than those of which the reunionists of Christendom have hitherto dreamed.

“These two achievements, even if they stood alone, would have made Madame Blavatsky notable among the leaders and moulders of the thought of this generation. But they did not stand alone. Perhaps even more important was the impetus which she gave to the revival of the doctrine of the continuity of

existence beyond the grave, and the Divine justice which enforces the law of moral responsibility, unthwarted and un-interrupted by death. In an age when materialism has entrenched itself in the Churches, she made men realise that the things which are seen are but temporal and evanescent, and that it is the things which are unseen which alone are eternal. 'The future life,' which had become a mere phrase to many, has acquired a fresh and awful significance; and the essential spirituality of man has been asserted with no uncertain sound in the midst of a carnal and material civilisation. Nor must it be forgotten in the midst of the clash of polemical strife that, despite all ridicule and misrepresentation and abuse, Madame Blavatsky, by her unswerving and passionate assertion of the reality and [246] continuity of her communications from the Mahatmas, has revived the almost extinct belief of Christendom in the constant presence and active intervention of guardian angels and saints in the affairs of men.

“If Madame Blavatsky has done all this, it is surely beside the mark to consider that her claim to be considered one of the greatest Borderlanders of our time is not to be ignored even if it can be proved that, on various occasions, she lied like Sapphira, cursed like a trooper, and lived like Messalina. We might as well refuse to recognise what the Psalms have done for mankind, because of David's treacherous murder of Uriah, or insist upon ignoring the influence of Constantine upon Christendom, because of the scandalous record of that Imperial criminal. These moral blots and blemishes—many of which her most devoted followers admit—were limitations to her influence. They were in an ethical sense what her ugliness was in another sphere. Few people realise how much Madame Blavatsky was handicapped by her singular lack of beauty. A beautiful woman finds her good looks a veritable John the Baptist for her Gospel. The mere spell of her beauty makes the crooked places straight, and levels the obstacles which would otherwise impede her progress. But Madame Blavatsky had neither form nor comeliness. She had no complexion, no figure, and no grace. She was almost disgustingly fat, and almost repulsively hideous. From another point of view she was equally unfortunate, Jeanne d'Arc and St. Teresa, two other Borderlanders [247] in our gallery, achieved their triumphs in their own country, and both were the incarnation of the national and religious spirit of their time. It was far otherwise with H. P. B. If there is one nation that is popularly believed to be antipathetic to the English-speaking race, it is that to which she belonged. If there is any section of, our Imperial realm where Russophobia exists in its most virulent form, it is in Anglo-India. But it was precisely there where Madame Blavatsky began her active apostolate of Theosophy. That with all these disadvantages she achieved

so much, is a fact which should never be lost sight of in attempting to estimate her place in the Gallery of Borderlanders.

“Those who, after duly considering what Madame Blavatsky accomplished, still cling to the belief that they ‘have demolished the whole fraud,’ by their conclusive demonstrations of the sliding panel at Adyar, brought to light by the Coulombs, are welcome to their conclusion. For us, and for most men, Carlyle’s terse and weighty words in reference to the complacent stupidity, which for centuries dealt in similar fashion with the Apostle of Arabia, suffice as a warning.”

On the 12th of November arrived at Bombay that great scholar and renowned publicist, Dr. Hübbe-Schleiden, the acknowledged author of that German policy of colonial expansion which Prince Bismarck fashioned out of his writings. Since 1884 he had been associated with us in our work in Germany and was now coming to India to perfect his knowledge of Hindu philosophy by getting it at first hand from the [248] pandits themselves. He was received on landing at Bombay, at my request, by our local Branch, garlanded on board the steamer, and taken to the Lodge room. A few days later he arrived at Adyar and was warmly welcomed by all the residents. Meanwhile Mr. Bertram Keightley had left for a tour in Southern India.

The Executive Notice of 7th October, notifying the Society of the expulsion of Alberto Sarak, alias Das, alias Martinez, alias Count, alias Dr., alias General Inspector and General Delegate of the Supreme Esoteric Council of Thibet, was circulated to the General Secretaries at this time. It was worded as follows:

“The Society is notified that Señor Alberto Das, formerly of Spain, and subsequently of Buenos Aires, Republic of Argentina, South America, has been expelled from membership; his two diplomas, the second of which he obtained under an alias, are hereby cancelled; and the charter granted him for the organisation of the Luz Branch T.S., at Buenos Aires, has been rescinded, and a new charter issued to Señores D. Federico Fernandez, D. Alejandro Sorondo, and their associates.”

Of course I have mentioned this person at various times and I only recur to the subject now so that his Theosophical history may be taken into our permanent record. It is almost beyond belief to what lengths credulity will carry persons who have an insatiate hankering for all that is mystical, without the counterpoise of sound common sense. At this very time of [249] writing, I am about to report to

the Indian Police the case of a confidence man who has been making money out of dupes by pretending to sell them mysterious medicines and other secrets, and affixing our title of F.T.S. after his name.

By the overland mail which reached me on the 20th of November, I got news that Mr. Old had published in the Westminster Gazette, eight chapters of a series in which the entire private papers of the Judge case were included. This is one of the disagreeable incidents in T.S. history which I would have been glad to pass by without notice; things have so entirely changed since then that Mr. Old, after having brought all this trouble upon us and withdrawn from membership, is now figuring again as a contributor to the Theosophical Review. But if I were to pick out only pleasant incidents and omit the others, my present work would never be regarded, as it now must be, as an absolutely veracious and impartial narrative of events. The papers in question were the various briefs of evidence and original documents which were to have been laid before the Judicial Committee if the Judge case had gone to trial; since it did not, then, clearly, these documents should never have been published, but have been laid by in our archives as historical data. I had given them into the custody of Mr. Old—then resident at Adyar—and for the preparation of copies: they were mine and no one else's until I chose to publish them if I ever should. Mr. Old had not the shadow of a right to either print (260) them himself or give them over to a third party for publication without my written consent. On 27th September he notified me that being “unable to accept the official statement with regard to the enquiries held upon the charges preferred against the Vice-President of the T.S.,” he resigned the office of Treasurer and Recording Secretary. So far, so good; but his dissatisfaction did not constitute him the appellate authority to set aside the findings of the Judicial Committee, nor give him the right to put our private papers into the hands of one of the most unsympathetic and caustic literary experts on the London press. This mistake of his he, himself, regretted when he found what use was made of the documents, but too late, for the merciless articles of the Westminster Gazette circulated throughout the whole English-speaking world and caused us all much sorrow. So far as appears at this distance of time, not the least good was effected; on the contrary the articles embittered the feelings of the Judge party and doubtless hastened the taking of the fatal step of Secession by Mr. Judge and his followers.

Mr. Sven Ryden, a Swedish member of the Golden Gate Lodge who had been acting as Treasurer and Recording Secretary, with great acceptability, finding it

necessary to return to San Francisco, was relieved of his offices from the 12th of October, and left India, carrying with him our best wishes. Mr. T. Vijiaraghava Charlu was appointed to act in his place.

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As the Indian National Congress had arranged to hold its Annual Meeting at Madras this year on the same days as our Convention, and as many of our friends were members of both bodies, a timely circular was issued asking that all who were likely to attend our meeting as delegates or visitors should notify us in advance so that the necessary preparations might be made. Only those who have been here on such an occasion can form an idea of what it means to find lodging and food for 250 to 300 delegates and as many more visitors, to everybody's satisfaction. Our quiet home is then the scene of the busiest activity.

CHAPTER XIX

MR. JUDGE DENOUNCES MRS. BESANT

THE discontent shown by Mr. Old, as narrated in our last chapter, was seething throughout the whole Society; petitions, remonstrances, copies of resolutions, poured in to me from all parts, many demanding that Mr. Judge should be called upon to publish a defence or resign; others, recommending him to make no defence, as their confidence in him was unshaken. A circular put forth by him on the 4th of November, "By Master's Direction," purporting to be addressed to members of the E.S.T., instead of clearing up the affair made it still more entangled. He and Mrs. Besant had been jointly in charge of this secret body, but now Judge, with supreme audacity, arrogated to himself "in full all the functions and powers given to me by H. P. B. and that came to me by orderly succession after her passing from this life," and declared himself "the sole head of the E.S.T." "Hence," he continues, "under the authority given me by the Master and H. P. B., and under Master's direction, I declare Mrs. Annie Besant's headship in the E. S. T. at an end." Coming from a man who, during ten of the years of his pretended close relationship with [258] the Masters, was writing me the most despairing letters and complaining that he was unable to get the smallest sign of their personal interest in him, this was a piece of audacity indeed. The whole circular was a most unsatisfactory document, disingenuous and self-laudatory. Mrs. Besant is made out to be much less important than himself in the E. S. T., a "Secretary, because she had great ability in a literary way... but this did not make her a teacher". He goes on to say that he has a large body of instructions given him "all the time from 1875, which I shall give out and have given out, as far as I am directed"; a palpable misstatement if his letters to me mean anything. In support of his claim to be a qualified teacher he refers to what H. P. B. said in her Introduction to Volume I of The Secret Doctrine, viz., that "she taught Colonel Olcott and two Europeans. I am one of the latter". He then proceeds with some confessions about myself which ought to surprise that large number of his followers and those of Mrs. Tingley who, in reading the history of the Theosophical movement, have found all reference to me and my work persistently suppressed. He says:

“Colonel Olcott is the old standard-bearer, and has been the medium for teaching, himself having Chelas whom he has instructed, but always on the lines laid down by the Master through H. P. B. He was selected by the Master to do a certain and valuable work not possible for anyone else, and he was never taken into the E. S. by a pledge, for, like myself, he was in the very [254] beginning pledged directly to the Master. His main work has been that great and far-reaching work in the world, among not only ordinary people, but with kings and rulers, for the sake of this cause, which the Masters knew he was to do for them.”

After paying compliments to Mrs. Besant’s “devotion and sincerity of purpose,” and confessing that she had given “many years of her life to the cause of the oppressed as she understood it,” and admitting that, during the previous five years she had “done great service to the T.S. and devoted herself to it,” he proceeds to paint in dark colors the downward path she was then treading because she had tried to force herself “along the path of practical work in that field”. “Sincerity,” he tells us, “does not confer of itself knowledge, much less wisdom”: he then becomes critical and didactic, holding her up as an example of failure to be avoided by other postulants for wisdom.

“Mistakes made by such a disciple will ultimately be turned to the advantage of the movement, and their immediate results will be mitigated to the person making them, provided they are not inspired by an evil intention on the person’s part. And I wish it to be clearly understood that Mrs. Besant has had, herself, no conscious evil intention: she has simply gone for a while outside of the line of her Guru (H.P.B.), begun work with others, and fallen under their influence. We should not push her farther down, but neither will the true sympathy we have, blind our eyes so as to let [255] her go on, to the detriment of the movement. I could easily retire from the whole T.S., but my conceptions of duty are different, although the personal cost to myself in this work is heavy, and as I am ordered to stay I will stay and try my best to aid her and every one else as much as possible. And the same authority tells me that ‘could she open her eyes and see her real line of work, and correct the present condition in herself as well as the one she has helped to make in the T.S. and E.S.T., she would find herself in mental, physical, and spiritual conditions of a kind much better than ever before, for her present state is due to the attacks of the dark powers, unconsciously to her’.

“And now it becomes necessary under instructions received, to give the members of the school some account of the things behind the scenes in

connection with the recent investigation attempted at London upon the charges against me.

“The two persons around whom its noise arose are Mrs. Besant and myself. Prior to that, in 1891, after the death of H. P. B., Col. H. S. Olcott, the President, was the centre of a disturbance due to his resignation, and that disturbance was due to the same forces working from behind to try and disintegrate the T.S. by causing its old-time President to leave office before his death. The recent troubles centred around us because I was made the object of an attack in the guise of an attempt to purify the Society, and Mrs. Besant was thrown forward as the official accuser of myself--a friend who was certified to her by H.P.B., [256] her teacher, and well known as working for the T.S. for many years. All this needs light, and the best interests of Mrs. Besant and of the E.S.T. demand that some of the secret history shall be given out, however disagreeable it may be, in order that the very purgation which was improperly directed to the wrong quarter shall take place now. The difficulty arose when in January or February Annie Besant finally lent herself unconsciously to the plot which I detail herein; but prior to that (from August, 1893), those managing that plot had begun to work upon her.

“The plot exists among the Black Magicians, who ever war against the White, and against those Black ones we were constantly warned by H.P.B. This is no fiction, but a very substantial fact. I have seen and also been shown the chief entity among those who thus work against us and who desire to destroy the whole movement and especially to nullify the great work which H.P.B. began for the Western nations. These Black Magicians have succeeded in influencing certain Brahmins in India, through race-pride and ambition, so that these, for their own advantage, desire to control and manage the T.S. through some agent and also through the E.S.T. They of course have sought, if possible, to use one of our body, and have picked out Mrs. Besant as a possible vehicle. One object of the plot is to stop the current of information and influence started by H.P.B. by deflecting thought back to modern India. To accomplish this it is absolutely necessary to tear down the tradition clustering [257] around the work of H.P.B.; her powers and knowledge have to be derogated from; her right to speak for the Masters has to be impugned; those Masters have to be made a cold abstraction; her staunch friends who wish to see the real work and objects carried on have to be put in such a position as to be tied hand and foot so as not to be able to interfere with the plans of the plotters; it has to be shown that H.P.B. was a fraud and forger also. These men are not the Chelas of our Masters.

“The name of the person who was worked upon so as to, if possible, use him as a minor agent of the Black Magicians and for the influencing of Mrs. Besant is Gyanendra N. Chakravarti, a Brahmin of Allahabad, India, who came to America on our invitation to the Religious Parliament in 1893. At the first, sincerely, desirous of helping the race by bringing to the American people the old truths of his forefathers, he nevertheless, like so many before him, permitted ambition to take subtle root in his heart. Fired with the ambition of taking position in the world as a Guru, though doubtless believing himself still a follower of the White Brotherhood, he is no longer in our lines; on the contrary, his mediumship and weakness leave him a vehicle for other influences also... His ability to be used as an unconscious vehicle was made known to me when he was made to receive the message. Although he was not fully aware of it, not only was the whole of his tour here well guarded and arranged, but he was personally watched by agents of the Masters scattered throughout the country, unknown to him, who reported [268] to me. On several occasions he has taken people into his confidence, believing that he was instructing them, when in fact they were observing him closely for the Lodge, helping him where right, and noting him fully, though they did not tell him so. This was also so in those parts or his tour when he believed himself alone or only with Mrs. Besant.”

The strikingly cruel feature of this case is the eagerness shown by Judge to nullify, so far as possible, Mrs. Besant's personal influence and at the same time to inflict on her as much pain as he could as a punishment for her having obeyed the call of duty, at my instance, by formulating the charges of misconduct which were to have been laid before the Judicial Committee. To speak with all candor, I must say that I thought that Mrs. Besant, and nobody else, should stand as Accuser, because no other person had done so much as she in creating for him the fictitious appearance of occult knowledge and confidential relations with the Masters upon which he had traded in his scheme for acquiring not only the Presidentship but also the occult Successorship to H.P.B. Without this endorsement by her he would never have dared to assume the authoritative tone which runs through the document we have been quoting from and all his literary output from the date of the London Committee meeting onward until his death. Mrs. Besant was simply led away by her congenial nobility of motive and honorable confidence in her co-workers. In this instance, to doubt Judge seemed to her monstrous, [269] and the animosity which she and those most nearly associated with her felt for myself had this blind trust in him for a basis, for I was never carried away for one moment by his pretensions: how should I be, in

the face of the multitude of disclaimers and appeals for help that he had addressed to me? Her tender-heartedness for him led her to put information about the case into his hands before it was time to use it judicially, and it was only in December of that year, when she came to Adyar and compared notes with me, that she could bring herself to believe that her estimate of his character and acts had been wholly wrong.

Yet we see in the above-cited passages that he accuses this dear, unselfish, loyal friend, this sister of the distressed and the oppressed, this potential martyr for humanity, with having gone about America before and after [believing him to be a criminal, yet treating him as a dear and valued friend, in short, playing the part of an abandoned hypocrite. And then see how he repaid her services to him and his Section that season, especially at [where her splendid eloquence crowned our Theosophical Congress with such brilliant success as, it was said, was greater than that of the Congress of any of the great world-faiths represented there by delegates. He depicts her not only as a hypocrite, nourishing the futile ambition to be my official successor, but worse than that, a practitioner of Black Magic allied with the fiendish enemies of mankind, and the helpless, hypnotised tool of one of [260] the most brilliant scholars of modern India, Professor Chakravarti, whose private character is without a stain and whose life has been lived in sight of the whole world. For an educated Indian the worst of all charges that could be made against a man is this very one of dabbling in sorcery, for, as I have often explained, the Hindus have voluntarily no dealings with the dead nor with sub-human spirits: such things are pursued only by the least advanced of the races inhabiting Hindustan. So the malice which prompted this accusation is palpable. I might quote much more from this evil-intentioned circular “issued in the E.S.T under the, protection of pledges made by all its members,” but my mind revolts, and I find, as I marshal the facts of this history before me for condensed record, that it is very hard to see all this turpitude uncovered without losing that judicial impartiality which should be my guide.

Let us turn our backs for the moment upon this whole matter and take a look around the Theosophical field while we are waiting for the month of December to pass away and bring us to the meeting of the Convention at which the Judge case was brought up and passed upon. One of the important events of this season was the creation of a Theosophical centre at Johannesburg, South Africa, by two or three earnest men who have kept our torch burning throughout the whole stormy period of the late war and who, with the coming of peace, are reviving its

activity with un-abated zeal. Mr. Kitchin, formerly of the Leeds [261] Lodge, had joined them in September, 1894; a lending library was formed and a press propaganda begun after a systematic plan. After [adjourned, Vivekananda, Dharmapala, and other Eastern speakers travelled about the country, giving lectures and creating that widespread interest in Theosophical ideas which has never since been extinguished.

Mrs. Besant's Australasian tour moved on its course of triumphant success and, after finishing the Australian continent it took her over to New Zealand. It is amusing to see how completely the popular idea of her personality was belied by the facts. It appears, from what one writer said, that they had "half expected to see a fire-eating virago, full of fury and repulsive personal eccentricities, whereas there stepped into view one of the most modest and womanly women they had ever seen. Instead of her bellowing in strident tones a diatribe against social order, they heard a silvery voice speaking wisdom in faultless phrases, acting for a mind which seemed to have stored away in itself a profound knowledge of each of the several subjects of her lectures. The most eminent statesmen and judges gladly presided at her meetings and introduced her to the Australian public in terms of the highest respect." The Sydney Herald said of her fourth lecture:

"It was a great oratorical effort—probably the most eloquent discourse ever delivered from a platform in this city—and the large house was visibly affected.

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"It was quite a study to watch the audience during the hour and a half that Mrs. Besant was addressing them. There was no coughing, no sneezing, no whispering, no going out for a drink....

"The listener who sat upright in his chair was the exception. The great majority bent forward towards the stage luminary, and the house resembled, to a certain extent, a plot of sunflowers or a bevy of fire-worshippers with their faces turned towards the sun.

"But the lecture was something more than a mere flow of oratory. Mrs. Besant appealed to the reason and not to the imagination of her hearers, and adduced strong arguments in support of the propositions she put forward. In the course of her address she attacked the scientific theories of heredity and atavism, and in the encounter with science, Theosophy usually came out on top.

"Three or four times during the evening the pent-up feelings of the audience

found vent in cheers. But the applause seemed to disconcert rather than to encourage the lecturer, and seemed almost as much out of place as it would have been in a cathedral during the progress of the service. The ovation tendered to Mrs. Besant at the close of the lecture was well-timed, and could not fail to be acceptable to the recipient.”

An earnest Christian writes to a Sydney paper, proposing that the attempt be made to induce Mrs. Besant to hold a public meeting of all the Christian [269] sects, at which they should be persuaded to unite on a common platform for the advancement of the religious spirit. He says:

“I. am sure our religious teachers and people, somewhat blinded by prejudice, do not know what sort of a woman we have in our midst. Could she, as an apostle of the broadest and truest Catholicism, be missioned forth so to the wide religious worlds, she would do more to promote universal union and harmony than any other could do. The crying need of this is on our Anglo-Saxon tongue everywhere. I firmly believe in the practicability of her power of achieving such a work: and it would be an achievement second to nothing but the founding of the Great Evangel itself by the Divine Master, devoutly revered by the dominant civilised races of the present epoch of the world.

“No one can listen to her, especially in her semi-private gatherings, without being impressed that she is possessed of transcendental ability, and of the truest Catholic, Christ-like piety and love. She is so overflowing with wisdom and knowledge that if she is not divinely inspired, I have no higher conception what such a one would be. She is so logical and eloquent, yet simple, apt, and convincing of speech, that I have never witnessed her equal in either man or woman.”

Another leading Sydney paper said about her lecture on the “Meaning and Working of Reincarnation”:

“This is one of the fundamental principles of the Theosophic creed, and although at first acquaintance [264] it would seem to contain nothing but uninteresting and unattractive elements, yet when the matter is gone into, and especially when it is so eloquently expounded by such a remarkable thinker and orator as Mrs. Besant, there will be found in it much that is worth thought, and much that will repay careful and reasonable investigation. One of the extraordinary features of Mrs. Besant’s charm and force as an orator is that, no matter how technical the subject of her discourse is, she always manages to deal

with it in an attractive light, gripping the attention of her audience at the start, and by the force of her oratory, the perspicuity of her reasoning, and the instructiveness of her matter never releasing that hold until the end. Last night the lecturess had what in other hands would have been a painfully dry, scientific and ethical subject to deal with, but for an hour and a quarter she engrossed the attention of her audience while she combated the widely accepted evolutionary theories of heredity and atavism, and offered the doctrine of reincarnation as a basis on which to found a new conception of human duty, and as an explanation of many apparently irreconcilable and unintelligible facts in life.”

There, let this series of vivid pictures of the real Annie Besant as she appears when doing her work as a teacher and the friend of all, of whatsoever creed or nationality, who may aspire towards the attainment of noble ideals of life, thought, and conduct, stand out in contrast with the painful caricature, painted in gall [285] and mud by an ungrateful co-worker, and the reader will be prepared to appreciate the remarks made by the several speakers about the Judge case at the then forthcoming Annual Convention of our Society, the report of which will come before us in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XX

CONVENTION LECTURES INAUGURATED

THE next palpable evidence of the spread of discontent among our members was the handing in, on the 12th of December, of the resignations of membership of Mr. S. V. Edge, and Mrs. R. Batchelor, of Ootacamund, the enthusiastic daughter of our dear and staunch old friend, Major-General Morgan. I must confess that both these resignations surprised me, for Mr. Edge had been peculiarly active as a worker both in London and Madras, and his retention of membership seemed about as certain as anyone's could be; while Mrs. Batchelor had been an extremely affectionate friend and admirer of H. P. B. and towards myself quite filial in her attitude. It was at this time that Mrs. Elin White, formerly of Seattle, about whom I have spoken above, joined the staff at Adyar with the intention of settling down permanently to work.

The letters received by the foreign mail of 18th December showed plainly enough that a split in the Society was imminent, that it was dividing into the hostile camps of the pro- and anti-Judge parties. The amusing feature was that the leaders of both cajoled and petted me as though they needed my help.

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On the same day Mrs. Besant telegraphed from Colombo her forthcoming arrival, and on the 22nd we gave her a hearty welcome for herself and those in her company, Dr. Hubbe-Schleiden, Mr. J. C. Staples, and Mr. Bertram Keightley. Mrs. Besant had intended deferring her reply to the outrageous slanders of the Westminster Gazette based upon the documents improperly supplied to the editor by Mr. Old, but on second thought, determined not to put it off, as it was important that her reply to the malicious charges against herself should be published as soon as possible. She therefore devoted a day to the matter and took her manuscript to the office of the Madras Mail, in which paper it duly appeared. Delegates had already begun to arrive for the Convention and from this time on they came in shoals.

As the Indian National Congress was meeting at Madras that year as above noted, I had arranged with its leaders to begin the sessions of our Convention on

Christmas Day, instead of on the 27th as usual. At 8 a.m. of that day, Mrs. Besant inaugurated the system of morning lectures on chosen subjects of general interest, which has since been so marked a feature of our annual gathering. Her subject was “The Self and Its Sheaths,” and how ably it was treated is known to the thousands who have read the pamphlet containing the verbatim report of the course of four lectures. An immense crowd had gathered, despite the early hour and the distance of our Headquarters from the heart of the town.

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The Convention proper assembled at noon when my Annual Address was read and a Resolution, supported by a magnificent speech, was offered by Mrs. Besant, and seconded by Mr. Keightley, requesting me to ask Mr. Judge to resign his office. As this document and that part of my Address referring to the case, present its features in a perfectly clear and dispassionate manner, thus enabling the reader to learn the truth, I think that I shall be doing a real service by rescuing them from the inevitable oblivion which would await them if left in pamphlet form, by making them part of this permanent record. I go on to say that petitions, remonstrances, and other communications about the case had come in so numerous as to make it appear that something definite and final must be done at once. The opinions of our members were classified thus:

“1. The American Section, with the exception of some individuals of the best class and some of lesser importance, stands solidly in his favor. I have even had it intimated that if Mr. Judge should be forced to resign, the Section will secede in a body, form an American Theosophical Society independently, and elect him President.

“2. The Dublin, Brixton, and some other European Lodges have passed votes of confidence; copies of a draft of Resolutions in his favor are circulating in France, Belgium, and Holland, and being sent me numerously signed; and I should not be surprised if a large number of excellent people in the European [269] Section should unite with the Americans to form the new Section in the event of a split. The Bournemouth and some other British Lodges and a large number of English Theosophists call on him to explain or retire. German opinion is reported to me as being adverse to him. Spain is against him, France divided, Holland divided.

“3. Australasia, so far as I have any direct intimations, is on the side opposed to Mr. Judge.

“4. India has, to my knowledge, sent in no protest in his favor, although many members recognising his immense services and his tireless activity in official work, deprecate any hasty action based on ex parte newspaper charges. The Poona T.S., through its President, “demands his expulsion from the Society”. The above facts prove the existence of the strong antagonistic currents of feeling above noted.

“What courses are open to us and which should we choose? I offer the thoughts which occur to me with the hope that I may be judicially impartial, regardless of all personal feeling or bias.

“Firstly. The Constitution of the Society must be rigidly adhered to at whatsoever cost. Not to save or to expel one man or twenty, will I swerve a hair’s breadth from the strict letter of the law. In July last, both the General Council and Judicial Committee voted to quash the proceedings against the accused on a point which, although technical was nevertheless irrefutable. Whatever is now or may hereafter be done in this affair, therefore, must be constitutionally [270] done. As we cannot legally try Mr. Judge, Vice-President, for alleged misdemeanors committed by W. Q. Judge, individual; and as the individual cannot be tried for his private opinions, we have to fall back upon the moral aspect of the case, and see how an individual accused of the immoral act of deception usually behaves. We have the familiar precedent of H. P. B. who, before leaving India—for the last time, as it proved—placed her resignation in my hands in order to relieve the Society from the burden of defending her against the charges of the Coulobms and the Missionaries. The Convention subsequently passed a vote of confidence, which I officially conveyed to her, and this restored her to her former status in the Society. State Cabinets invariably resign office upon the passage of a legislative vote of lack of confidence. This is the unwritten, sometimes the written, law of honor. Frequently, the resigning official offers himself for re-election or again accepts office, if so requested. From the fact that I had to over-rule the point made by him that he was not and had never been Vice-President de jure, I was led to believe that Mr. Judge was disposed to follow the same course as far as relinquishing that office was concerned. But, however that case may be, I should, if the case were mine, do as I have more than once before, both within and without the Theosophical Society, offer my resignation but be ready to resume office if my superiors or colleagues showed that I possessed their confidence, that there was a necessity for my so doing, and circumstances [271] permitted. While the Society cannot compel Mr.

Judge to resign and offer himself for re-election, and a very large body of our members advise him not to do so, he has it in his power to relieve the present strain by so doing and to thus enable the whole Society to say whether it still wishes to be represented by him before the world, or the contrary. Such a course would not affect his relations with the American Section or the Aryan T.S., those concerning only the Section and Branch, and having no Federal character, not coming under the purview of other Sections nor being open to their criticism. International action is only called for in Federal questions.”

I felt it my duty to draw the attention of the Convention to one aspect of the case which had a distinct and important bearing upon the question of Mr. Judge’s guilt or innocence: a view which would of necessity suggest itself to every practical student of occult science. I said:

“It is proper for me as a student of Practical Psychology of very long experience, to draw attention to the important fact that, even if the charges of forged writing and false messages brought against Mr. Judge were made good before a jury, under the exoteric rules of Evidence, still this might not be proof of guilty knowledge and intent. This must not be overlooked, for it bears distinctly upon the question of moral responsibility. Every student of Modern Spiritualism and Eastern Occultism knows that a medium, or psychic, if you prefer the word, is often irresistibly impelled by [??] an extraneous force to do acts of turpitude of which he is incapable in his normal state of consciousness. Only a few days ago, I read in the learned Dr. Gibier’s ‘Analyse des Choses,’ a solemn statement of this fact accompanied with striking examples in his own practice. And the eminent Professor Bernheim also proved to me this dreadful fact by hypnotic experiments on patients in the Hôpital Civile, at Nancy. Equally well known is it that persons, otherwise accounted sane, are liable to hallucinations which make them sometimes mistake their own fancies for spiritual revelations and a vulgar earth-bound spirit for an exalted historical personage. All this moment, I have knowledge of at least seven different psychics in our Society who believe themselves to be in communication with the same Mahatmas and doing their work, who have each a knot of disciples or adherents about them, and whose supposed teachers give orders which conflict with each other’s! I cannot impugn the good faith of either of these sensitives, while, on the other hand, I cannot see my way to accepting any of their mandates in the absence of satisfactory proof of their genuineness. So I go on my way, doing my public duty as well as I can see it, and leaving to time the solving of all these mysteries. My objective

intercourse with the Great Teachers ceased almost entirely on the death of H. P. B., while any subjective relations I may have with them is evidence only to myself and would carry no weight with third parties. I think this rule applies in all such cases, and no amount of mediumistic phenomena, or of clearest [278] visions of physically unseen Teachers by psychics who have not passed through a long course of training in Raja Yoga, would convince me of my duty to accept blindly the mandates of even well-meaning advisers. All professed teachings of Mahatmas must be judged by their intrinsic merit; if they are wise they become no better by reason of their alleged high source; if foolish, their worthlessness is not nullified by ascribing to them the claim of authority.

“In conclusion, then, I beg you to realise that, after proving that a certain writing is forged and calculated to deceive, you must then prove that the writer was a free agent before you can fasten upon him the stigma of moral obliquity. To come back to the case in point, it being impossible for any third party to know what Mr. Judge may have believed with respect to the Mahatmic writings emanating from him, and what subjective facts he had to go upon, the proof cannot be said to be conclusive of his bad faith, however suspicious the available evidence may seem.

“The way out of the difficulty lies with him, and with him alone. If he should decide to neither give any satisfactory explanations nor to resign his Federal office, the consequence will undoubtedly be that a large number of our best people of the class of Mr. Herbert Burrows, will withdraw from the Society; while if he should, his numerous friends will stand by him all the more loyally throughout. I do not presume to judge, the case not being before me on its merits.

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“I must, however, express my profound regret that Mr. Judge should have circulated accusations of resort to Black Magic, against Mrs. Besant and Mr. Chakravarti; neither of whom have ever, so far as I have been able to judge in years of personal intercourse, done the least thing to deserve such a suspicion. As for Mrs. Besant, I can conscientiously affirm that in all my life I never met a more noble, unselfish, and upright woman, nor one whose heart was filled with greater love for mankind. The Theosophical Society owes her a debt it can never repay.”

After the reading of the usual official documents, Miscellaneous Business was

then in order, and the Judge case being called, Mrs. Besant rose and addressed the Convention. She first conveyed the greetings of the European Section as its delegate, stated that she had tendered her resignation as President of the Blavatsky Lodge as soon as Mr. Judge's insinuations to her disparagement had been put in circulation, so that the Lodge might be entirely relieved of responsibility for her actions if it chose, that she had been re-elected and was therefore free to serve as delegate of the Section and to offer the Resolution to which she was about to speak. Coming to the history of the case proper she recapitulated the facts already made known to my readers, and when the fact of the meeting of the Judicial Committee was arrived at in the narrative, said:

“Before that Committee objections were raised by Mr. Judge as to its jurisdiction. Let me say I had [275] drawn up six charges to lay before the Committee. Under each of these charges I had drawn up the evidence on which the charge depended. I had made what would be called a brief; the charges were the indictments; and the evidence was practically the speech of the counsel stating what the charges were. My only deviation from the legal action was this—that I sent a complete copy of the whole statement that I proposed to make, to Mr. Judge; that, I knew was outside the legal duty, but I did it in order that the case might be met upon its merits, that he might know everything I was going to say, every document I was going to use, and every argument I was going to employ. Although it was irregular for me to do so, standing as I did, I thought that the Committee was to try a brother, and as we did not desire any sort of triumph or any kind of advantage but only absolute truth, every possible opportunity for explanation should be placed in Mr. Judge's hands. I thought it right to send the whole of the documents to him, so that he knew every word that I should speak before the Committee.

“As I say, when the Committee met, Mr. Judge raised technical objections—one that was over-ruled, was that he was not legally Vice-President at all. That was one objection. The other objection was that, although he was Vice-President, the offence committed, if an offence, was not committed by him as Vice-President, but as a private member. You will observe that that was what in legal terminology is called a [276] demurrer. He did not challenge the facts of the case, but he challenged the jurisdiction of the Court before which the indictment was to be laid: the objection was held to be a good objection, and I agreed with the finding. I think the objection was well taken, from a legal standpoint, and I hold that Mr. Judge had the right to take the legal objection if he preferred to rely on a

demurrer rather than meet the case upon its merits. Every accused person has such a right in Courts of Law, and we are bound in dealing with members of our Society not to do anything which would be less generous, than the Court of Law would allow him, and not to deprive an accused brother of peculiar right of defence which he would have in the courts of his country and which he had a right to use before ourselves. Regarding that action of Mr. Judge's part as fatal to his own dignity and reputation, I urged strongly upon him not to shelter himself under the technical plea. I could do nothing more than that. The technical plea was held, and I think rightly, to be a good plea. The Committee decided that it had no jurisdiction and therefore could not listen to the charges, much less of course to any evidence in the matter. According to my view—that is my own opinion—the Committee should have risen the very moment it had arrived at that decision. Having decided that it had no jurisdiction, its work was over, and it should have adjourned; but instead of that—very likely I may be wrong in my opinion--it thought it right to allow Mr. Judge to state what would have [277] been his line of defence if the matter had been laid before the Committee. And on the statement of Mr. Judge that if he had defended himself it would have involved the question of Mahatmas, the Committee further decided that it should not have tried the charges.

“Then the Committee rose, and Mr. Burrows proposed that a Jury of Honor should be held. Mr. Judge refused a Jury of Honor, on the ground that his witnesses were in America and that it would take six months to get together his evidence. The only importance of that is as having bearing on the resolution of the Committee, which was passed by the Committee before this refusal was made: i.e., that it believed that Mr. Judge was ready to go on with the case, and therefore that he did not try to evade enquiry. The Committee said this on the statement of Mr. Judge, that he was ready to go on: when the Jury of Honor was proposed, and when it might have gone into the case, he withdrew the statement that he was ready to go on, and said that his witnesses were away and that it would take six months for him to collect the evidence. On the following day, in consequence of the strong pressure put upon Mr. Judge by his friends, he wrote and asked suddenly for a Committee. Such a Committee though, would never have been in any sense representative, and I felt the difficulty at once of refusing it or agreeing to appear before it—difficult to refuse because, however late in the day, Mr. Judge asked for it; and difficult to appear before it, because some of [278] the best members had left the place; so that it would have been a Committee without authority and without dignity, and the whole matter would have been

hurried through in a way not conducive to a proper investigation. Therefore, entirely on my own responsibility—here you have a perfect right to judge me if I was mistaken in the action I took on myself—I made a statement in which I declared my own firm belief that these letters were not genuine, that the writing was a simulated writing, and that it was done by Mr. Judge. I read that statement before a meeting of Convention delegates and Mr. Judge followed it, with a statement denying it, and then it was printed and sent out to the world.

“Now comes the point as to the articles that appeared in the Westminster Gazette. These articles were based on documents supplied by Mr. Old, including the documents which I was prepared to lay before the Committee, as well as certain other documents which belonged to the Esoteric Section, which I should not have laid before the Committee. I was and am under a promise of secrecy regarding those documents, and under no possible conditions would I have broken the promise I made. But in addition to the evidence which was published in the Westminster Gazette, there was a considerable body of other evidence having an exceedingly strong bearing on the case; so in judging of the value of the statements of the Gazette, for the purpose of this movement, I take all the documents which deal with the exoteric and public matters.

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There were others in addition, which would have been laid before the Committee, had I been allowed to lay them. I now pass on to those proposals which I lay before you. Now it is said, and truly said, that the statements are ex parte statements; but while you admit that they are ex parte statements on the part of newspapers, you must remember that they are statements which would have been laid before a Committee where Mr. Judge would have been present—statements that he might have answered if he desired to answer them, and therefore they are not ex parte statements in the ordinary sense of the term. If statements are made when a person has had no opportunity of answering them, it is right to demand an answer and to form no opinion until the answer is made. If the statements have been placed in the hands of the accused person, and he then, knowing the statements and the evidence in support of them, elects to shelter himself under a technical demurrer in order to prevent an open trial in regard to the statements made, then he has no right to claim the advantage of sheltering himself under the plea of the statements being ex parte statements, when they come before the world in the form in which they now appear. Therefore I consider that that is not a legitimate plea, because the defence and answer might

have been made, and ought to have been made, at the time.

“In addition to the statement of fraud against Mr. Judge, there are statements against me for condoning the fraud, and against Colonel Olcott and Mr. [280] Keightley for similar condonation. We are challenged to answer the accusation and I will deal with it in a moment. Let me say also that it is said that we had a conspiracy of silence. Against this there is this fact, that I was bound under a legal agreement of 1893, to be in Australia on the 1st September last for a lecturing engagement. I was therefore obliged to leave London, and I took the last ship which made me land in Australia the day before that on which my first lecture was to be delivered. By sitting up all night before I started for Australia, I managed by myself to direct a copy of this inquiry, with my statement that I believed that these forgeries had been made, to all the leading London papers. In addition to that, I sent to all these papers a statement which I had drawn up and submitted to certain well-known persons, with regard to the policy of concealing or evading truth, or considering that ordinary morality was not binding on anyone who stood as an occultist. I drew up that statement and took weighty names to sign it, because I considered the protest was necessary against the policy adopted by Mr. Judge, and I desire that all the members of the Society should know that the President-Founder, Mr. Sinnett, Mr. Keightley, Mr. Sturdy, myself, Dr. Westcott (who has a peculiar following in Europe) and Mr. Leadbeater (who is well known in Ceylon)—these people, who were known as eminent Theosophists, should be known to stand to absolute truth against any sort of paltering with it or evasion, against fraud of any kind; so that the Society might remain clear in [281] the world’s face. I sent that also to the London papers, and I sent it with a private note from myself asking them to give full publicity. I placed all these documents in the hands of my friend Miss Willson, of the London headquarters, and asked her to deliver them by hand at the newspaper offices. The Westminster Gazette was one of the papers I wrote to asking for publicity. So I do not think there was much hushing up, as far as I was concerned. They say I “rushed” away. That is true, under the circumstances I told you. But Colonel Olcott was there for over a month after I had left. He was there till the end of August, he would have answered any question that was asked, and he is the highest official in the Society. The papers did not say one word about the whole thing. The Westminster Gazette kept absolute silence, and three months after these facts were sent it by myself, when I was in New Zealand and when it knew that I could not possibly answer it in less than another three months, it then brought out all the accusations, together with the accusations

against myself for condoning fraud, and for endeavoring to hush the truth of the matter for advantages, monetary and otherwise, that were obtained by belonging to the Society, and for the sake of the general position which I hold as one of the leaders of the movement.

“A telegram came to New Zealand stating that an exposure had been made, and a little later another telegram saying that, in consequence of the exposure, Mr. Judge had expelled me from the Society. I was [282] not able to answer them beyond saying there must be some mistake, not knowing what had really occurred, and the papers met me in Ceylon when I landed from Australia. I wrote at once to the Daily Chronicle to say that an answer would be sent as soon as I landed in England. But on reading the articles on my way to Madras, I saw no reason to delay the answer, and I wrote that answer without delay after I arrived here on Saturday evening, and took it yesterday down to the Madras Mail, where it will appear to-morrow. I went to, Reuter’s Agent and telegraphed to the Chronicle that the answer would come by the first English mail. That answer is now being printed as a pamphlet, to the number of 20,000 copies, and will be sent to every Branch of the Society, in order that the full facts may be laid before them in every part of the world. Now I say that to you, and you will see its bearing in a moment, on one of the proposals I make.

“There is in Europe a very strong feeling on this matter: I have received from the General Secretary of the Section a list of names eminent in the European Section, to whom have been sent out circulars asking those to whom they were sent to sign the circulars if they approved of Mr. Judge being called upon to make an explanation. Out of the eighty circulars sent, 65 answers have been returned. These 65 unanimously demand that explanation should be made. Out of these 65 signatories, 12 are signatures of Presidents of Lodges and Societies in Europe. In addition to that, there has been a kind of informal canvass which has [283] been placed in my hands, in which twelve Lodges and Centres demand that Mr. Judge shall explain or resign. One of them demands that he be expelled and the rest only ask for explanation or resignation. There are then seven centres and branches which take a somewhat indefinite position. Three on his side; the others ‘counsel delay’; one looks to the Adyar Convention to discuss the matter, and does not wish to fan the flame. The President of one refuses to place the matter before his Lodge at all, and one expresses no opinion, content to leave action to Headquarters. A more definite expression than that it is not possible at present to obtain, because there has not been time for the General Secretary to

get answers from all the Lodges. Mr. Mead wrote to me—I received his letter yesterday—stating what had so far been done and saying that he believed that an informal appeal had been sent to Colonel Olcott—and that is true—by Mr. Judge’s friends. No official notice had been sent to him, and the appeal had been circulated privately, so that he could only mention it as information for me, and not as the Secretary of the Section. I fully agree with what Colonel Olcott said. There is a strong feeling on both sides. Probably America is nearly unanimous in Mr. Judge’s support; there are exceptions, but very few. Probably Australia is equally unanimous against him, but you must discount that by the fact that I have been lecturing there and exerting personal influence—not against Mr. Judge, I did not mention his name, but gaining influence—and you [284] should bear this in mind when you are weighing the evidence of feeling. This is not a quarrel over individual opinions.”

We have reached the limit of our space for this month, and I must here interrupt the thread of the narrative, which will be continued next month, but I wish to call the attention of the reader to the magnanimity and sweet charitableness shown by the speaker against whom such foul charges had been made by Mr. Judge.

CHAPTER XXI

REPORT OF THE CONVENTION

(1894)

WE now resume our report of the Convention of 1894; Mrs. Besant is still speaking:

“No passion, no anger should come in; but you should endeavor to do justice. Therefore while Australasia may be unanimous against Mr. Judge you ought to discount it by the fact that I have been lecturing everywhere with enormous success and that influenced many people; and therefore it may be a momentary rush and not a permanent resolution. With regard to Europe the division is very great. I do not feel as a European delegate that I have any right to vote as a delegate on this matter. I lay before you exactly the facts of the division in Europe and I tell you my own personal opinions. When I return, there will be a very strong if not an overwhelming party in favor of the policy of truth, of absolute honor and uprightness, and unless something is done, some of our best people will immediately leave the Society and public propaganda will be rendered well nigh impossible. In England, for a ~~public~~ public man to be accused of dishonorable conduct and for him to refuse to resign office or to meet the charges, is a practically unheard-of procedure. I do not mean to leave the Society, and I shall not resign even though Mr. Judge refuses to resign and is not willing to give explanation. I shall go on with my work. But I am bound to tell you that on every platform on which I shall stand, I shall be met with this difficulty as to dishonor. I will bear it. I will face it, and stand by the Society despite the difficulty. My own approval goes with those who challenge the action of Mr. Judge as dishonorable, and regard the Society as most seriously compromised by having for its Vice-President such an official second in command—and first in command when our President leaves us, and another President has to take his place. Now this is the first opportunity that we have had of speaking. Therefore it is that I move the resolution, and let me say that I quite admit what Colonel Olcott said as to the possibilities of unconscious fraud under

mediumistic conditions, of wrong acts being thus done. But that is not a point which an official, such as the Vice-President of a Society that stands on a moral ground before the world, should take in his defence of official position. Mediumship is an excuse for the individual against moral judgment. It is no excuse for an official who under mediumship commits acts of moral turpitude, and has thereby shown that it is his duty to at once resign his official position, inasmuch as he is not responsible for his actions, and therefore must refuse to lead the Society into a position [287] so detrimental to its honor. I had better read the resolution and then you can follow the remaining argument:

““Seeing that a series of articles has appeared in the Westminster Gazette, London, containing charges of deception and fraud against Mr. W. Q. Judge, now Vice-President of the Theosophical Society; and

““Seeing that a strong body of evidence has been brought forward against the accused, and seeing that the attempt by the Society to bring the matter to an issue last July was defeated by Mr. W. Q. Judge on a purely technical objection to the jurisdiction of the committee; and

““Seeing that Mr. Judge, being Vice-President of the whole Society, has issued a quasi-privately-circulated attack against one section thereof, thus stirring up ill-feeling within the Society, and endeavouring to set the West against the East, contrary to the first object of the T.S. generally, and to the second object specially; and

““Seeing that this is the first occasion since July on which a representative body of Theosophists has been gathered together; and

““Seeing that immemorial custom requires of every honorable man holding a representative office in any Society to at once tender his resignation under such circumstances as are stated above,

““Therefore the anniversary meeting of the Theosophical Society resolves:

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““That the President-Founder be and is hereby requested to at once call upon Mr. W. Q. Judge, Vice-President, Theosophical Society, to resign the office of Vice-President; it being of course open to Mr. Judge if he so wishes, to submit himself for re-election, so that the Society may pass its judgment on his positions.

““Proposed by ANNIE BESANT.

“Seconded by BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY.

“The following are my reasons for submitting that resolution to you. I urge you to ask Mr. Judge to resign, because his office is an office for life, or rather during the life of the President. If it were only a yearly office, then at the end of the year you would have an opportunity of pronouncing your judgment as to whether you agree or disagree with having a man against whom certain charges had been levelled, as your officer. You have not the power of such an election, because the tenure of Vice-Presidentship is practically unique, save that of the President. The two stand apart. There is no re-election; therefore it is the more necessary that if a man is challenged, if his honor is challenged, he shall give his office back to the Society which has the right of saying either: ‘We will take you with the charges against you,’ or else: ‘We prefer to be represented before the world by someone else.’ I therefore call upon Mr. Judge to resign, and I say that he ought to restore to the Society its liberty of choice in this matter.

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“Then I call on him to resign because that course is always taken by honorable people when a challenge is made; not that the challenge is necessarily true. H.P.B., as the President told you, resigned the Corresponding Secretaryship the moment the Coulomb charge was laid against her. She was there as the Secretary. She resigned office the moment the charges were laid, in order that the Society might not be compromised by the attack made upon herself; by the vote of the Society confidence in her was declared, and then she took back the office. Is not that the precedent for Mr. Judge to follow, claiming, as he does, to be the pupil of H.P.B.,—leaving the Society to put him back in his place, as it put her back, if on a review of facts, it considers him innocent of the charges that are made against him? I say it is always done. So strongly do I feel this that, though I hold no office in the Society as a whole, though I am nothing more than the President of a local Lodge, holding my office on a yearly tenure, although I was re-elected President of the Blavatsky Lodge in September last, yet, in that these charges had been made against me in the following month, the same mail that takes my answers to the newspaper’s charges, carries my resignation of the office of President of the Blavatsky Lodge, and then I stand for re-election. If they think my answer is sufficient, they will put me back as President. But I will not hold office, even a local office for a year or the nine months remaining, unless, by their free-will they give it back to me, after my honor has been challenged [290] and my good faith has been impugned; and inasmuch as I am thus

challenged—and challenged also by Mr. Judge with the practice of black magic and with working under black magicians—I say to the Lodge, the only body to which I am responsible: ‘Here is the office you gave me before the charges were made; I will take it back if you give it to me, having listened to the charges made. But I will not drag you into the charges against me, I will save your honor as the Blavatsky Lodge, and cut myself away from you until you re-elect me.’

“Then there is another and a serious point. I have in my hand a document that ought not in a public meeting to be held by me. This document appears as an esoteric document written by Mr. Judge, sent to a person in India expelled from the Esoteric Section, published in the Westminster Gazette, in part, and completely, I am told, in a newspaper in Bombay; so that the whole of what is now thus published is public property. In that certain statements are made. I see their force perhaps more than you do, for the report of the American Section read to us just now, says in a veiled way what this circular openly says. I have to draw your serious attention to this as a matter affecting the future of the Society. It is stated in the document now before you that there is a plot, and in this which is circulated under the pledge of secrecy—but which is circulated in such a manner that it reaches the public press, and everything in it, slanderous or otherwise; has its full public effect on public mind—

[291] it is distinctly said that there is a plot amongst black magicians influencing certain Brahmans in India through race-pride and ambition, to control and manage the T.S.; that these magicians have picked me out as their agent, and have used as an intermediary my honored friend, Mr. Chakravarti, chosen, you will remember, by the Indian Section and some Brahmanical societies as their Delegate to the Parliament of Religions; that the Brahmans and their agents engineered the charges against Mr. Judge, and I practised black magic on Mr. Judge and two others.

“Mr. Judge further takes on himself to say that there are no true Initiates in India, and to praise the West as against the East, asserts that a great seat of Western Occultism is to be set up, and that this was the object of H.P.B. I am ashamed to say that the holy name of the Master is attached to this attack on the East, on the Brahman caste, and on individuals. Now my reason for bringing this forward is that it is being circulated all over India, and with what result? The Vice-President of our Society attacks the whole of the Indian Section, and all its Brahman members. Charging one of them by name, and the whole of them in this general vague way, with a desire to guide and control the Society; charging

some of them with black magic; charging them with using me as an agent and a practiser of black magic, in order to bring about this plot; so that an officer of the Society secretly circulates this kind of attack against one of the Sections, setting the East against the West, stirring up disunion and [292] unbrotherly feeling and strife in our midst; contradicting the very first declared Object of the Society, that we know no distinction between races, and contradicting our second Object, viz., to familiarise the West with the literature, philosophy, and religions of the East, and to demonstrate the importance of that study.

“I maintain that when an official takes up such a position, he ought at least to resign, so that the Sections may say if they desire to be thus represented in the face of the world; so that the Indian Section may have the right to say whether it endorses this slander, whether it considers that these attempts are being made under the shelter of black magicians, whether it considers, as it has the right to consider, that Mr. Chakravarti and myself are their agents; if so, we most certainly ought to be expelled. I say, when an official has to meet such charges, he is bound in the commonest honor to resign the office that protects him, and to allow the Society to re-elect him, if it endorses the statements he has made. These then are the reasons why I ask for his resignation. Let me say he misrepresents the feeling in the West. There is no such feeling against you, my Indian brothers; there is no such widespread belief in such a plot. Take America, and see how your own delegates were welcomed there. Take Europe, and see how Professor Chakravarti was welcomed; and I may tell you from my own personal knowledge that, so great has been the effect of the speeches which he made before the Chicago Convention [293] that some of the noblest of our people in England look at the present time to him as one of the best representatives of Eastern thought in the movement; and they will be outraged and scandalised by such a charge, coming with all the authority of the Vice-President, against him. Therefore I ask his resignation, I do not ask his expulsion; to expel him would be to take action too hurriedly, would be to take action that, I hold, you have no right to take, until the very last effort has been made to deal with the matter in gentler and kinder fashion.

“Myself and brother Chakravarti are most hit at, I both in public and in that circular. It is he and I against whom the worst and the foulest of these accusations come. I have had no opportunity of consulting with him; he is far away; he has taken no part in the whole of this business; and therefore, I am unable to say to you what his opinion is. I am acting on my own responsibility,

without his judgment, and therefore I may not commit him, not having asked his views; but I venture on my knowledge of him, to say one thing in his name, as I say it in my own, that we are the two that are most outraged by this attack—and we seek no revenge. I say to you, being thus charged, that I am not willing to expel my brother, I am not willing to forget the work he has done, and the services he has rendered. I have learnt that when you are struck at, you may not strike back in anger, nor deal with the matter with a personal bias, nor with passion, nor with wrath. I ask him to resign; and then he can [294] be re-elected if the Society thinks it right. That, I hold to be the duty of any honorable man. That, therefore, I hold to be his duty. If I have any influence with you, if my words can go for anything in pleading, if my desire has any weight in any of your hearts, I ask you not to use bitter language, not to be carried away by the insult to our beloved India or by any other reason. Arjuna was told to strike; Arjuna was told to fight; but without passion, unattached, separate from the outer action, and at peace within. Let us take that as our model; let us ask our brother to resign, and let him justify himself if he can. But do not prejudge him by expulsion, which puts another stigma on him in the face of the world. Ask him to take action which every honorable man may take, and which every honorable man ought to take. Ask our President to request him to do it, so that it may preserve peace of the Society.”

I think that when the next biography of Annie Besant is compiled, this speech, so full of kindly compassion, so free from even a tinge of malice, or even of that righteous indignation which is permissible to an innocent person whose character has been traduced without cause, should be brought into notice.

In seconding the Resolution, Mr. Keightley, in some condensed remarks, told about the part which he had taken in the meeting of Judicial Committee and his concurrence in the view of the case which it had taken when deciding upon the validity of Mr. Judge’s demurrer against its jurisdiction. Referring [295] to the fact of Mrs. Besant’s offered resignation of office in the Blavatsky Lodge, which had been unanimously declined, he instanced still another circumstance going to show how she had acted according to the generally accepted code of honor when she was under accusation. It was that when she and Mr. Bradlaugh, as officers of the National Secular Society, were criminally prosecuted for publishing a document popularly known as the “Knowlton Pamphlet”. The very moment that these proceedings were commenced, both Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant tendered their resignations as President and Vice-President of that society, to

which offices they were subsequently triumphantly re-elected and reinstated. He said that Mr. Judge, not having taken that course, had “placed the Society to which we all belong, in a position which is absolutely untenable”. Captain Banon, not satisfied with the mild measure suggested, moved, and Miss Müller seconded, an amendment to the Resolution that the President-Founder should be requested “to take the necessary steps in accordance with precedence to expel Mr. W. Q. Judge from the Theosophical Society”. Adverting to the spirit in which Mrs. Besant had moved the Resolution, Miss Müller said:

“Mrs. Besant has brought the charges against her colleague and friend, for whom I know she feels so great a tenderness, that she cannot press home against him that justice which time demands that we shall press home. I revere and love Mrs. Besant for her tenderness and womanly affection, which still bind [296] her to her old friend. So it is not for her, but it is for us to do all that is required. It is not for us to be affected by such things. We have got to do our duty before the world, however disagreeable it may seem to the Theosophical Society. This is the first opportunity we have had of expressing an opinion upon Mr. Judge. These charges which Mrs. Besant brings, she brought formulated against him and brought to him face to face during the Convention in July. I wish I had the time, that I had the opportunity and the eloquence, to tell you all exactly the spirit of characteristic forbearance and of tenderness, and purity of Love which she showed him day by day, hour by hour, minute by minute, and when he was trying his very utmost, with cleverness which would have frustrated her desire to get at the truth. Nobody who saw Mrs. Besant last year could but admire and love her, however he might differ from her views: I never saw such an exhibition of spiritual kindness and purity as she showed then.”

The debate continuing with great ability, our learned colleague, Dewan Bahadur S. Subramanier (since appointed to the Bench of the Madras High Court, and knighted by the Queen), in a very temperate speech, said that a prima facie case had been made against Mr. Judge with regard to forgeries and with reference to those forgeries he was called upon to defend himself in London, but evaded the defense. He thought that he should be called upon to answer the charges and if he then refused to answer, he should be expelled [297] by the General Council. The Chairman called the attention of the learned brother to the fact that, under the Constitution of the Society, we had no right to expel Mr. Judge or make him resign without giving him the chance of defence; this had already been done, and he therefore thought the amendment suggested by Mr.

Subramanier was superfluous. He called upon Dr. Hübbe-Schleiden, as an eminent Doctor of Laws, to give us his opinion. That gentleman endorsed unreservedly Mrs. Besant's remarks, but seconded the amendment of the Hon. Mr. Subramanier. Mr. E. M. Sasseville, a representative of the American Section and a member of the Society, of ten years' standing, supported Mrs. Besant's views. Mr. Keightley deprecated the plan of Mr. Subramanier, which practically asked us to go over the same ground which we had already traversed. Mr. C. V. Naidu, a well-known Pleader of the Central Provinces, was in favor of expulsion; the Countess Wachtmeister supported Mrs. Besant, and Mr. V. C. Seshachari ranged himself by the side of Captain Banon. The Chair, finding that the debate had gone far enough and that valuable time was being wasted, gave Mrs. Besant the floor for a rejoinder. She spoke as follows:

“I need do nothing in reply except to sum up the points on which your decision has to be made, and I do ask of you to preserve a quiet dignity in so serious a matter. It is not a matter for laughter. It is not a matter for passion. It is a matter involving the future of a great spiritual movement, and you should, [298] I think, show dignity and a quiet spirit. In giving your vote for it, you will have to answer in the future. The first amendment that will be put to you by the Chair is that of the Honorable S. Subramanier. If his speech had been delivered a year ago, I should have agreed, but we have done exactly what he now asks us to do again. We have asked Mr. Judge to explain. We have called him before the Judicial Committee, which is the only constitutional and legal way of trying him. We asked him there to meet the charges and he evaded the whole thing. To ask him over again is to put yourselves in the absurd position of finding yourselves next year exactly in the position where you were at the commencement. He will probably go through the same succession of excuses, prevarications, and evasions. And, remember that all the trouble of the best lawyers in your Society was taken last spring to find out the way in which he could be brought to book. There is no other way in the Constitution except the one tried and which failed; so that if you pass that amendment you will practically tell your President to do what he has already done—to waste another year in doing what the past year has been wasted in doing—and at the end you will be exactly where you are now. If Mr. Judge gives no explanation and keeps his position in the face of the world, then there comes the question, how are you going to force him to act. There is no other way. You have a Constitution and you cannot break it; you have laws and you must abide by them. There is no way of reaching Mr. Judge [299] except the way you have tried. Then comes the question of expulsion; but you cannot expel

him. You may start on lines which ultimately, you hope, will lead you in that direction, but nothing more. But remember that, supposing you pass the original Resolution and through the President call on him to resign, that does not deter the General Council from expelling him if he does not choose to make his explanation. I can conceive nothing more unwise, more rash than to plunge into the act of expulsion, because one gentleman says that my statement is true. That gives you no reason to refuse to hear Mr. Judge. That is not judicial, to expel him. To ask him to resign is to leave him absolutely free. To ask him to do what an honorable man would have done a year ago, is the only thing remaining to be done. I am seeking to clear the Society and not to raise party spirit. Mr. Judge says one thing: Mrs. Besant says another thing. Let them both look for one thing, that is the Society's welfare. Let the thing be fought out; but the Society should not be compromised in the face of the world. So I ask you to say 'No' to both the amendments; that is, to keep your hands carefully at your sides without raising them, until the original Resolution is put before you, and then to vote upon it. Let me say one thing—that mistake may not arise; one word with reference to the telegram which the Countess Wachtmeister said was sent by Mr. Judge to Australia. It was a newspaper telegram. I have no reason to believe that Mr. Judge sent it. With this public statement I leave the question in your hands."

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(At this stage a voice from the audience demanded an adjournment, but the motion fell through for want of a seconder.

The President then put up the first amendment, that of Captain Banon, to the meeting and it was lost.

Mr. S. Subramanier having withdrawn his amendment, the original Resolution of Mrs. Besant was put to the vote and carried, nem-con.)

How far Mr. Judge realised the expectations of those of his well-wishers at the Convention, myself included, will be seen as the narrative of his shameful case gradually unfolds itself.

The sessions of the Indian Section were held as usual, and in the course of his report, the General Secretary, Mr. Bertram Keightley, brought up the matter of the proposed transfer of the Sectional headquarters to Northern India. The scheme at that time was to locate it at Allahabad, and as Mrs. Besant and Countess Wachtmeister had made up their minds to take up their residence in India, and were ready to give pecuniary help, the project was carried through.

The result of a vote by Branches was that 68 Branches voted for and 2 against the transfer. The remaining Branches did not vote at all. The Convention vote was taken at the Session of 26th December. Great dissatisfaction having arisen about the behavior of Mr. P. R. Venkatarama Iyer, a committee of inquiry was appointed which, at the meeting of the 28th, reported against his retention as Assistant Secretary of the Indian Section.

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The year 1894 was characterised by extreme activity throughout the world; there were long tours made by Mrs. Besant in India, Australia, and New Zealand; by Mr. Judge, Mr. C. F. Wright, Dr. Griffiths, and Countess Wachtmeister (who alone gave 100 lectures and visited 48 Lodges of the Society) in America; by Mr. Mead in Europe; and by Mr. B. Keightley in India; our Swedish, Spanish, and Dutch colleagues had shown ceaseless altruistic industry; the Education movement was proceeding by leaps and bounds in Ceylon; and our multitudinous publications were circulating in a great many countries. The first practical result of Mrs. Besant's tour at the Antipodes, besides creating a deep and widespread interest in Theosophy, was the taking of the initial steps towards the formation of the Australasian Section, as above noted, and Mr. Staples, of London, the selected General Secretary, was now at Adyar as its representative. The beginning of the work at Honolulu dates from this year, as well as that in the Transvaal, which I have previously alluded to. In my Annual Address it was noticed that I had, for the trifling sum of about \$100 built the mud-walled, palmyra-thatched schoolhouse which was the forerunner of the several buildings since erected for our Pariah schools. During the year, 42 new branches of the Society were started.

Besides her four lectures before the Convention, Mrs. Besant gave one at the Congress Camp on the 29th of December, on the subject of "The Place of Politics in the Life of a Nation," and on the last day [302] of the year, another at the same place on "Temperance," each time to an audience numbering over five thousand people.

CHAPTER XXII

THE SOCIETY AT TWENTY

(1895)

WE now enter the twentieth year of the Society's history, after passing through troubled waters: the crisis just behind us would have wrecked any society not so compactly organised and full of vitality. Some persons have thought I should have adopted the policy of omitting from my journal the episodes of [which have been recorded in recent chapters, but it should be remembered that I am writing history, not a collection of complimentary essays and entertaining stories of pleasant experiences. What has happened has happened, and though we choose the weak policy of ignoring it, it cannot be erased from the book of our Society's history. An old proverb says: "It is swimming against the stream that strengthens the arms," and I doubt if any intelligent observer will say that we would have been the stronger if there had been no Judge or Coulomb scandals, misunderstandings, or frictions of personalities. The Society has been tried in the fire and had much of its dross burnt out. Its leaders come and go, join, retire, or die, but it pursues its steady [804] march onward towards success and yearly extends its sphere of usefulness. Those who are behind the movement fill up the vacancies made in our ranks by death and otherwise and the close of each year finds us stronger and more capable of winning our way than we were the year before.

In the January number of the Theosophist (1895) appears my official notification of the formation of the Australasian Section, T.S., dated January 1st, and the recognition of Mr. John C. Staples as General Secretary. In Chapter XVII of this Series (Theosophist for June, 1903) was published the official notification of Mrs. Besant, acting as my special delegate, of the preliminary arrangement she had made with the Branches in Australasia for a sectional organisation, and in a communication under date of January 1st, 1895, at which time she had reached Adyar on her return, she reports as follows:

"Acting under your delegated authority in the Australasian Colonies, dated

April 27, 1894, and officially published in the Theosophist of May, I received the written votes of the undermentioned chartered Lodges of the T.S. for the forming of an Australasian Section of the T.S., and for the acceptance for one year of the services of Mr. J. C. Staples as General Secretary of such Section. That as your representative I acted on these votes and communicated with Mr. Staples under Article III, Clause 7, and formed the Section. The applying Branches are: Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Rockhampton, Bundaberg (in Australia), [805] Auckland, Christchurch, Wellington, Dunedin (in New Zealand), —nine in all. There remain two other Branches, one in Brisbane, which, not having its charter, could not vote; and one in Hobart, Tasmania, which, owing to an unexpected change in my route, lost, without fault of its own, the opportunity of recording its vote.”

Mr. Staples himself arrived at Adyar on the 22nd of December, 1894, in company with Mrs. Besant, Dr. Hübbe-Schleiden, and Bertram Keightley, the party having met her at Colombo on her return from Australia. Mr. Staples left for his new field of labor on the 9th of January (1895), carrying with him the best wishes of everyone who had met him at the Convention now under notice.

One interesting and encouraging feature of the Convention was the optimistic tone of the Annual Report of Mr. Buultjens, Manager of Buddhist Schools under my direction; it is noted as follows in my Annual Address:

“Mr. Buultjen’s Report shows that we have already increased our schools from 9 in 1892, to 34 in 1894; our number of pupils to 6,583; our Government grant-in-aid to Rs. 8,906; and that the poor Buddhists of the Island have already spent on school buildings Rs.32,545; a sum which, if the average wealth per capita of the donors be compared with that of the European or American average of the same class, must be equal to what a subscription of more than a lakh would be in the West. There are still 20,000 [806] Buddhist children to be rescued from the religious peril, they are in for lack of Buddhist schools, but having done so much as our brave Buddhist Theosophists have until now, we shall not have too long to wait for their complete triumph.”

Our principal workers, including Mrs. Besant, the Countess Wachtmeister, and Mr. Staples, having all left by the 9th of January, I myself left for Ootacamund on the 10th. My bullock coach met me at Mettupalium, the station at the foot of the mountain, and I rode in it all the afternoon of the 11th and following night, reaching “Gulistan” by 11 o’clock of the morning of the 12th. This was before the construction of the mountain railway which now whisks one up to the 7,500

foot level in a few hours.¹²

Editorial work and the addition of a new building to the existing premises, the preparation of material for the first volume of] and other matters kept me busy until the last day of February when I left for Madras to take the steamer for Calcutta. On reaching Diamond Harbour we found the river so low that the ship, could only go up on the flood tide, so many of its passengers landed and came up to town by train, reaching Calcutta at 10 a.m. on the 7th of March. On this occasion, as previously, I was the guest of my old and respected friend, Maharajah Sir J. M. Tagore, who lodged me at his guest-palace (Boitokana), the old stopping-place of H.P.B. and myself. I found Mrs. Besant and the Countess looking well and [307] that evening the former gave, with great force, her lecture on "Castes and Classes". On the 9th the Countess, for the first time, imparted to me the interesting secret that during the previous winter Mr. Judge had offered to procure my deposition and to give the presidentship to Professor Chakravarti! On the next day I attended Mrs. Besant's lecture at the Town Hall before a monster audience, and at 6 a.m. on the 12th, having finished the business for which I had come, sailed on the "Goorkha" for Madras, which I reached on the 16th. I had the pleasure, about this time, of sending Mrs. Besant a copy of the Subba Row gold medal which the Convention had advised me to award her for her lectures of the previous season.

On the 21st I received a letter, from Mrs. Besant and the Countess suggesting the expansion of my old idea of class-teaching by renowned pandits of students attracted to us by the Adyar Library. They proposed that I should found an Oriental institute in connection with the Library and this scheme I have been keeping in mind ever since. Recently, however, it has been urged by Babu Govinda Das, himself an able Orientalist, that to have only classes to be taught by renowned pandits in the different darshanas, or schools of Indian philosophy, would benefit but a very small number of persons, besides being very costly; it would be more useful to spend the money on the publication of valuable books, treatises, and reprints of rare works in our possession, as these could be sent to all parts of the world and benefit many hundreds. As it is [308] premature to discuss this matter at the present moment it is needless for me to enter into details.

On the 11th of April I issued an Executive Notice convening the General Council at London. On the 1st of May Dr. English, then associated with Mrs. Higgins' school, telegraphed his acceptance of my offer of the post of sub-editor of the Theosophist, which relieved my anxiety as to how I should have the

magazine taken care of during my absence in Europe. By the 3rd of May I had prepared about 170 pages of matter—enough for nearly three months' issues, and on the 5th left home for Bombay and Marseilles; taking with me a Hindu servant whom I had engaged for my friend Xifré of Madrid.

In a letter of Mr. Fullerton's, received by me at Bombay, he writes despairingly of having discovered a conspiracy between Mr. Judge and Dr. Griffiths to make the American Section secede. This was his first intimation of that wicked scheme. Of course, Judge having taken up his stand on the slippery declivity of rebellion and given an impetus to his selfish scheme, could not prevent his slipping down the slope until he plunged into the abyss of secession. It was his only alternative since he dared not face the searching inquiry into his action which the Convention had instructed me to make. It is known now that all through those spring months the secession scheme was being secretly perfected, and according to the methods of the political caucuses, so thoroughly perfected by the leaders of Tammany Hall, it was made impossible for ~~the~~ the unsuspecting members of our American Branches to know what they would be led into doing at the Boston Convention of the Section, that was convened for the month of April. Notice of the explosion of the bomb reached me under circumstances that will be presently mentioned.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE AMERICAN SECTION SECEDES

(1895)

I SAILED from Bombay on the 10th of May in the French steamer “La Seine” and at Suez was transferred to the “Australien,” and sailed in her for Marseilles on the 21st. The reader may picture to himself my astonishment when, on reaching Marseilles on the 30th of the month, among the large number of letters awaiting me was one from Mr. Judge notifying me of the secession of the American Section on the 28th of April, last past. This was his first intimation to me of his intention, and his reward for my judicial impartiality and undiminished friendliness up to that moment. If this might not be called a crisis, what would? However, I lost no sleep over it nor shed a tear; I simply regarded it as an act of moral suicide which concerned only the individual himself: as for its destroying, or even permanently weakening the Society I did not entertain the thought. The fact is that a dozen such “crises” would not make me pass a sleepless night or lose a meal, for down to the very roots of my being I have the conviction that (311) those who are behind this movement are stronger than all adverse forces which could be combined together. If the eyes of our timid members could only be opened like those of Elisha’s servant, they, like him, would see “the mountain full of horses and chariots of fire round about”—the Society.

On the day of my arrival I left by train for Madrid and, breakfasting at Barcelona and passing the day and night in the train, reached the capital of Spain at 8 a.m. on the 1st of June. The country through which I had passed presented an attractive appearance—full crops ripening, and the grape-vineyards looking green and thrifty as a whole, although in places a good deal of mildew showed itself. As Mr. Xifré did not expect me until the following day nobody met me at the station, so I drove straight to his house and received the loving welcome which he always gives me on our meeting after an absence. He inhabits a magnificent Moorish palace copied from the world-famous Alhambra near Granada, begun by his late father and finished by himself at a cost of several million francs. Shortly after my arrival Messrs. Melian and Treviño, those splendid Spanish colleagues of ours, came to see me.

On the next day I went through an experience as nearly suggestive of the

horrors of hell as one could conceive of—a great bull-fight. I went there deliberately because public speaker like myself must gain knowledge from many sources if he wishes to fit himself to be an adviser of students of human nature. This [817] was a great occasion, some festival or other which had to be celebrated by an extra amount of cruelty incarnate. I found myself in a vast amphitheatre with private boxes partitioned off for notabilities. Fifteen thousand spectators were there and in a box high up sat the Royal Infantas, Dukes and other grandees, and other people who ought to have known better. It was a carnival of brutality from beginning to end, the only blameless and noble participants being the bulls and the horses which they disemboweled. There were matadors, picadors, toreadors, and a lot more of men dressed in fantastic costumes and displaying great skill and agility. From the moment that a majestic, high-crested bull was hurried through the entrance gates at one side his tormentors began to stick sharp darts, bedizened with ribbons, into him, to madden him with spear-thrusts and the waving of red cloths, until, driven to frenzy, he dashed about the ring in all directions, charging indiscriminately men and horses. He would come up to a cavalier, lower his head, drive his horns into the horse's body, lift him and his rider from the ground and sometimes overturn both. In the latter case the rider would pick himself up, if able, encourage his horse to rise, spring to the saddle, stab his flanks with long spurs and force him again into the path of the charging bull, to receive another thrust of those deadly horns; his intestines, mean-while, escaping from his wounds, trailing on the ground to be trampled upon by his own hoofs. When the noble quarry has been weakened and worn out by [818] nervous and muscular reaction and loss of blood and stands trembling, he receives the death-stroke from the hand of the espada who runs up in front of him, waving a crimson shawl to provoke him to lower his head and thus expose the vulnerable spot at which the swordpoint must enter the spine and then, the blow delivered, he tumbles into a motionless heap, a dead carcass. The toreador struts out where he can face the Royal box, makes his salute, is acclaimed by the tumultuous shouts of the excited multitude and walks around the ring to receive the presents of money and other valuables which are showered at him from the benches. The dead bull is then dragged out of the arena by a rope tied to his body, drawn by gaily-caparisoned mules, subordinate assistants run in to cover up the pools and splotches of gore, the dead horses are dragged out, the band plays a national jota and, after a few minutes the entrance gates of the bull-pen again swing open and another victim of the best bovine blood of the Spanish herds gallops in and the disgusting tragedy is repeated. On the afternoon when I

was there eight bulls were killed, a dozen poor horses disemboweled and two men—a matador and a picador—were wounded; thus giving the humanitarian some small compensation for the pain he had been compelled to endure throughout the spectacle. I told my friends on returning to the house that if I had not passed through the horrors of five battlefields I could not have endured this awful experience without becoming sick. How many incarnations must such [314] people pass through before they reach the lowest of the mental planes on which they can begin to see a shimmering of spiritual light?

On the 3rd of June I enjoyed the pleasure of meeting seventeen of the members of our local Branch, among them the Duc de Plasencia, F.T.S., a young friend of Xifré's. The latter took me to the famous Museum which contained the treasures of the Spanish school of artists Murillo, Velasquez, Ribera, etc. Our members bade me farewell the next day at the station on my departure for Paris by the Sud Express. By 5 o'clock the next morning we reached Zumarraga, where we had to stop on account of a landslip. I improved the opportunity in drafting an Executive Notice about the secession of the American Section, which is too important to be omitted from the present narrative. Its wording is as follows:

“PRESIDENT’S OFFICE,
ZUMURRAGA, SPAIN,
June 5th, 1895.

“An official letter, of date May 2nd, 1895, from Mr. W. Q. Judge, of New York, to the undersigned, in which he signs as ‘President of the T. S. in America,’ communicates the following facts, viz.:

“1. That the American Section of our Society has declared its ‘complete and absolute autonomy’;

“2. Has adopted the title of ‘The Theosophical Society in America’;

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“3. Has elected Mr. Judge, President for life, and Dr. J. D. Buck, Vice-President; and

“4. Adopted a Constitution, by a majority of 181 votes, in a total ballot of 201 Branch and Councillors’ votes, cast by Delegates representing 90 Branches in the Convention.

“A verbatim report of the proceedings, sent by Mr. Judge, shows that the

Convention adopted a Preamble to the Resolutions to the effect that the ‘different forms of organisation through which the body known as the “Theosophical Society” [the title being given as above printed—between inverted commas—apparently to indicate that the Convention does not recognise its validity], had passed since the year 1878, were solely the result of growth, and not of votes’... ‘and have been merely de facto and not de jure’.

“The only interpretation of the above acts and declaration which the undersigned, as one tolerably well acquainted with constitutional and parliamentary procedure, is able to arrive at, is that the American Section, exercising its indisputable right, in lawful Convention assembled—

“1. Voted to constitute itself a separate and completely autonomous Society, with its own title, constitution, and by-laws, life-president and other officers; and has thus as effectually broken its relation with the Theosophical Society as the United States of America did their colonial relation with Great Britain on July 4th, 1776.

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“2. Voted to consider the Theosophical Society as a body existing de facto and not de jure; holding a name to which it is not really entitled, and having no constitutional jurisdiction over the Sections, Branches, and Fellows in America and elsewhere, now holding its charters and diplomas.

“Since, however, the [American] Section, Branches, and Fellows in question had recognised the Society’s jurisdiction up to the date of the meeting of the Convention, and assembled as a part of the Society, and are still on our Headquarters’ registers; and since the records cannot be altered save by the intervention of the President, it rests with the undersigned to issue the present Executive Notice for the information of the concerned; thus completing the legal and constitutional separation from the Society of the participating Officers, Branches, and Fellows of the American Section, extinguishing the said Section itself, and recognising it as a new Society, devoted to the same work as that which the mother Society has for so many years been prosecuting. As President therefore, and official executive representative of the Constitution of the Theosophical Society, I do now declare and proclaim:

“First.—That the Charter, heretofore granted by the undersigned, viz., in the year 1886, for the formation and maintenance of the American Section, is hereby abrogated by virtue of the power given in Art. VII, Sec. I, of the Rules, and that

from April 28th, 1895, the Section ceased to exist.

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“Second.—All Charters of Branches which in Convention voted for the said Act of Secession, or which may have or shall subsequently vote to adopt the same, are hereby annulled, and the Recording Secretary is instructed to remove the names of the said Branches from the roll kept at the Society’s Headquarters, Adyar.

“Third.—The diplomas of all Fellows who have accepted or may in future accept for themselves and declare valid the said Act of Secession, are hereby cancelled; their holders cease, ipso facto, to be Fellows of the Theosophical Society; and it shall be noted on the Society’s Register that they withdrew themselves from membership on April 28th, or on such other date subsequently as may have marked their adhesion to the Act of Secession aforesaid.

“Fourth.—A certain number of Branches, Branch members, and unattached Fellows of the Society in America, having refused to accept as binding upon them the said Act of Secession, and expressed their wish to continue their relations with the Society as heretofore, and the importance and necessity of organised action having been fully proved by experience, the undersigned gives notice:

“(a) That he will issue a new Charter for an American Section of the Theosophical Society, under the provisions of Art. VII, Secs. 1, 2, 4, and 5, and hereby confirms the validity of existing Charters of Branches, a majority of whose members have voted against accepting the Act of Secession aforesaid, or may change their votes after the date of the present instrument.

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“(b) To carry into effect the above notice, the undersigned appoints Alexander Fullerton Esq., F.T.S., of New York, Mrs. Kate Buffington Davies, F.T.S., of Minneapolis, George E. Wright Esq., F.T.S., of Chicago, and William John Walters Esq., F. T. S., of San Francisco, a special Committee, to collect and forward to the undersigned all petitions and resolutions pertaining to this business, to have charge of all American affairs pending the issue of a Section Charter, and as Presidential Agents to supervise the proper organisation of the new American Section of the Theosophical Society.

“The undersigned notes with regret that the American Convention was led into

the adoption of the wholly false and misleading idea, that the Theosophical Society, now existing is not de jure, the continuation of the Society which was formed by H. P. B., the undersigned, and our colleagues, at New York in 1875, but an adventitious body, the growth of circumstances, and having no real corporate authority over its Sections and Branches. There is, however, at Adyar, the original Record Book of the proceedings of Council, in which in Mr. Judge's own handwriting, and signed with the name of Mr. A. Gustam, the then Recording Secretary, T. S., is written the report of a meeting of Council, held early in 1878 at which the President was given full discretionary powers to establish Headquarters wherever he chose, to adopt whatever measures he might see fit in the Society's interests, the Council ratifying in advance whatever he might [319] do. This record is unfortunately in India at this moment, but it has been written for, and will be published at the earliest practicable date, for general information. It will then be seen how unsupported by facts is the record of the Society's history which was laid before the American Convention and before the counsellor-at-law whose professional opinion was obtained thereupon. When the Founders left New York for India, the undersigned, in an official order issued at London in January, 1879, the text of which is preserved, appointed Major-General Abner Doubleday, U.S.A., F.T.S., his representative pro tem. no definite plans for the future having then been formed. The members left at New York nominally held together for some years, but finally dropped out. In 1883 a few of them were gathered together by Mr. Judge, and upon due application, a new Society was formed, and chartered as a Branch of the T.S. under the title of 'the Aryan Theosophical Society'. By virtue of its quasi-successorship, though in point of fact, illegally, some of the original registers of the T.S. have been retained in that body. As a Branch it was chartered and registered, has been regularly reported to Headquarters, and has paid to the Treasurer of the Society the lawful fees and dues of its members. Prior to this, however, charters had been granted by the undersigned to two other American Branches. As President-Founder, therefore, the undersigned declares that the Theosophical Society has had an unbroken existence from the date of its foundation in 1875 to the present [320] day, and that every charter and diploma issued by it under its seal and over the President's signature, has been valid and of constitutional force. The further declaration is officially made that, from the date of the passage of the above-mentioned Act of Secession, the retention of the papers and property of the late American Section, the continued use of the Theosophical Society's seal by the new Society, its Officers, Branches, and Members, have been illegal, and on

behalf of the Society the undersigned repudiates, as invalid, all new documents bearing the Society's Seal or his official signature. He also requests that the new Society's officers will turn over all Sectional archives and other property to the Special Committee herein-above appointed.

“Finally, the undersigned gives notice that Mr. W. Q. Judge, having by his own act lost his membership in the Society, is no longer its Vice-President, and the said office is now vacant.

“While it would have been better if the work in hand could have been continued as heretofore in a spirit of unity and mutual reliance, yet the undersigned considers that a separation like the present one was far more prudent than the perpetuation of ill-feeling and disunity within our ranks by causes too well known to need special reference. The undersigned offers to his late American colleagues his best private and official wishes for the prosperity, usefulness, and honorable management of their new Society.”

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The lapse of time and the trend of events has not made me disposed to alter the decision then made; I think it was the only logical remedy to meet the case if the autonomy of the Society was to be maintained.

CHAPTER XXIV

SPAIN, LONDON, AND HOLLAND

(1895)

MY journey back from Madrid to Paris was made tedious and unpleasant by delays caused by landslips on the line of the railway. I was compelled to stop a night at a doleful hotel at Zumarraga and the next one at Tolosa, whence we moved onward to Hendaye, the French frontier town. From thence I went on to Paris very comfortably in a Pullman car. The monotony of the Spanish transit was relieved by the conversation of an elderly Irish gentleman, with whom I had a delightful passage of wit. After some hours of travel the thing became monotonous to him, so he presently took from the net over his head his travelling bag, drew from it a bottle of Irish whiskey and politely asked his neighbors at his end of the compartment to join him in a friendly drink. I noticed that he had a rich Irish brogue and when he came to my end of the compartment and offered me the bottle I politely declined, using the same brogue. He stopped, looked at me in surprise and said: "You're Irish!" When I insisted that I was an American he stoutly denied it, [328] adducing as proof positive the fact that I had the brogue and that he could tell the very county of Ireland that I came from. My protests and disclaimers went for nothing and when, laughingly, I told him that my ancestors had been born and died in America during the past 250 years, he looked at me with an expression of reproach that I can never forget and said: "Excuse me, Sor, but it's not a nice thing for a man to deny his own country." Dear old gentleman, perfect type of his nationality and class, I shall ever preserve in memory the fact that he paid me, in this way, the highest compliment possible as to my mimetic faculty.

I got to Paris in the early morning of the 8th of June, left for London at about noon and reached there at 8 p.m. At the Headquarters in Avenue Road, I found all well and all glad to see me.

The Executive Notice about the American Section, which I had drafted at Zumarraga, was sent to the printer for distribution throughout the Society. Some

of Mr. Judge's principal backers came to see me to discuss the case and try to persuade me to smoothe things over and let the secession take its course: needless to say, without avail. On the evening of Sunday, the 9th, I went with Mrs. Besant to her lecture on "Man as Creator out of the Body". On the 11th I read 26 galleys of proof of the first volume of]. I presided on the 12th at a very fine lecture by Mrs. Besant on the "Light and Dark Sides of Nature". On the 14th I sent out certified printed copies of my Zumarraga Executive Notice dissolving [324] the Judge secession organisations, for circulation generally throughout the Society. That evening Mrs. Besant and I met at the private house of an influential Spiritualist, John Slater, a well-known medium, who gave tests of identity of deceased friends to several persons present. My record for the day closes with a note that Miss F. H. Müller, our old colleague, had resigned from membership. In her letter of notification to the Westminster Gazette she says that she withdraws because there is no longer any reason for her remaining and that she does not "esteem the opinions of the leaders of the Theosophical Society". I thought it a pity that she should have taken this extreme step and her subsequent drift from us to Vivekananda, from him to Christianity, and from that to her present position as the supposed special agent of the Higher Powers to bear their message to mankind, has not tended to give one the impression that she gained much by her withdrawal. She had always been my strong and valued personal friend and during her long connection with the Society had done what lay within her power to promote the movement.

I embraced the opportunity afforded me to spend some time with my very old friend and New York colleague, Mr. Richard Harte, who joined the Society at New York very early and whose connection with the Headquarters staff at Adyar for several years is fresh in the memories of our Indian members. During my visit of this year of writing (1903) I have heard of his untimely decease and was sincerely sorry to lose [325] the companionship of one who, despite his eccentricities, was a congenial friend. The latest number of Light that has reached me gives an account of his having begun to convey automatic messages from the "Spirit World" through a medium, and I think it more probable that they are genuine, for he is just the sort of chap who would take pleasure in making that kind of experiment for his own satisfaction.

One evening while he was at Adyar he made, in the presence of the Baroness Kroumness, F.T.S., of Austria, and myself, a very interesting experiment, viewed from the scientific side. He had procured in the bazaar a large glass

clock-shade, which he placed on a cloth-covered writing-table in our library: to make sure that no air could get under the case another woollen cloth was spread for the edge to rest upon. In a short cork inside the shade was fixed a darning-needle, point upward; on which point was nicely balanced a long strip of newspaper margin, running to a point at one end and folded down the middle. Mr. Harte then had each of us in turn place our hands against the glass on the outside, and hold them still to see if his balanced paper indicator would be affected by any vital, magnetic, or other current emanating from our hands. There was some slight movement in the case of us two men, but when the Baroness' hands touched the clock-case an agitation immediately began in the paper index and, finally, it swung on its pivot half around the circle. By changing her hands the motion was turned in the other direction. The [326] experiment was several times tried and always with the same result. This antedates Dr. Baraduc's apparatus for recording the effects of human vital currents by several years and, to my mind, is even more convincing than the vibrations of his needles

Mr. Harte had a chronic liking for experimental investigations in physics. While he was at Adyar, he had a carpenter at work about two years on a working model of a boat-propeller on the fish-tail principle, from which he had great hopes. He modified his plans fifty times until, finally, he was ready to test the efficacy of his propeller. So, on a warmish day he got into his boat, put his feet on the treadles that were to make the shaft revolve and at the word fell to with all his force: I, meanwhile, walking along the river-bank between two marked points with a watch in my hand. Before he had travelled over half the course the perspiration was streaming from him at every pore, yet his boat crawled along the water at an ominously slow speed. Arrived at the point of destination, he was pretty nearly done up and his state of mind may be judged from the fact that it appeared from our calculations that a steamer fitted with his fish-tail propeller would move at a rate of about two and a half miles per hour. Nevertheless he took his failure good-naturedly and bore me no malice for my laughing at him.

During my visit to London on the occasion under notice it was my good fortune to make the personal acquaintance of Madame Sarah Grand, authoress of [327] *The Heavenly Twins*, whom I found to be a most agreeable, cultured, and attractive lady. My dear old friend, C. C. Massey, whom I looked up as usual, I found depressed about the fall in land—values—he being a land-proprietor—and generally in a pessimistic mood. My friend Moore and I went one evening to hear a paper read before the Folklore Society by a noted author, and were greatly

disgusted with the seeming moral weakness shown by him in dealing with the question of psychic phenomena; we were equally so with the speech made by another celebrity on the question, his remarks being couched in a tone of insolent and superficial scepticism as to the subject. It is inconceivable to me that a man who has become convinced of a certain truth should have the moral cowardice to shrink from giving his testimony to it: on the other hand, nothing arouses a stronger combative feeling in me than to hear a person who is absolutely ignorant of and incompetent to express an opinion upon psychic phenomena, venturing to air his worthless opinion and to insult persons who are qualified by long experience to discuss the phenomena in question.

Among my visitors on the 20th of June was a tall and handsome gentleman, Count Franz Bubna, F.T.S., of Austria whose acquaintanceship with us leaders of the Theosophical movement began, if we may believe our colleagues who have developed the power of reading the Akashic records, in the far-distant days of ancient Peru. His is only one of several such cases (328) which have been brought to my notice and which go to show that the ties between myself and my fellow-members in the Society are not now formed for the first time in our present incarnations. It is indeed a pleasing thought that we have been evolving along the same ray of the Logos, and that our mutual relationship will be strengthened in proportion to our joint activity in our present life-work; that if we learn to love and work with each other now, death will not cut asunder the bond of union. I wish that every member of the Society could take to heart this truth, and apply it to all his relationships in life, for certainly in the case of those who are united in marriage or family ties, they would come to understand that their contact is not accidental, nor their permanent wrenching asunder inevitable or even possible.

On the day above mentioned I left for Holland and reached Amsterdam at 8 on the following morning by that short and agreeable route via Harwich and the Hook of Holland. The three days of my visit included delightful conversations with my dear friends of Amsterdam and the Hague, visits to Mr. Fricke's model school, a steamboat excursion to Alkmaar, an old, quaint Dutch town four hours' sail from Amsterdam, a reception and question-meeting at the Amsterdam headquarters, a visit to the Royal Museum, where the Director-General, Mr. Fred. Obreen, showed me all the pictorial treasures of the Dutch school, and a drive from the Hague to Scheveningen, the fashionable watering-place, during which the fisher (329) girls, standing along the road, burst into laughter as they saw my curly white hair and long beard and shouted after me the words "Welcome

Klaus!” their popular name of Santa Claus, the children’s toy-bringer at Christmas-time. I left on my return journey on the 23rd and twelve hours later arrived in London after a pleasant transit by rail and boat from Amsterdam.

CHAPTER XXV

CHANGING THE CONSTITUTION

(1895)

THE disingenuous policy of Mr. Judge in trying to shirk responsibility for his misdeeds under cover of technicalities with respect to the nature of the Vice-Presidential office and the limitations of the incumbent's responsibility, had made it clear that we would have to make various changes in our Rules, and the matter seemed of such grave importance that I had decided to convene a meeting of the General Council at London in the month of July (1895). The text of my Executive Notice appears in the Supplement to the Theosophist for May, 1895. It reads as follows:

“The General Secretaries of Sections are notified to attend, in person or by proxy, a meeting of the General Council, at the Headquarters of the European Section, 19 Avenue Road, Regent's Park, London, N. W., at noon on the 7th day of July next, to consider the case of the Vice-Presidency, and the several issues that will be made by the undersigned, and vote upon the constitutional questions involved.”

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In pursuance of this appointment I had left Bombay for Marseilles on the 10th of May—as noted in the preceding chapter—reached Marseilles on the 30th and then got the first news of Judge's secession. This, of course, put a new aspect upon the whole question of the business that was to be brought before the General Council: the secession of the American Section was an accomplished fact—so far as a majority vote could make it so. I had acted upon it officially in my Executive Notice of June 5th, from Zumarraga, and the Council had now to take action upon this document in addition to the subjects for the consideration of which the meeting was called. It must be borne in mind that this meeting was not called after the Judge secession, but before it, and while the question was pending whether or not he should be forced to retire from office. It was in our mind to make alterations in the language of the Rules as it affected the terms on

which the Vice-Presidency could be occupied and vacated, with or without the consent of the incumbent. The crisis of the Secession precipitated matters so that, instead of meeting in London on the 7th of July, the General Council met at the London Headquarters on the 27th of June. The Indian, European, and Australasian Sections were respectively represented by Messrs. B. Keightley and G. R. S. Mead, General Secretaries of the first two, and Mr. Sinnett as proxy for Mr. J. C. Staples, General Secretary of the third. Of course, as President-Founder, I presided. The American Section was then in the transition stage from the [332] old to the new Charter, and under the management of the special Committee designated in the Zumarraga Executive Notice. The Scandinavian Section did not come into existence until a few weeks later. The Chair appointed Mr. Mead as Secretary to the meetings. He then, with a few prefatory remarks, submitted his recent action for the consideration of the General Council in the following term:

“TO THE GENERAL COUNCIL, T. S.,

“The undersigned hereby places before you a copy of his Executive Notice of June 5th instant, in which the separation of the American Section from the mother Society is recognised; its Charter, those of all assenting Branches, and the diplomas of all Members or Fellows who have voted for the Act of Secession, and declared the Theosophical Society to have had no existence, de jure, since the year 1878, cancelled. The matter is before you for such action as you may see fit to take, under Sec. 1 of Art. VI, of the Rules.”

It was then moved by Mr. Sinnett, seconded by Mr. Keightley, that the President’s Executive Notice of June 5th, 1895, be approved and ratified by the General Council, and so notified to the Sections. Carried unanimously. This legalised the Presidential action in the matter of the American Section and the provisions for carrying on the business of the Section until its new Charter could be issued and a General Secretary recommended for appointment.

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The President-Founder then read the following paper to the Council for its information, and the same was, upon motion, ordered to be included in the published report of the meeting:

“TO THE GENERAL COUNCIL,

“I wish to lay before you a few remarks about the proposals recently put forward for a change in the Constitution of the Theosophical Society. It is not

necessary that I should deal with them in detail, since I am concerned only with the general principle involved. Should we, or should we not, essentially alter the Constitution under which we have worked fairly well for so many years? If so, should we do it hurriedly, under the pressure of a momentary outbreak of feeling, or should we proceed slowly and deliberately? I incline to the latter policy, as I do not see any sufficient reason for haste, which is always injudicious, and often fatal to a good cause. Our present Constitution has been a bridge strong enough for us to cross upon, and has not been found radically defective. At the same time it may be improved and, as President, I am more interested than anybody else to see the improvement made, for the ultimate burden of responsibility falls on my shoulders. I should regard as an improvement any new clauses which should make it easier for me to deal executively with crises like that through which we have just passed in the Judge case, and which has been effectually ended by his withdrawal from office and from membership.

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But for the clumsy and expensive expedient of a Judicial Committee, I might have settled the whole matter long ago, and thus saved a vast amount of friction, ill-feeling, partisanship, and expense. Executive powers of the amplest scope were held and exercised by me from a very early period in our Society's history, i.e., before we left New York for India, and to the recent date when tinkering of the Constitution, alteration of the Rules, and binding the President in coils of red tape, began. My experience in Governmental affairs and private societies and corporations, has convinced me that, with an honest and capable man as manager, the fewer Rules and the less obstructive formalities there are, the better will work be done and the more prosperous and successful be the Society, bureau, department, or company. With a dishonest or inefficient manager in control, the multiplication of Rules does no good; the only remedy is in change of the administration. It should also be borne in mind that in our Society, Presidential action is subject to the approval of the General Council, and hence is not autocratic. Pray do not suppose that my remarks are prompted by any personal considerations whatever, for such is not the case. I have always been ready to yield my office to a better man; I am so to-day: I do not wish to remain President one day longer than my services seem necessary for the best interests of the Society. That has become the life of my life, the dearest object of my heart, and far be it from me to omit doing anything, or to hesitate from [335] making any sacrifice, by which its welfare may be promoted.

“Among the criticisms of the Constitution which seem to have a certain weight, I will specify that of the wording of our Third Object. It has been urged that, by encouraging inquiry into ‘the psychical powers latent in man,’ we have fed a craving for phenomena, and opened the door to abuses which have drawn upon us the curse of many troubles. When one sees how easy it is for self-deluded psychics and cunning pretenders to draw crowds after them in a blind quest after ‘powers,’ and a more open intercourse with unseen teachers, one can sympathise with the views of those who would alter the phraseology of our Third Object. I, myself, would be glad if it should be made a serious offence henceforth for any person in our Society to give out any teachings as by authority; for it has always been my belief—and I can point to printed records as far back as 1853 to prove my assertion—that the value of any given teaching is not augmented in the least degree by attaching to it an authoritative name. Holding these opinions as I do, I should be glad rather than sorry to see some change made in the wording of the Third Object. There are other changes that it would doubtless be well to make, as for example, to eliminate the idea of geographical boundaries in constituting a Section. There are others still, but, as said before, I should be distinctly opposed to taking precipitate action, and should not recommend any changes that had not been considered ~~(336)~~ and voted upon in all the Sections, and finally ratified by the constitutional majority vote in General Council (Art. V, Secs. 1, 2, and 3).

“Some, I see, have erroneously supposed it necessary to alter the Constitution that new Sections with autonomy may be created. A glance, however, at Art. III, Secs. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and the last sentence in Section 4 of same Article, will satisfy anyone that the President has full power, ‘for valid reasons,’ to form new Sections, prescribe their territorial limits, grant them autonomy, confirm their By-laws, and empower them to issue, under his authority and in his name, charters and diplomas. Under my present powers I can, if it should appear to me judicious, create one or a dozen new territorial Sections within the present area of anyone of the existing Sections, as easily as I can create them in Africa, South America, or any other continent not at present sectionally chartered. The only prerequisite is that seven chartered Branches of the Society within the specified area, shall join in petitioning me to issue such a charter in each case. The modification I would suggest is to strike out the words ‘territorial’ and ‘geographical area’ where-ever they occur in connection with the idea of a Section.

“While upon this subject, it is best that I should make very clear the difference

between an autonomous Section of the Society and a seceded Section. A Section of any public body is a part of it; subordinate to its Constitution; under the government of its Executive and Council; incapable of exempting itself [387] from its Constitutional restrictions which include the results of any decisive vote that may be constitutionally cast by its highest governing assembly. A Section of our Society may, therefore, be autonomous in the full meaning—self-law-making—of the word; that is to say, may make its own by-laws and rules with the President’s approbation, but (vide Art. III, Sec. 10) with the proviso that they ‘do not conflict with the Objects and Rules of the Theosophical Society’. Now, the General Secretary of a Section is, ex-officio, a Secretary of the Society and a member of the General Council; which (vide Art. V. Sec. 1) is invested with ‘the general control and administration of the Society,’ and (Sec. 2) decides its action by ‘a majority of votes’. If he is outvoted in Council he has no choice but to submit, as would any other member in any other question introduced by him. Then, again, the Section being, not a separate body, but only a part of the one international body known as the Theosophical Society, which has been organised in a given territory or country for convenience of administration, it has no right to alter its subject relationship with the Society; to change the wording of its by-laws without Presidential warrant; to elect a ‘President’ of the Section, either temporary or permanent; to give an illegally chosen Executive (in violation of Art. II, Sec. 7), an unlawful title or a longer term of office than that prescribed by law; or to repudiate the de jure character of the Society, and thus declare invalid the charters which it has issued and the diplomas or certificates of membership granted [388] by it to its Members or Fellows. These are severally acts of rebellion, of independent sovereignty, of defiance; and these steps having been taken by the late American Section, in convention lawfully assembled, as reported to me by Mr. Judge in an official letter signed by him in his new Presidential capacity I had no alternative but to accept the situation, recognise the revolt as an accomplished fact, and officially suppress the Section, discharter its revolting Branches, and cancel the diplomas of those Fellows who had, by their votes, declared them invalid instruments—mere waste paper. I need not say how sad I was for the necessity of taking this summary action, for the ties of personal affection and respect bind me to many of our late American colleagues. But duty demanded this sacrifice of feeling and I could not hold back. Our Association being of a purely voluntary character, I could not exercise the least coercion to keep the members loyal; I could only give effect to their declared personal independence by relieving them pro forma of their membership.

Moreover, the majority in a Branch being the voice of the Branch—its governing power and lawful representative for the time being—I was compelled to accept a Branch majority vote in favor of the Boston Act of Secession as the expression of the Branch’s sovereign will that it should cease to be a part of the Theosophical Society of 1875, and thenceforth be a part of the new American society of 1895, and cancel its old charter. Similarly, when the majority of any Branch had voted to remain loyal and repudiate secession, it was my [§§§] duty to officially recognise and affirm the fact, and leave the Branch charter in the hands of the loyal majority. Of course, the minority would in any case have the clear right of leaving the majority in possession and reorganising themselves as a new Branch of the Society of their choice. It has given me pain to come to know that this self-evident rule of parliamentary and ethical procedure has not been grasped by some of our late American colleagues, who now find themselves, to their surprise, deprived of membership in the Society which they had come to love, and for which many of them had made large sacrifices. To all such, whether as individuals or as Branches, the door will always be open for return.

“Now the case would have been quite different if the Boston Convention had proceeded within Constitutional lines. They might, for instance, have pointed out desired modifications of their sectional by-laws and rules, and under Art. III, Sec. 10, have submitted them to me for ratification. I should have felt myself obliged to approve and confirm all amendments which did not conflict with the constitutional solidarity and international character of the Theosophical Society as a whole; there would have been increased autonomy and no revolt. But I should never have confirmed any proposed change which would make the American Section and its General Secretary more independent of the General Council, the President, or the Theosophical Society’s Constitution than are the other Sections and General [§§§] Secretaries; or which gave it a President, a misleading title, a new seal, or a new form of diploma. To do so, would be equivalent to my consenting to the upsetting of the Constitution and the splitting of the Society into fragments. Though fifty new and autonomous Sections should be chartered by me, the Society would not be weakened: it might, perhaps be bettered, although I have always believed that ‘in union is strength’; but to permit one Section to set itself up as independent of the central control, to deride its authority and pronounce illegal its charters and diplomas, would have been as bad statesmanship as for Great Britain to ratify the secession and independence of Scotland, England, or Ireland, or for the United States to have permitted Virginia or any other State to set itself up as an independent sovereignty,

contrary to the provisions of the Federal compact between the States of the Union. The pernicious example set at Boston is bearing its natural fruit in one or more pro-positions which are now being circulated for signatures, and upon which no other interpretation can be put than that the formation of new Theosophical Societies is contemplated. I hope that the promoters of these schemes may look at the questions without prejudice, from both sides, before pressing them to an issue.

“If seven European Branches are discontented with remaining in the present European Section, they can join in petitioning me to form them into a separate Section, and I shall do so if, as above explained, their [341] proposed By-laws are formed in such a way as to agree with the provisions of the Theosophical Society’s Constitution and By-laws now in force. I am also willing to charter new Sections in specified countries as, for instance, Sweden, Holland, Germany,¹³ etc., etc., if pressed to do so, and valid reasons are brought to my notice. At the same time I wish it to be made plain to your respective Sections that, for the same reason that I dischartered the American Section and its revolting Branches, and cancelled the diplomas of its consenting members, I shall discharter every other Branch in any part of the world which, by a majority vote of its fellows, accepts and endorses the Secession Act of the Boston Convention, and shall cancel the diplomas of those who vote with the majority.

“This, you must observe, is quite irrespective of the personal worth of the recalcitrant members; a simple act of constitutional procedure, imposed upon the President and General Council, and for neglect to do which we might be impeached. It is the confirmation of the right of each member to free private judgment and liberty of action: he revolts against our authority, denies the legal status of our Society, repudiates the validity of our charters and diplomas; we let him depart in peace with our kindest wishes for his spiritual welfare, and that is the end of our mutual relationship.”

[342]

As the office of Vice-President had been declared in the Zumarraga Executive Notice to have been vacated by Mr. Judge by his act of secession, the President-Founder, before the close of the Council meeting, announced the appointment of Mr. Alfred Percy Sinnett to fill the vacancy, and Mr. Sinnett having accepted the nomination, the Secretary was instructed to publish for general information the proceedings of the meeting.

The General Council then adjourned sine die.

To complete the legal formalities an Executive Notice of Mr. Sinnett's appointment was issued at London on the 27th of June and circulated to the General Secretaries of Sections, with the following request: "You are hereby requested to take the vote of your respective Sections upon the above nomination, and to communicate the result to me within the next three calendar months, as prescribed by the By-laws."

By the 17th of September the affirmative votes of the four then existing Sections having come in, an Executive Notice was issued at London declaring him "to be the constitutionally chosen Vice-President, subject to the conditions prescribed in our By-laws". At the present time, as experience proves, it takes about six months to get a vote of the General Council upon any question submitted to the members by the President-Founder: when our contemplated Sections in South America, Cuba, South Africa, and other distant territories are added to our rolls, the time required will be even longer.

CHAPTER XXVI

MORE DETAILS OF THE SECESSION

(1895)

THIS timely action saved the situation, snatched the coveted prize from the Secessionists, and forced them outside the walls of our fortress, where they had only scope for guerilla tactics. The plot had been deliberately hatched and they seem to have expected to carry the whole Society with a rush, as they had the American Section. I do not wish to use any harsh terms, for I am convinced that, barring Judge and a few others, the mass of seceders were as sincere in their beliefs as were the Confederates who took up arms against their Government. But they made certain fatal miscalculations, among which was the popular strength of Mrs. Besant. Judge probably thought himself more influential than she, and knew that she would never resort to the deceptive policy which he had used successfully with her and some of her associates in the European Section; by trickery he would get the better of her, as he had in the matter of putting off her Indian visit, and compel her to keep silence if he could not neutralise her. Another mistake was in ignoring members of strong character, and not his followers, like Sinnett, George Wright of Chicago, Mead, Sturdy, Staples, Fullerton of New York, Oliver Firth, the leading men in the Indian and Australian Sections, the strong partisans of Mrs. Besant in Great Britain, like B. Keightley, and elsewhere, who would naturally stand by her in a comparison of characters and condemn him for his whole behaviour. Lastly, myself, plus the strength behind me, the strength of the Truth, Justice, and Integrity of our cause, the unshakable constitutional basis of the Society and, greatest of all, the Masters, whom I have so long known, so long served, and who have approved of my official management, even when our London people were boycotting me.

How the Secession scheme was pushed through the Boston Convention was reported to me by some of the loyal minority, among them Dr. La Pierre, of Minneapolis. We are indebted to them for their narratives, from which I am now compiling this story. My informants say that Mr. Judge made use of the power he

had over the members of the E.S.T. (Eastern School of Theosophy), the confidential group of special disciples which H.P.B. formed and which, after her death was directed by Mrs. Besant and Judge. He had issued the manifesto referred to in “Old Diary Leaves” for August, 1903, [Chapter XIX] in which he farcically deposes his coadjutor, declares himself the only head of the School, in apostolic succession to H.P.B., and the only living agent of the Adepts. The Branches [346] of this School in America were circularised by him and it was arranged that they should manage to be chosen as Delegates to the Boston Convention.

As I wish to be perfectly fair and impartial, I must say that Dr. Buck, in a letter to me of May, 1895, indignantly denied the truth of the charge that the machinery of the E.S.T. had been employed by Judge and his friends to control the Boston Convention. Still it cannot be denied that the E.S.T. circular, briefed for my chapter in the August Theosophist, [Chapter XIX] was issued by him as a secret document, for it says as much. Dr. Buck, moreover, sent me in another letter (of May 31st, a month after the Secession), a copy of his own Circular (undated) addressed to the “Members, Branches, and Sections of the Theosophical Society”. This is a notable document, as will appear from the following extract:

“There is a ready and efficient method of ending the bitter strife which has already made our Society a laughing-stock. That is, the separation of the Sections, the abolition of the offices of President and Vice-President, the giving of complete autonomy or ‘home rule’ to every Section. In other words, to be like Canada, self-governing in every particular, with its own laws, legislature and Governor, though still in the Empire. As the chief of those in opposition to Mr. Judge have done their best to drive both President and Vice-President out of office, they can find no reasonable ground for complaining of our deciding as above suggested and asking them to cooperate by [346] voting in the same way. This will give the American Section the opportunity to stand by Mr. Judge and continue the work with him which has been so successful and satisfactory in the past. No duties whatever devolve upon the office of Vice-President until the death of the President, why should we wreck the movement for an empty name?

“The Sections being so widely separated, the present dissensions and strife will go on for years, and even then result in no settlement satisfactory to all parties. Some will believe Mr. Judge guilty, others will believe him persecuted and much abused. This was demonstrated in the effort made in London last July. Several

thousand dollars were expended in travel from the remotest quarters of the globe, and three weeks' time were employed in efforts for final adjustment. A conclusion was reached, the best possible under the circumstances, accepted unanimously without protest, and delegates including prosecutors and defendant departed their several ways. Yet here we have the whole matter again revived with accusations more bitter, denunciations more general, feeling intensified, and in the face of all this, other meetings and trials proposed. Under the circumstances, and with the history already made before us, this is utter folly.

“I do not ask any member or Branch of the T.S. to pass judgment on Mr. Judge or his accusers, for I am well aware that such judgment would be worthless without the possession of all the facts to the last analysis, including what part, if any, the Masters [847] may have had in our affairs. But I do ask the Branches and members of the American Section to speedily put an end to strife in the only way now possible.

“The T.S. has grown so large, and is becoming so unwieldy that a separation of Sections even without our present trouble, would soon, in my judgment, become imperative. Let each Section retain the present organisation and name, but simply manage its own affairs. No executive or general officer can exercise jurisdiction all over the globe.

“The honorary title of President-Founder belongs alone to Colonel H.S. Olcott, and the American Section should in the future, as in the past, recognise this and bestow upon him all honorary considerations, fraternal regard, and the appreciation of his long and untiring services.¹⁴

“Instead of promoting strife among the Sections, the action proposed is the only possible way to secure harmony. We can then without official constraint, vie with each other, as individuals, Branches, and Sections, in all good words and work. We can affiliate as sections, on the same basis, and help each other then, as now, in that peace of brotherly emulation that is devoid of strife.

“I therefore urge the American Section to pass unanimously a vote of Secession, and declare their entire autonomy, and to proceed to organise this Section on [848] this basis, and make it effectual in the best sense for the promotion of the real brotherhood of man on the lines laid down by the Master and H.P.B.”

The reader who has followed me in my narrative will give its proper value to this circular, for it foreshadows the exact course which was followed by the seceders in the Boston Convention. It was circulated to the Branches (or to the

Branch officers who could be relied upon to make good use of it, for officers of a certain influential Branch tell me that it never came to their knowledge before the Convention, but was kept from them by the recipients), in ample time to influence the selected delegates. In fact my former friend Dr. Buck in sending me the copy above quoted from, writes me (May 31st) that this was the campaign document which brought about the action in Boston. With benevolent candor he advises me—as did Judge, Patterson, Rambo, Neresheimer, and other of their leaders, to accept the action as a fait accompli, ratify the Secession and recommend the other Sections to do likewise: then we should have peace. Judge goes so far as to ask me in one of his letters, to declare that I knew him to have been in relations with the Masters and possessed of psychic powers. If I would do all this, it was intimated that I might count on pecuniary support for Headquarters as in the past. Truly a compliment to my lamb-like innocence! The real scheme in view was kept secret except from certain chosen leaders; the other delegates walked like sheep into the pen to be branded.

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On the evening of April 20th a private meeting was held at which Mr. Judge, Dr. and Mrs. Keightley, of London, Messrs. Fussell, Claude Wright, Patterson, and the Presidents of Branches in the New England Theosophical Corporation (a federation) made up the programme for the Convention, drafted resolutions of Secession, a new form of Constitution and By-Laws, and called themselves a Committee on Resolutions. At another private meeting on the 27th of April, the day before the Convention, Dr. Buck, of Cincinnati, assisted, and also such of the “faithful” delegates as could be collected together. This illegal meeting ratified the proceedings of the previous meeting. When the Convention assembled Dr. Buck was, of course, elected Chairman and two other conspirators (as I must call them), Messrs. Wright and Fussell, Secretaries; a nominal Committee on Credentials passed upon the qualifications of Delegates! All the proxies of absent delegates were, naturally, held by the bodyguard of Judge. The delegate from the Ishwara T. S. voted for Secession, contrary to his instructions from the Branch. But, that did not matter since it was known in advance just how things were to be made to go. Letters from sympathisers in Europe provoked cheers for Judge, among them one said to have been unusually scurrilous against Mrs. Besant, from Dr. Franz Hartmann, which was so violent that, as alleged, Dr. Keightley suppressed part of it in the reading, and the demand for its publication by the loyal minority was, at the suggestion of Mr. Judge, overwhelmingly

denied by the majority.

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A resolution of the Ishwara Branch condemning Secession and signed by about 90 persons was thrown out.¹⁵ Then came the immaculate and constitutional Report of the pretended “Committee on Resolutions” and with it the psychological moment! When the clause providing for the election of Mr. Judge as Perpetual President of the “Theosophical Society of the [351] Western Hemisphere” (sic) was read, the delegates, led by the managers, “shouted themselves hoarse”. The election was carried by 195 yeas to 10 nays. The meeting then went mad. Mr. Fullerton had previously made an eloquent speech, in which he showed most conclusively—says my correspondent’s report (of date, May 5th)—that there was “no occasion for the proposed Secession except to relieve Mr. Judge from replying to the charges against him. But his words fell upon deaf ears; the delegates were there for a purpose and they were bound to carry it through.” In conclusion, my friend suggests that I, as President, should issue a proclamation asking the members of the Society in the United States and Canada to unite and resume the form of the “American Section of the T.S.” I do not recollect when or where this important letter reached my hand, but it seems to have been sent through Mrs. Cooper-Oakley. Possibly I got it on landing at Marseilles, possibly at London on my return from Spain.

Of course, the loyal members of our Society throughout the United States took active steps to save the Section from wreck. Mr. George E. Wright, President of the Chicago Branch, proved a pillar of strength at the time and he was energetically supported and helped by Miss N. E. Weeks, the Branch Secretary. To them was largely due the prevention of the secession of their Branch, and the arousing of a hopeful feeling in other Branches. I find in my archives the following paper which goes to support this view:

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CENTRAL STATES COMMITTEE OF THE
THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

“26 Van Buren St., Room 48

Chicago, June 1st, 1895.

“To H. S. Olcott, President of the Theosophical Society and Chairman of the Executive Council.

“Dear Sir,—

“The undersigned regularly organised and constituted Branches of the Theosophical Society, by their duly authorised officers do hereby make application to be officially recognised as the American Section of the Theosophical Society. In case this request is granted we desire to appoint Mr. Alexander Fullerton to act as General Secretary pro tem., of the American Section until the election of officers at the next regular Convention in April, 1896.”

CHICAGO BRANCH W. J. Walters, Sec.

Geo. E. Wright, Pres. MUSKEGON BRANCH

Netta E. Weeks, Sec. F. A. Nims, Pres.

ISHWARA BRANCH S. E. Sherman, Sec.

J. W. B. La Pierre, Pres. PORT TOWNSEND

pro tem. BRANCH

Ruth P. Clawson, Sec. Robert Lyall, Pres.

pro tem. (Per Louise Thomas, in

BOISE BRANCH absence of Pres. And

Mrs. C. C. Wood, Vice-Vice-President)

Pres. Louise Thomas, Sec.

Mrs. E. E. Athey, Sec. NARADA BRANCH

GOLDEN GATE LODGE Ida S. Wright, Pres.

D. J. Lamoree, Pres. Arthur L. Knight, Sec.

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WILLAMETTE BRANCH INDRA BRANCH

Lewis A. Ward. Pres. John Heales, Pres.

E. Edwina Powell, Sec. Wm. J. Ward, Sec.

Dr. Mary Weeks Burnett, then as always one of the most active workers in our Society, was sent to London to represent in the Convention the loyal minority and to present the above document; but so much time was lost in circulating it for signatures that she had to come over without it, and Mr. Wright's covering

letter to myself was not posted until the 26th of June. Meanwhile, however, besides the nine signatory Branches, he had received notices of concurrence from those at Toledo, Toronto, Los Angeles, East Los Angeles, and Las Vegas (N.M.). Mr. Wright reports that he had turned over the record book and letter files of the Section to Mr. Fullerton, who would act as General Secretary. It was very gratifying to me to find that the Executive Notice from Zumarraga, Spain, covered the whole ground traced out in the important document above cited. The presence of Dr. Weeks Burnett at the Convention of the European Section, gave much pleasure to everybody; and she was made the bearer of fraternal and appreciative messages to Mr. Wright and the other loyalists whom she represented.

The new Charter for the American Section, promised in my Zumarraga Executive Notice, was issued by me at London on the 7th July, but ante-dated to the 28th of April, 1895—(vide Theosophist, August, 1895, p. xiv, [354] Supplement) and sent to Mr. Fullerton as General Secretary ad int. Thus was the hiatus closed up and the re-chartered Section sent on its way.

Compared with the overwhelming majority of Secession, this was a very weak phalanx, but still a working and effective nucleus, as it was composed of men and women in deadly earnest—the truth of which has been proved by events. Little remains to recount. How we withstood the shock, how the Society has gone on strengthening and extending itself year by year, is matter of common knowledge. Poor Judge, with a fatal disease wearing away his life, enthroned in his seat of coveted power and elected “President for Life,” survived less than one year. He found himself eating but Dead Sea fruit—fair to look upon, ashes within. He did his best with the help of his chief stimulatress, Mrs. Tingley, to make his Society a strong rival of ours, issuing among others, persuasive circulars like the following:

“NOTICE TO MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

New York, May 4, 1895

“Dear Friend,

“1. At the Ninth Annual Convention of the American Theosophical Societies (Branches) held in Boston, on the 28th and 29th of April, 1895, the COMPLETE AUTONOMY of the said Societies was declared and the title “The Theosophical Society in America,” adopted together with a Constitution. The Resolutions declaring such autonomy are as follows:

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“Whereas, the growth of the Theosophical Movement has been phenomenal in America, and its origin, aim, and method of work is unlike any movement of modern times, and,

“Whereas, the different forms of organisation through which the body known as ‘The Theosophical Society’ has passed since the year 1878 were solely the result of growth, and not the result of votes, and were thus adopted from time to time to suit the exigencies of the moment and have been merely de facto and not de jure, and,

“Whereas, on the other hand, the Confederated Branches in America were regularly organised in 1886-87, and,

“Whereas, we have outgrown the present form of organisation of the Theosophical Society, and,

“Whereas, the duties pertaining to the general offices of the said Theosophical Society have not been essential to the real work of any Section or to the Movement as a whole, its federal and general officers residing at remote distances from each other and being necessarily unfamiliar with the exact conditions and needs of Sections other than their own, and,

“Whereas, a federation of all Branches of the world is not essential to the real work of any Section or to the Theosophical Movement as a whole, and,

“Whereas, conditions contrary to the principle of Universal Brotherhood have arisen within the Theosophical Society which would prove fatal to the continued existence of said Movement; therefore be it ~~1956~~ “Resolved, First, that the American Section, consisting of Branches of the Theosophical Society in America, in Convention assembled, hereby assumes and declares its entire autonomy and that it shall be called from and after this date ‘The Theosophical Society in America,’

“Second, that the administration of its affairs shall be provided for, defined, and be under a Constitution and By-laws which shall in any case provide for the following;

“(a) A federation of Branches for the purpose of the formation of a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood without any distinctions whatever, this being its principal aim and object; its subsidiary objects being the study of ancient and modern religions, sciences, and philosophies; the declaration of the importance of such

study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man,

“(b) That William Q. Judge shall be President for life, with power to nominate his successor; and a, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Executive Committee, elected yearly.

“(c) Autonomy for Branches in local affairs.

“(d) An yearly Convention with equitable representation.

“(e) Territorial Committees for propaganda, without power to legislate.

“(f) The declaration that every member has the right to believe or disbelieve in any religious system or philosophy consistent with Universal Brotherhood [357] and declare such belief or disbelief, without affecting his standing as a member of this Society, each being required to show that tolerance for the opinion of others which he expects for his own.

“Resolved, that until the final adoption of a Constitution and By-laws the President is empowered to issue charters and diplomas for this Society.

“Resolved, that the Branches in America shall retain their present charters, the President being directed to endorse them as valid under the Constitution within a period to be defined.

“Resolved, that the books, records, lists, monies, funds, and property of every kind belonging to us as the American Section of the Theosophical Society be and hereby are turned over to and declared to belong to the Theosophical Society in America, their custodian to be William Q. Judge; but all members of the present federation not wishing to continue their membership under the new name shall on demand be entitled to their per capita share of the said monies and funds.

“Resolved, that until the said Constitution is written and adopted, the affairs of the Theosophical Society in America shall be administered under the Constitution of the American Section of the Theosophical Society, where that does not conflict with the above preamble and resolutions, and wherever such conflict occurs the said Constitution is hereby repealed, but all provisions relative to the Theosophical work and propaganda shall stand valid.

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“Resolved, that the Theosophical Society in America hereby recognises the

long and efficient services rendered to the Theosophical Movement by Col. H. S. Olcott, and that to him belongs the unique and honorary title of President-Founder of the Theosophical Society, and that, as in the case of H. P. B. as corresponding Secretary, he can have no successor in that office.

“Resolved, that the permanent organisation of this Convention remains as, and is hereby declared to be, the permanent organisation of the first Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society in America.

“Resolved, that all Branches of the Theosophical Society in America that do not vote for the autonomy of this Society may ratify the action of this Convention within three months from this date and such ratification shall constitute such Branches members of said Society.

“2. You have the right to accept or reject the above noted action of the Convention, and in either case I beg to request that you will inform me of your decision. In case you accept, you will please send me, to the above address, your diploma, in order that it may be endorsed as valid and continued in this Society. I will return it at once. All this is necessary in order to make the records regular and complete.

“3. The Constitution and By-laws are being made up, and when printed will be ready for distribution. A verbatim report of the Convention will be issued as soon as possible.

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“4. Dues of members-at-large. These have been raised to \$2 a year instead of \$1 as heretofore.

“Fraternally yours,

“WILLIAM Q. JUDGE,

“President of T. S. in America.”

I think we may profitably close this chapter at this point and see if something pleasanter will not offer itself for our consideration next. Our ship has been struggling through a sort of Sargasso Sea of floating weeds, but there is clear water beyond.

CHAPTER XXVII

MRS. MITCHELL AND HYPNOTIC

EXPERIMENTS

(1895)

WE have now seen the unsavory Judge case pass through the Judicial Committee and the General Council, so that only one stage remains before this page of our history can be turned down, viz., the European Section Convention. Of course the Convention had no jurisdiction over the matter, being the representative only of its own territorial area, but, for its information, the proceedings of the General Council had to be reported. Shortly after I had taken the Chair and called the meeting to order, a paper was handed in by Dr. Keightley and other representatives of the secession party, which proved to be an address of an apparently fraternal character, offering to co-operate with all bodies that were organised with the object of helping mankind. But when I came to read it, its real underlying motive was clearly exposed. It was not addressed to me as President of the Society and Chairman of the Convention of the European ~~Section~~ Section, but to “The European Theosophists in Convention assembled as the ‘European Section of the Theosophical Society,’” that is to say, the self-styled European Section, etc., thus implying that there was no properly formed European Section but only a conclave of individual members. The discourtesy intended and expressed is too evident to require further notice, and, of course, as the responsible Chairman I had no choice but to have the paper laid, unread, upon the table. The vote on this was unanimous. In history there is no record, to my knowledge, of any such paper having ever been admitted to a reading by any sober assembly or convention. Yet it is amusing to note in the various complaints made against us by the seceders, one of unbrotherliness and discourtesy because of its exclusion. The fact is that it was simply a continuation of the impertinent tone adopted by the Boston Convention when it declared that the great international movement which H. P. B. and I had engineered for so many years,

so successfully, “was solely the result of growth, and not the result of votes,” that the different modifications adopted “to suit the exigencies of the moment” were “merely de facto and not de jure”. The Judgeites offered in the Convention several resolutions of like tone, which were rejected, of course; whereupon they rose, to the number of 43, and departed from our midst: then came a huge sigh of relief and thenceforward the proceedings went on in the greatest harmony. And now let this whole black mephitic fog of secession be swept out to sea by the fresh breeze [362] that is ever filling the sails of our richly freighted bark. That beloved Quaker poet, Whittier, has said in a few golden words all that we needed to have said:

The clouds, which rise with thunder, slake
Our thirsty souls with rain;
The blow most dreaded falls to break
From off our limbs a chain.

By way of contrast with the disagreeable sensations caused by the episodes in question I had the joy of a re-union with my sister, after a number of years—the one who was so kind and considerate to H. P. B. during the old Lamasery times at New York. It was a delightful change to be able to withdraw one’s thoughts from present surroundings and recall the days of our youth and the many years of our happy family life with our noble parents. I took her to various interesting places in and about London, often with Dr. Mary Weeks Burnett, and once or twice with Madame Le Roux, a French nun, Mother-Superior of a Spanish Convent, who had been converted to Theosophy by a perusal of our literature, supplemented with the persuasive arguments of my friend Xifré. The first volume of these DIARY LEAVES being in the press I had to give a good deal of time to proof-reading. On the 9th of July my wanderings about town were interfered with by an attack of gout, but by the next afternoon I had got well enough to drive to the house of my friends, the Earl and Countess of Jersey, for luncheon.

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I do not recall any visit which gave my sister more leisure than one on the 11th to see a beloved friend of mine at Streatham Hill, whose tranquillity of mind and beauty of life is matched by the charms of the grounds about his country place.

Among my notable visitors of that time was Miss Brich, F.T.S., of

Southampton, now so widely known as the wife of my good friend, Alan Leo, editor of *Modern Astrology*, and one of the most interested members of our Society in London. The lady has a decided gift for palmistry and, I believe, for psychometry as well. I know quite a number of persons who have been astonished at her power to trace out the varying incidents of their lives in the lines of their hands. It is useless for anyone to say that there is nothing in palmistry, or psychometry, or phrenology, or physio-gnomy, or even Dr. Buchanan's Sarcognomy, for each and all of these are severally indications of the fact that the body of man is constructed by Nature after a plan in which the power of the indwelling entity is commingled with the plastic matter of flesh in such a way that the study of the latter, or rather of the body as a whole, is rewarded by glimpses more or less perfect, according to our developed discriminative powers, of the character of the dweller. The reader will remember that Professor Buchanan in announcing his system of Sarcognomy affirms that if a man's head be removed, his character may be as accurately read from the developments of the body, as before. For my part, I hold to the idea which I have expressed before, [364] that, seeing that the Eastern and Western systems of palm-readings are quite different, and yet that equally successful tracings of the subject's life events have been made by proficient in both of the schools, it is not so much the hard-and-fast system of interpretation of the palm-lines as the possession of a psychical insight which enables the palm reader to trace out the vicissitudes of the subject's life. This Mrs. Leo seems to have.

I took my sister one day to Maskeleyne & Cook and saw that infamous libel on our Society, the play of "Modern Witchcraft," about which I have spoken already. As she had a strong personal attachment to H. P. B. and a lasting friendship had been contracted between them, she was as indignant as myself in seeing our mutual friend caricatured in such an unpardonable manner.

Richard Harte, who was a New York acquaintance of my sister as well as myself, came for dinner on the 16th of July and discussed metaphysics in his usual eccentric style, with Mr. Mead, Mrs. Mitchell, Dr. Weeks Burnett, and myself. On the 17th, my friend Xifré arrived from Spain, via Paris, and charmed our ladies by his finished courtesy and cheerful conversation. Mrs. Mitchell and I left London on the 18th for Margate where Mrs. Holmes, the animating genius of our local group, extended to us her hospitality, and at 8 o'clock that evening I lectured and answered questions afterwards until bedtime. On the following morning we sat on the jetty enjoying the balmy [365] sea breezes and watching the

invalids and other visitors. While the season lasts, no summer resort offers a more delightful atmosphere than this famous place. I was interested in seeing my old American acquaintance J. L. Toole, the comedian, with whom we members of the Lotus Club used to pass many joyous hours at New York. Watching him being wheeled about in his bath-chair, a man stricken in years and seemingly feeble, one would never suppose that throughout a whole generation he had held without dispute so commanding a position as he did in the world of dramatic art.

On the afternoon of the same day we all went by train to Ramsgate, where Miss Hunter, our local leader, had arranged a meeting of members and inquirers to hear me discourse. The next day my sister and I left for France, via Boulogne, our kind hostess accompanying us across the channel for the sake of the excursion. We reached Paris at 11 p.m. and put up at my usual place, the Hôtel Gibraltar, then situate in the Rue St. Hyacinthe, but now and for several years past at the corner of the Rue de Rivoli and Rue St. Roch.

During the ten days that Dr. Burnett, my sister, and myself were together, we did much sight-seeing and profited by every opportunity to gain information about hypnotic science and the phase of therapeutics that was specialised by Professor Charcot at La Salpêtrière. The headquarters of our movement in Paris was then in the Rue d'Estrées in charge of Madame Kolly, a [redacted] most enthusiastic F.T.S., whose face is familiar in some of the group photographs of delegates present at London Conventions. She kept our rooms so tidy that it was a pleasure to visit them. Mr. Xifré also turned up in Paris and we had the pleasure of his company for four or five days until he left for Carlsbad to take his usual course of the waters. He took me one day to see a village of Soudanese negroes, that had been set up in the Jardin des Plantes, and a more dirty, stupid, and brutal group of human beings I never saw; despite their being Moslems, it seemed to me that they must be capable of every cruelty and treachery in their own country, and one visit was quite enough to satisfy our curiosity. On the 25th my nemesis of accumulated work overtook me, and while the ladies went to the various paradises of the Paris shops, I stayed at home, read thirty galleys of my book and wrote some twenty letters.

On the 26th we all went to call on our old colleague, Lady Caithness, Duchesse de Pomar, at her palace in the Avenue Wagram. We met there the gifted Madame de Morsier, who had been for years Lady Caithness' indispensable Private Secretary and literary aid on the Theosophical magazine, L'Aurore, which she published for several years. Madame de Morsier and I were intimate friends and

I was always very glad to meet her again. On the day in question she took me to call on Dr. Baraduc, who showed us some remarkable photographs of what purported to be astral light, human auras, and cosmic matter in the process of [387] differentiation. Whatever it might have been, the photographs were certainly very interesting. They have been engraved for one of his books on the subject, which have succeeded his first one, *La Force Vitale*, of which he presented me a copy. That evening I dined with Xifré and saw him off to Carlsbad.

On the 27th, armed with an introductory note from my acquaintance, Dr. Babinski, to his successor as Chef de Clinique, Dr. Souques, we visited La Salpêtrière, and Dr. Souques was obliging enough to give my lady companions the opportunity of seeing some of the hypnotic experiments which Professor Charcot and his chief aid, Dr. Babinski, had shown me on the occasion of other visits. He also made with us an appointment for a second visit two days later.

Meanwhile I went on the 28th to the Ecole Polytechnique, on invitation, to see Colonel de Rochas make some hypnotic experiments for the edification of some of his scientific friends. I have seen him give demonstrations of the sort more than once and have found them invariably instructive. Being disembarrassed of the necessity of thinking about curing a patient and following out a medical routine, he dashes boldly into the subject from the standpoint of the student of psychology who has no ulterior motive beyond learning something new about psychology. It is a great loss, to us, his fellow-inquirers, that he should have taken pension lately and so broken up his laboratory at the Polytechnique. The several books which he has published are important contributions [388] to this branch of science, and I hope that in his retreat he may produce other books embodying more of his notes of experiment, with the comments which his ripe experience and present freedom from official interference enable him to make.

According to appointment, then, the ladies and I made a second visit to La Salpêtrière to see Dr. Souques experiment with one of Professor Charcot's most famous subjects, known as "Blanche," and with a fresh one. Among several successes the doctor made a failure in a case where I suggested that he should, before calling the sensitive into the room, gaze fixedly at a bright coin laid on the table, and try to keep the picture of it fixed in his mind until the hypnotic girl had entered, when he should attempt to transfer to her mind his visualised picture of the coin, and tell her that she might have the coin lying there as a present if she would pick it up. As remarked, the experiment failed and, as I told the doctor, because he had failed to keep vivid in memory the coin-image.

We all lunched with the Duchesse that day and in the evening a friend of Madame de Morsier, le Comte de Constantin, a very old experimentalist in mesmerism and clairvoyance, brought to my hotel at her request one of his mesmeric subjects. The best thing she did on that occasion was to read print and writing while her eyes were gummed and bandaged securely.

On the 30th our good friend, Dr. Weeks Burnett, left us for England and I took my sister about to see more objects of interest. All this time the publishers [369] were daily sending me rolls of page proofs of my book, which had to be read and returned at once so as not to keep the press waiting. On the afternoon of the day in question we made a call on a cousin of ours whom I had not seen for forty years, and who, naturally, brought up a thousand and one souvenirs of our childhood. At 9 p.m. on that day Mrs. Mitchell and I attended a séance at Lady Caithness' palace, of what she called her "Star Circle". There was a beautifully decorated little chapel quite in the old Gothic style, with a full-length and beautifully painted picture of the hapless Mary, Queen of Scots, in a sort of recess or chancel at the end of the room. Masked sidelights illuminated it so as to impress one with the idea that a living woman was waiting there to receive our salutations: the rest of the chapel was darkened. The Duchesse had been having this performance going on for a long time and seemed to be thoroughly convinced of the genuineness of her relations with the deceased queen through the paid mediums. One of these was a snuffy old woman in a ruffled bombazine dress, who gave messages by raps and table-tippings. One, to my address, purported to be from H.P.B. herself, and the Duchesse with an air of perfect conviction asked me if I did not think it was genuine. "Why, Duchesse," said I "you knew Madame Blavatsky intimately, as well as I, and you certainly must be willing to admit that if she were indeed present, rather than give such a stupid performance, she would fling the table to one end of the [370] room and the medium to the other!" Our hostess and I were on such terms of friendship that she took no offence at my candor, but still seemed as if she were not ready to abandon her faith in her employée. The other medium was a rather pretty young woman who wrote very rapidly at a side table while the other performance was going on. When I came to read her essay I found it good enough to put into the Theosophist as a sample of the best of the matter which was being given in this famous circle. Here is a paragraph from the paper, which, under the title of "Clairvoyance" will be found in the number of our magazine for April, 1896:

"What more staggering fact is there for human intelligence than that the

immensity of the heavens reflects itself accurately at the sensitive end of the optic nerve, and that all the worlds which rush through the starry spaces, with the races which cover their surfaces, may be contained in the human eye, while man sees the creation merely because he condenses and contains it within himself. Thus in each human eye the same phenomenon repeats itself and immeasurable space faithfully come to each of us and mirror themselves in this luminous spark.”

The next day, on our way back from a visit to Versailles, my sister and I visited a splendid panorama called “L’Histoire du Siêcle” a visual presentation of the history of France within the past century. The painting was so well executed and the portraits of the chief personages of the several epochs were so accurate, that one got a very vivid idea of the course of events [871] since the pre-Revolutionary days of the eighteenth century and down to the current epoch, the Republic of Carnot (who was subsequently assassinated). I wish that the time might come when history would be taught in schools by this method, for I am sure that it would be more efficacious than any course of cramming out of dull books.

At the hotel on the evening of the 1st of August we had a second hypnotic séance with Mme. V..., M. de Constantin’s best clairvoyant. The results this time were much better than on the former occasion. Besides reading with gummed and bandaged eyes, she was made to exemplify the power of fascination by the unspoken command of the mesmeriser, her bodily weight was sensibly increased, and her nervous sensitiveness was changed so that, while her skin was insensible to pinches, touchings, and even pricks of a pin, or the point of a knife-blade, she could feel acutely every finger-touch or pin or knife-prick on the surface of a glass of water placed behind her and out of the range of her sight, after she had held it in her hands in her lap a few moments, so that the water might become saturated with the aura given off from her person. This is always a very interesting and instructive experiment. At the séance in question, not only the Count but I myself also tested the subject. She showed no sign of consciousness when I was pricking her arm and shoulder with a pin, but the moment that my sister, obeying my gesture, thrust a pin into the surface of the glass of water, the woman started and gave a [872] little scream as she would naturally have done when the skin was pricked while she was in her normal waking state. I tested over and over again the power of attracting and repelling her by a mental command. The reader will bear in mind that the mesmeriser in this case was a private gentleman, and that his researches for so many years had

been solely for the purpose of gaining scientific information.

The next day was the 2nd of August, and my 63rd birthday. With Madame Savalle, Jules Bois, the author, and M. Bailly, the publisher, we went to Aulnay-s-Bois to breakfast with M. Arthur Arnould, President of our chief Parisian Branch, and a very well-known journalist. The breakfast was itself worth remembering because of the superb omelet given us by our hostess. The house occupied a small corner of the Forest of Bondy, known to every schoolboy for its connection with the tragedy in which a murdered victim's dog picks out of a crowd his master's assassin, who is brought to justice.

On the next day, among other things visited, was the famed Musée Grévin, a collection of Waxworks that is superior to that of Madame Tussaud. Scattered here and there through the different galleries are life-size effigies of individuals and groups, so placed as to deceive the unwary visitor. One seats himself beside a quiet-looking gentleman who holds in his hand a catalogue and who seems to be occupied in looking at the wax group before him. One asks permission to see the catalogue for a moment and, getting no [878] answer, turns to repeat the question when, lo! the silent neighbor proves to be a man of wax. In one corner in a passage, a uniformed attendant seems to be taking a quiet nap but on inspection, he too proves to be wax. So that really one gets a bit bewildered and cannot always distinguish living persons from their ceramic simulacra. As my sister and I were sitting on a bench I noticed that various passers-by scrutinised us closely as if to make out what we were. This provoked my love of fun to try an experiment, so, moving to the other end of the bench and cautioning my sister not to betray me, I assumed a pose and looked at a fixed object with a steady stare; controlling my breath so as to make an almost imperceptible motion of my chest. Presently there came along a party which included a young woman of twenty-odd years, who stopped nearly in front of me, watched me for a couple of minutes, then nudged her cavalier and whispered: "How very lifelike! What a clever piece of modelling. Alphonse, it is really incredible." Then, always keeping a watchful eye upon me, and encouraged by my immobility, she came timidly forward, stretched out her right arm and with her middle finger touched me on the cheek! This was too much for my gravity and I had to smile, but at the touch of the warm flesh the inquisitive young person gave a little scream, flushed up to her hair, and ran away: my sister, who throughout the scene had with the greatest difficulty resisted the tendency to laugh, now gave way to her mirth, in which all the bystanders joined.

CHAPTER XXVIII

FIRST VISIT TO BERLIN

(1895)

AT the house of Dr. Baraduc on the following day I met at lunch one of the most interesting men whom I have seen in France, a Dominican friar, whose white woollen robe and intelligent face reminded me of the description given of that great historical personage, Apollonius of Tyana. And, by the way, how majestically looms up against the background of history this incomparable man. The friar was an intimate friend of the family of my host and discussed with me for hours together and in the most amicable tone, the teachings of Eastern and Western philosophy. There is something about these well-educated ascetics of different religions, a something of unworldliness and high aspiration, which leaves a lasting impression upon the minds of those who come into contact with them. No wonder that princes show them homage and the greatest merchants and other capitalists place themselves at their feet to receive instructions. I have met many in my time—Hindus, Buddhists, Parsis, Mahomedans and Christians, all of whom made me think better of humanity; but towering above them all, and excelling [975] them in sweetness of expression and speech and the resplendency of spirituality, stand our Teachers and Masters.

What stronger contrast could there have been to this encounter with the worthy friar than the pictorial history of one of the most revolting pictures in the annals of the race, the panorama of the Bastille incident of the French Revolution, wherein we saw a glimpse of our humanity in its wildest, most murderous aspect: the mob shouting and fighting, volunteers enlisting, Marat and Hébert, those head devils of anarchy, looking on unmoved at the raging of the storm which they had helped to bring about.

My sister and I went on the same evening to the Robert Houdin conjuring show, originally founded by the great French conjurer himself, and since his death kept up by his pupil and successor, a man with a Scotch name which now escapes me. The tricks shown were extremely good and puzzling. We had table-

turning and lifting by unseen agencies, and communications given by a human skull and an artificial detached hand that rapped out what they had to say on squares of thick plate glass brought forward in the aisle among the audience. Of course it was an electrical trick. We sat where we had a good view of the thing but neither of us could form any idea as to the nature of the mechanical appliance used.

I have always been fond of these exhibitions and two days later took my sister to see another show of the kind at the Theatre Isola. The puzzle offered us on this [876] occasion was an exhibition of thought-transference which, though doubtless a humbug, was sufficiently surprising as may be inferred from the test which I gave the performer, M. Albertini. I told him to get his female subject, Mlle. Zmyka, to leave the stage, take her seat in a certain chair in the audience and say "Vive la Republique!" Without any apparent communication between them she obeyed his unspoken order, came and sat in the designated chair and cried, not what I had told him, but "Vive la France!" I fancy that this was really more satisfactory than if the right word had been spoken, for in the latter case some written paper might have been surreptitiously shown her, whereas, in changing the word it would look as if she had caught the thought but not the exact words called for.

Amid our pleasure-seeking I was obliged, now and again, to let my sister find her way about alone while I stopped at home to work off accumulations of office business. Thus, on the 8th of August I stopped at the hotel to write a chapter of OLD DIARY LEAVES. On the 12th my sister and I left Paris for Brussels, that coquettish town whose gay appearance has earned for it the nickname of "Little Paris". For the information of whom it may concern I may say that living there is cheap and that for a large and comfortable room in a hotel close to the station the charge is only 2.50 fcs per day. There was another round of sight-seeing for us, notable among them the Museum of Antiquities, in a tower of the fifteenth century, where one can see relics of the ancient time, including [877] household furniture and utensils, which enables the student of history to visualise quite easily pictures of the everyday life of our ancestors. After a successful season at Earl's Court, London, the proprietors of the "Spectacle of Venice" had brought it over and installed it at Brussels. It was a most realistic reproduction of the "Bride of the Adriatic," her bridges, canals, gondolas, piazzas, shops, and monuments. The whole was lighted up by electric lights, and there was the splendid band of a Bersaglieri regiment and a superb orchestra from La Scala,

with no end of fantoccini (puppet shows), street singers, and processions of gay masqueraders.

The next day came the sobering break of proof-reading of galleys and plates for my publishers. I have travelled so much and in so many lands that I never am content to follow in the beaten track of your “personally conducted” trippers, but wander hither and thither in search of interesting sights, unusual people, cheap restaurants, and cosy hotels where one can live economically: one has only to have command of a couple of languages besides English to get on well in any part of the world. These remarks are apropos of a note that I find in my entry for the 14th of August. I took Mrs. Mitchell to a restaurant patronised by working men where one dines abundantly and in a clean place for 60 centimes—say six annas, or six pence. Then there is a constant amusement offered gratis to the impecunious traveller, in the shape of the street fairs which one sees in almost every (1878) continental town. All is noise, movement, and glitter, the shops overrun with articles to eat and to wear, and in side shows are to be found those “freaks” that our former colleague, W.L. Alden, has so humorously described. Pasted in my Diary is a handbill of “The Living Skeleton, Surnamed the Modern Proteus,” whose case, if we may believe the advertisement, “has upset all the savants of the principal Faculties of France and Berlin”. I should think it must or else our men of science must have only rudimentary imaginations, for here is the feast of wonders which he offers, to his patrons:

1. The statue man; 9. The stoppage of the heart-beats
2. and the circulation of the blood in all
3. 2. The abdomen man; parts of the body.
4. 3. The obese man; “The most astounding thing to science is the
5. voluntary stoppage of the beating of the heart while the man is speaking.”
6. 4. The tortured man; [Surely a man who can change himself from
7. a Daniel Lambert to a Calvin Edson,
8. 5. The hanged man; have himself tortured, hanged and killed,
9. 6. The skeleton man; and after all that come up smiling, is
10. 7. The dead man; something to see.]
11. 8. Interruption of the

12. circulation of the blood;

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Two days more of sight-seeing and we then went on to Antwerp which we reached in barely an hour by rail. That evening we had the good luck to see the Place Verte, or Green Square, illuminated, and to hear the music of one of those well-trained military bands, which afford so much pleasure to the populace, who on the continent of Europe are quite able to distinguish good from bad music. On the next day we heard mass at the great Cathedral and saw Rubens' magnificent "Descent from the Cross." Our friend Dr. Weeks Burnett, attracted by my sister, for whom she had conceived a strong friendship, arrived from London, and during the next three days we made our outings together. Another day of heavy proof-reading followed, and as soon as I was free I took the ladies to see the Steen Museum, a very fine collection of historical and other antiquities. In the evening we all went to a clattering fair, where the usual distractions were offered, but where two of the soberest members of our Society, viz., Dr. Burnett and I, had rides on a gorgeous merry-go-round, to the equal astonishment and amusement of my sober sister, who could never have thought of so compromising her personal dignity. To tell the truth, we others would not have done it but for my prankish fancy to see such an embodiment of high respectability and sobriety of demeanor as Dr. Weeks Burnett flying around on a hobby-horse. It was not so easy a matter for me to persuade her and she made it a condition that the P.T.S. should mount the horse next hers, which I, nothing loath, did, and away we went, to the [380] sound of a screeching steam-trumpet and steam-propelled barrel-organ!

On the 20th we tried to start for Homburg Bad, but on arriving at the station found that we had been deceived as to trains and had, perforce, to pass the night at a neighboring hotel. Dr. Burnett had bade us good-bye at the station and we were sorry to lose the sight of her then fresh and bonny face. We reached Homburg late that evening after changing cars three times, but the welcome we got from our friend Mrs. Tracy, and the delightful supper and beds more than compensated us for the disagreeable experience of the day. At these watering places the best of the daily life is in the early morning when the fashionable invalids throng the parks around the mineral springs of health-giving, pungent waters. Homburg was then in the height of the season and the lovely park was crowded with celebrities of all sorts and kinds, from royalties down. His Majesty Edward VII, then the Heir Apparent, was an assiduous health-seeker, and drank

his mineral water from the bubbling spring and promenaded the avenue and mingled with the gay throng with evident zest. The two days spent at this place were full of interest to both of us but, if it had not been for parting with the dear friend who had invited us there, we should have been quite content to put the scene behind us. For the fashionable world is, at bottom, a wearisome and stupid thing; to enjoy it one must be ignorant of what constitutes the real pleasure of life.

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On the 25th, in the early morning, we reached Berlin and were put up in the house of a Lutheran Pastor in Grossbeerenstrasse, near what I think is decidedly the most original and effective urban decoration I ever saw. I refer to that artificial hill which has on its summit a church at which special services connected with the army are held. The mound is planted with forest trees, here and there clusters of bright flowers are placed, and a little mountain brook tumbles from the top to the bottom over boulders, through pebbles, and from small shelves of rock the water drops in silvery veils. A stranger would be ready to take his oath that it was a natural hill in the midst of a great metropolis, whereas, in point of fact, every cartload of soil, every tree and flower and every zig-zag turning of the (artificial) streamlet has been placed where it is by the cunning engineers who designed this unique monument to the memory of the brave sons of the Fatherland who had fallen in battle. My illusions as to the hill were all dispelled by the revelations of the engineer himself, a member of our Theosophical Society.

This being my first visit to Berlin¹⁶ I was naturally led to make the comparison between it and Paris, with whose physical aspect I was so familiar. To summarise my impression I may say, while the former city cannot be compared for magnificent monuments with the latter, and it has nothing to even remotely [382] hold its own with the Avenue des Champs Elysées—no city has that—the impression it gives one is much more restful and domestic than the gay metropolis of France, where domesticity is hidden from public view behind the fronts of enormous apartment houses and so deceives most strangers into the belief that in France the “home” is almost unknown, a most erroneous assumption, for in no country are the domestic ties warmer and stronger than there. To me Berlin seems a town of private residences, and therefore, being an American, most attractive. And yet a pleasure-seeker may find as much amusement as his heart craves, and if one wishes to see amusement shared by

the whole family, assuredly one should go to Germany. The beer gardens are an unflinching subject of interest to the traveller for, while the father smokes his pipe and talks his politics, or commerce, or science with his male friends, the mother knits and listens and looks after the children who are playing around her with their toys. Surely this is an immense improvement over our brutish ways of solitary drinking in saloons while the family are left at home to pass the time as best they may. And one of the sights of the world is a German public park, say the Thiergarten, on a Sunday, with every table occupied, every path and avenue crowded with moving throngs, and two superb military bands, stationed at two points, which play alternately the choicest pieces from the operas and minor composers. I was greatly struck by the chest developments of the German women, which offered a very striking contrast with what one sees [000] in England or America: they look like a race of natural mothers and housewives.

On the evening of the 30th there was a full meeting of our Berlin Branch, or rather as full as could be expected in the summer season when many were out of town. I spoke in English and was interpreted in German by a talented young actor named Reicher, son of one of the most distinguished tragedians of the day. He had been partly educated at New York and spoke our language with great correctness. One of my pleasantest acquaintances at Berlin was Mr. B. Hübbe, brother of that dear old friend and colleague, Dr. Hübbe-Schleiden, whose home it was a charm to visit. Our movement goes slowly in Germany, not because of their lack of capacity to understand our philosophical teaching, but, as I have elsewhere remarked, because mysticism degenerated into a sort of childish pretension unsupported by personal spirituality, and got its death-blow for the moment in the mummeries of a horde of petty societies which aped the spiritual powers that they did not possess. The national mind has now reacted into commercialism and we must, perforce, wait patiently for the German pendulum to swing back to its natural place in the arc of high thinking.

Our visit to Berlin came to an end on the 2nd of September, when my sister and I left for Amsterdam via Hanover, reaching there at 8 p.m. after a dusty and fatiguing ride. Of course, Mr. Fricke, who never neglects a duty but makes it a pleasure to do it, met [004] us at the station and took us to a clean and nice hotel, where we were soon made to feel the affectionate interest of our colleagues in the gift to my sister of baskets of lovely flowers, sent by Mesdames Meuleman and Windust. The next day Mrs. Windust came and took us by train to Haarlem, where we heard the great organ—in my boyhood counted as one of the wonders

of the world, but now over-shadowed by sundry others—played, rather badly. And on the 4th Mr. Fricke conducted us on a steamboat ride to a quaint inland Dutch town, where we had refreshments and the amusement of seeing the queer clogs and dresses, and brick-paved streets, and high-peaked gables, and sluggish canals, all of the most pronounced Dutch type. On the 6th I was laid on my back by an insidious enemy that I now recognise as gout, which effectually stopped my gadding about. It seems absurd that I should have anything the matter with me, but until Dr. Nanjunda Row of Madras had the happy inspiration to experiment on me with the new German remedy, Urosine, I was now and again reminded by a swollen and painful foot that not even this granite-and-iron body of mine could be counted on for an indefinite old age. On the day in question, with much pain and the help of some men, I managed to get from my hotel to the Amsteldijk Headquarters, where a large meeting of our members was held in my honor.

We left Amsterdam for London via Hook of Holland on the 6th, I, using a pair of crutches, without which I could not have moved a step. On the boat I slept [385] on deck, as my foot was too bad for me to go below. After an uncomfortable night we got to Headquarters in Avenue Road the next morning and were warmly welcomed. I had to keep my room all day and so was prevented from going to the station to see Mrs. Besant off for the North on a lecturing tour. Gout did not prevent me, however, from reading my book-proofs or carrying on my correspondence. One day I read ninety-two pages, and another two hundred and fifty of the book, which brought me to the end of the main text and left nothing but the Index to prepare. On the 19th all was finished, and now the publisher's part of the work would begin.

I see that I had a good many visitors in those days and some very interesting discussions and conversations. On the 17th I had the pleasure of sending to the good Dr. Zander, of Stockholm, the engrossed Charter for his Scandinavian Section of the T.S.

I cannot pass over without notice certain experiences at the time, which were very fascinating and yet at the same time open to much criticism from the close student of psychical science; I mean experiments in tracking up past incarnations of some of our leading entities. Nothing could be more probable, to say the least, than that the principal agents in our Theosophical movement, which we have reason to believe to be overlooked and directed by certain Personages, should have had mutual personal relations and with the unseen Personages in question

at different epochs of the past. The moment one accepts as reasonable the [386] theories of karma and reincarnation, and at the same time the concept that entities are no more confined to certain countries or families in perpetuo than the individual drops of water in a fountain to the fountain basin, we can see clearly enough how, when an entity develops to the point of potential efficiency as an aid to evolution, it would be directed to reincarnate in that place or family where it could at the same time give most useful help to others and earn for itself the best chances to work out its collective karma. For instance, I have seen a long table of successive reincarnations of a certain entity which had developed a peculiar capacity for art¹⁷; each time that it passed into incarnation it used its innate faculty to produce art forms, thus acquiring more proficiency, and at the next stage taking that faculty into incarnation where it had more or less chance to earn artistic renown as the environment happened to be more or less favorable: this environment changing at each stage according to the moral and intellectual and even spiritual influences which lay behind it. This does not mean that a painter, musician, or sculptor should go on uninterruptedly, becoming greater in his art at each succeeding rebirth, for the entity was not confining itself entirely to the one art faculty, but functioning in the family, the state, or otherwise, according to its developed attractions. So would it be with the religious [387] tendency, or the faculty of invention, of war, of literature, or of Government: the entity, given the necessary circumstances, would fall instinctively into the groove built for it by past experience.

This by way of commentary upon a variety of readings in the âkâshic records which were made for me at London at the time specified. Among others whose evolutionary careers were traced was myself, and it was certainly a fascinating picture that my psychometers painted from the records in the Book of Chitragupta. Far be it from me to pretend to the ability to discriminate between the truth and the delusion in these narratives: not having the developed psychometric gift myself, I can only lay away these stories in a back chamber of my memory and wait for time to show which is right and which wrong. This subject is so interesting that I shall just leave it at this point and make the continuation in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XXIX

PSYCHOMETRY AND ÂKÂSHIC READINGS

(1895)

WE were discussing the question of the possibility of tracing back the evolutionary progress of any given entity, following his trail, as it were, along his particular orbit, and noting the interruptions of his progress by his successive entrances into the incarnations on the physical plane. To the uninstructed reader this may seem an extravagant assumption, but really, when one takes the trouble to inform himself as to the results obtained already in different countries, by different observers in the department of psychometric research, the idea loses all its miraculous character and seems to be as reasonable a statement as one regarding the movement of planetary bodies. It is now more than a half-century since in 1849 an American physician, Dr. J. R. Buchanan, announced to the world his splendid discovery of Psychometry.

The germ of the idea was given to him in 1840 by the late Bishop Polk of Tennessee, who informed him, in conversation, that his nervous sensibility “was so acute, that if he should by accident touch a [] piece of brass, even in the night, when he could not see what he touched, he immediately felt the influence through his system, and could recognise the offensive metallic taste”. This remark made to an ordinary person, might have led to nothing further, but, as Denton says: “In this case the right thing was told to the right man, and he commenced a series of experiments, placing metals of various kinds into the hands of persons of great sensibility, and in this way found that there were a number who possessed the power of naming metals, without any knowledge but that which was communicated in this way by touch.” Pushing his investigations further, he found that these same sensitives, if given to hold in their hands substances of a decided taste, such as sugar, salt, pepper, acids, bitters, etc., could get so distinct an impression in each case as to be able to recognise and name the substance; and this, even when the substance that was being tested was wrapped in paper and concealed from the knowledge of the sensitive. Out of a

class of 130 students at the Eclectic Medical College, Cincinnati, 43 signed a declaration that they were able to do this.

In the course of time, Buchanan pushed his researches into a new and most interesting field. He found that his sensitives could, by applying to their foreheads a writing document, no matter whether ancient or modern, or a painting, or a piece of tissue, or any article that had been handled or fabricated by man, get into psychic, or auric, touch with the individual with whom the article was associated.

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Thus an immense area of human history was laid open to research. In 1853 Mr. Wm. Denton, a geologist and palæontologist, reading about these things, and pondering over them, conceived the idea that “if there could be impressed upon a letter the image of the writer and his surroundings, during the brief space of time that the paper was subjected to their influence, why could not rocks receive impressions of surrounding objects... and why could they not in a similar manner, communicate these to sensitive persons”. So he began, cautiously, to test the psychometric faculty of his sister, wife, and ultimately his young son, by giving them bits of mineral, fossil, and other geological remains. He found, to his great joy, that his surmise was correct, and then onward for fifteen or twenty years he pursued his experiments and recorded the results in that most interesting book, *The Soul of Things*. To his discovery Buchanan gave the name, *Psychometry*.

For almost all of the time since his announcement of it, I have been familiar with it and in connection with the present article have just gone through the three volumes of Professor Denton’s most interesting work above mentioned. It is not too much to say that if one would have a complete understanding of the revelations given us by Leadbeater, Mr. Scott-Elliot, and some others, and if one would understand the secret of Madame Blavatsky’s writing her marvellous books about things quite outside her field of education, one should familiarise himself with the principles and history of psychometry. Although modern Hindus do not [391] know it, the name of their mystical deity, Chitra Gupta, is virtually a synonym of psychometry for, as every Sanskritist knows, the name signifies “hidden pictures,” and in a Japanese religious painting which hangs on the wall of the room where I am writing, the god Yama is pronouncing judgment upon a culprit arraigned before him, and whose secret sins during life are being exhibited to his gaze in a magic mirror which stands to the right-hand side of

Chitra Gupta, the “Record Keeper”.

If it were possible for man to pass along his evolutionary career, leaving no more trace behind him than the keel of a boat passing through water, then it would be waste of time to discuss the question of recovering our historical pictures from the past. One of the most striking books in literature is the *Jâtakathavannanâ*, or stories of 550 births of the Buddha. The Enlightened One is supposed to be recalling from time to time the stories of his different reincarnations and the relationships which had been borne to him by certain of his disciples. This, also, is a work which should be read by thoughtful Theosophists after they have prepared their minds by reading Buchanan, Denton, and some of our own contemporary workers. Professor Rhys Davids believes that these “Birth Stories” are the source from which a great body of the world’s folklore has been derived, and it really does not make much difference whether they are authentic in the way of reincarnations of Sakya Muni, for the object in view was to show how the seeds of present events are sown in our past incarnations.

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The astounding fact in Buchanan’s discovery is that the whole of Nature surrounding us is proved to be a sort of photographic film in which we, our actions, our words, even our characters, are indelibly recorded, losing nothing of vividness by the lapse of time, but the picture of a million years ago showing itself to the psychometer as vivid, life-like, and full of color as though it were made an hour before. I am tempted to illustrate this by numerous citations from the psychometrical records collected in Professor Denton’s books, but as space forbids that, I may just give one or two brief extracts to show what I mean. For instance, a small bit of fresco-painting picked from the wall of “Cicero’s House,” Pompeii, is given to a psychometer who places it against her forehead. Then pictures come crowding before her. She sees Pompeiian houses with their furniture, decorations, and inhabitants; throngs of people in the street; men driving in chariots; soldiers carrying lances in their hands and wearing the armor of that period; a public assemblage where a multitude is listening to music and looking at spectacles—all in as vivid colors and as life-like as though she were looking at the scenes of to-day.

Another experiment was made with a portion of volcanic tufa, not larger than a small bean, which was obtained from the excavations at Pompeii. The psychometer sees the same city but other scenes, and now her attention is

attracted by a great mountain (Vesuvius, in fact) which is in violent eruption. She then proceeds to describe, as though an eye-witness (388) that appalling catastrophe which in the year A.D. 79 buried out of the sight of man for seventeen centuries that gay and pleasure-loving city, where luxury was carried to its greatest height and voluptuousness made the end and aim of high society. We have, as the reader knows, but one trustworthy description of that great tragedy, whose writer, Pliny the Younger, was also an eye-witness. Now, as I have said before, when alluding to this fact, if one places side by side the narrative of Pliny and the psychometric description of Mrs. Denton, one will see that she has not plagiarised in the least degree but has given us a description which none but a witness of the scenes could have constructed. And yet, her source of inspiration is a little fragment of the tufa belched out in overwhelming floods by Vesuvius at the time of the catastrophe. Everything is real and vivid to her perception, sight, and hearing. "I hear the mountain bellow. What a depth that comes from!... The amount vomited out is immense. It is not like lava, but spreads out in a great black cloud that rolls over and over and covers the country like a flood. I can hardly believe that what I see is correct. It looks as if it would bury everything all around it. What a sight! There it goes pouring, spreading, foaming, as it rolls down the mountainside in a great black wave. It seems to me that there is water too, running down the side of the mountain." How true this is to life, every visitor to the now excavated city of Pompeii will appreciate. And now she sees the inhabitants, in a paroxysm of terror, flying to the (394) open field in the vain hope of escape. "I feel the influence of human terror that I cannot describe; it is awful... I feel like screaming. There are many different sensations commingled; but there is a horror more overpowering than all. This is either Herculaneum or Pompeii. There is no fancy about this; it is too terribly real. Some seem to regard it as a judgment of the gods. There is wild agony, prayer, and blind dread. Now I see them. Some wring their hands; others throw out their arms wildly... Now I see a very large crowd of persons, some hurrying along, and occasionally looking back; others seem to feel as if they could never leave, but are compelled to go, to save their lives. The scene is agonising in the extreme. I see one woman dart from the rest, and rush back, as if she had left a helpless parent or child to perish, that she was now determined to save; but she is compelled to give it up in despair, for there is a fresh burst from the mountain, and she sees there is no hope. A darkness almost as great as night is now around them. How wild they seem! Many know not what to do or where to go. They act as if they thought there was hardly any place left in the wide world for them."

Now let us go back to ancient Egypt, to a time which “cannot have been less than about two thousand years ago, and may have been very much earlier”. The psychometer in this case is not Mrs. Denton, but Mrs. Clapp, the wife of an acquaintance of Professor Denton. The latter sent her husband a fragment of a [395] fruit-stone taken from an ancient tomb in Thebes, Upper Egypt. The specimen was about as large as a grain of corn. Professor Denton gave Mr. Clapp no idea of its nature so that it was impossible to explain what followed on the theory of thought-transference from husband to wife. The first impression she gets is of a sort of cave that looks as if it might be a tomb. She enters and in the dark interior sees sarcophagi, “coffins strange-looking, and different from ours in this country, —very narrow at the foot, and broad at the shoulders; and at the foot on the end a strange cross.

“Here comes a procession all dressed in black. Eight men are carrying a rough-looking bier, and on it a coffin, covered over with a black cloth. They are clad in priestly-looking robes, peaked crape caps, and black tape-strings tied around the right ankle of each man that carries the bier. They have placed it in front of the tomb and are all looking down on it. There are some more waiting at the entrance, or gateway, close by two large stone posts. Four of the eight have each placed a green twig on the coffin—two at the head, and two at the feet. Now the other four are tying a piece of something black on each twig, and are making motions over the coffin,—bidding it adieu, I suppose. Now the rest are marching up to the tomb, and are forming a line on each side of it. Each man places his right hand on his heart, and his left on the side of his cap.”

The psychometer follows the funeral ceremony to its conclusion, mounting a flight of six stone steps [396] along with the burial party. They enter a large hall. A continuous bench or seat runs around the whole hall; there are desks, or what looks like them, at the sides; and in the front, opposite the entrance, an altar, or speaker’s stand, and in front of it a large box. They all march up to it, take off their mourning regalia, untie the tape on their ankles and place everything in the big chest or box; they then pass out and disappear from the field of observation.

So, in the course of the series of experiments conducted by Professor Denton throughout a series of years, psychometrical examinations were made of different races of mankind in a great many countries and in the most widely different epochs and in every imaginable sort of environment; to say nothing of observations of the earth at different geological epochs; ante-diluvian as well as post-diluvian birds, fishes, animals, savage and tame; industrial arts practised,

and in short, a multitude of facts which enable us to have a very good idea of the history of our planet. Now will anyone say that, provided we have a solid basis of belief in the permanency of human records in Nature's "unfading galleries," it is impossible for one possessed of the psychometric faculty, supplemented by a knowledge of the sevenfold constitution of man and the convincing reality of the fact of reincarnation, that the past lives of anyone of us may not be traced as accurately as the movement of the planet in its orbit can be calculated and predicted by the astronomer? Of course, it is but fair to say that at the present moment [897] the scientific value of psychometrical research is very far from having been proved; a mass of interesting data have been collected, some capable of verification, some possibly correct, and some seemingly improbable. The field stretches out mainly before us, and it is one most worthy of investigation. As regards the tracings back of the births of some of us, in the Society, it is but fair to say that they should not be accepted as absolute truth until our observers have developed their clairvoyant sight much more than it is at present, and until they have become able to divest themselves of all feelings of personal preferences or antagonisms to the subject whose evolutionary career is being observed.

The case of Professor Hitchcock, detailed by himself in the *New Englander*, is one of the most striking on record. "He had, during a fit of sickness, day after day, visions of strange landscapes spread out before him; mountain and lake and forest—vast rocks, strata upon strata, piled to the clouds—the panorama of a world shattered and upheaved, disclosing the grim secrets of creation, the unshapely and monstrous rudiments of organic being."¹⁸ If sufficiently sensitive this was no wonder, when he was handling from day to day the rocks that contained those landscapes, and was continually surrounded by them. In his *Religion of Geology* speaking of the influence of light upon bodies, and the formation of pictures upon them by means of it, he says: [898] "It seems then that this photographic influence pervades all nature; nor can we say where it stops. We do not know but it may imprint upon the world around us our features, as they are modified by various passions, and thus fill nature with daguerreotype impressions of all our actions that are performed in daylight. It may be, too, that there are tests by which nature, more skilfully than any human photographer, can bring out and fix these portraits, so that acuter senses than ours shall see them as on a great canvas spread over the material universe. Perhaps, too, they may never fade from that canvas, but become specimens in the great picture gallery

of nature.”

One stupendous fact established by psychometrical research is that the means of recalling a given scene or a given personage of some past era is obtained equally well from a small grain of matter taken from the locality or the house of the person in question; nay not even a mass as small as a wheat corn is necessary, for in many cases, a little fragment of plaster or lava was reduced to powder and a smudge of it made on the centre of the psychometer’s forehead and equally clear visions were obtained as when he was holding a piece as large as an apple or a mango in his hand. We may go even further and remark that a little piece of a mummy’s shroud or a curtain that once hung in a legislative hall, or an object like a pen or a sword, or a casque that had been in contact with the body of a deceased historical character, would enable the psychometer to give us a vivid word-picture of the person and [399] even of his character and motives. Thus, when psychometry is perfected we shall have the means within our reach of correcting the inaccuracies of written history, and of reading in the “hidden pictures” of our Hindu Chitra Gupta the now concealed story of the world’s evolution and the origin and vicissitudes of human races. One can realise the pertinency of the Psalmist’s declaration (PS. CXXXIX.) that there is no place either in Heaven or hell or in the uttermost parts of the sea, where man can escape the divine power, and it is useless for him to call on the darkness to cover him, for “the darkness hideth not from Thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee,” when one sees how the most hidden, remote, and unimagined events of the past are traced out by psychometric vision. Professor Denton’s psychometers found men working in the deepest mines, saw the denizens of the lowest depths of the ocean, recalled historical scenes of many different epochs and even saw the primeval monsters of the earth, the sea, and the air, moving about in quest of food, devouring each other or engaging in life—or death—struggles. It must be a dull intellect indeed that can read these accounts without being impressed with the thought that isolation for man, bird, or beast is absolutely impossible and unthinkable, and that however concealed may be one’s crimes, its trace in Âkâshic records is imperishable.

With poetic insight, Longfellow expresses his ideas in the following charming verses.

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PHANTOMS

All houses wherein men have lived and died
Are haunted houses. Through the open doors
The harmless phantoms on their errands glide
With feet that make no sound upon the floors.
We meet them at the doorway, on the stair,
Along the passages they come and go,
Impalpable impressions on the air,
A sense of something moving to and fro.
There are more guests at table than the hosts
Invited the illuminated hall
Is thronged with quiet, inoffensive ghosts,
As silent as the pictures on the wall.
The stranger at the fireside cannot see
The forms I see, nor hear the sounds I hear;
He but perceives what is; while unto me
All that has been is visible and clear.
We have no title deeds to house or lands;
Owners and occupants of earlier dates,
From graves forgotten, stretch their dusky hands,
And hold in mortmain still their old estates.

On the same day when these Âkâshic readings were made for me (September 18) I received a letter from an old friend of my mother's, then eighty-three years of age, in which she gave me the interesting information that she remembered perfectly well the day of my birth. What a pity that I had not bethought me of asking her about the hour so that my industrious friends, the astrologers, might have a fair chance of erecting a horoscope that would be approximately correct! On the 19th, Mrs. Besant lectured at the Blavatsky Lodge, on "Man's Relation to Nature."

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On the 21st she and Leadbeater jointly traced out some of my Âkâshic history,

this time finding me in the capital of Atlantis when one of our Masters was the ruling sovereign and H. P. B. his son. A scene in the Royal gardens where the young Prince was attacked by a band of conspirators and I had the chance of coming to his rescue at the right time was most interesting and picturesque¹⁹. On the 24th, Mrs. Besant being away at Bristol lecturing, I got Leadbeater to examine psychometrically the “flowerborn” ring, the making of which to come out of the heart of a rose that I was holding in my hand, is described in O.D.L., First Series. He pleased me much by finding that the phenomenon was genuine and untainted with fraud.

On the same day our dear colleague, Madame Meulemann, “the Mother of Dutch Theosophy,” arrived from Amsterdam. On the 28th, leaving my sister in London, I went to Margate where I was received as usual most hospitably by Mr. and Mrs. Holmes, and in the evening went with the latter to Ramsgate where I was appointed to conduct a question meeting on Theosophy. On the following evening there was a similar meeting at the house of the Holmes’ at Margate.

On Tuesday, the 1st, I returned to London, arriving at headquarters just in time to say good-bye to Madame Meulemann. On the next evening I lectured before [402] the North London T.S.; there was a nice audience and the meeting was successful. On Thursday evening Mr. Sinnett lectured at the Blavatsky Lodge; on Friday I took my dear sister to Southampton whence she sailed for New York the following day; after which I returned to town. On the Sunday evening we all went to the last lecture of Mrs. Besant, of that year’s Sunday evening course, the subject being “Karma,” for the treatment of which no lecturer within my acquaintance has anything like her talent. On Monday morning I got my papers packed for shipment and in the evening had a farewell reception given me. The Lodge room was very prettily arranged and deco-rated and a large number of friends were present. On the following day I left London for Paris, en route for India, most of the influential London members seeing me off from the station. At Paris I was met by my friends, Madame Savalle and Señor Xifré. The following two days were agreeably spent with those friends in seeing people and receiving visits, and on Friday, October 11th, I left for Marseilles, which I reached on Saturday morning after an all-night journey. Here, as usual, I made a call on that dear and respected old friend of ours, the Baron Spedalieri, one of the two surviving and most important pupils of Eliphas Lévi, and the same afternoon embarked for Colombo on the M. M. steamer “Irawaddy,” thus ending my European tour of 1895.

CHAPTER XXX

VIVEKÂNANDA, BOMBAY, PANCHAMAS

(1895)

BEFORE sending the pilot ashore and cutting myself loose from Europe and its affairs, I want to say a word about a man who addressed his London public within a few days after my departure from Marseilles, homeward bound. I refer to the Swami Vivekânanda, one of the most talented, forceful, and successful of modern Hindu religious agitators. He, himself, has so fully written and spoken about his passing connection with me at Madras, confined, I believe, to a single interview, that it is needless for me to dwell upon the subject. I may only say that he did not impress me as a person with whom it would be easy to get on in an independent capacity, nor did he impress me with having any belief in the existence of our Masters, which I attributed to the fact of his being an uncompromising Vedântist. He had, however, a precious gift which it is a pity is not more generally shared by modern Hindus, viz., earnestness. He was all that and, moreover, vehement in the enunciation of his ideas. What his impression upon the English public was is shown in the following report taken from the Standard, which I happen to have at my hand. The statements that he was a Brahmin and that he wore the robe of a Buddhist priest are, of course, erroneous, but such details are of small importance. The paper says:

“Since the days of Ram Mohun Roy, with the single exception of Keshub Chunder Sen, there has not appeared on an English platform a more interesting Indian figure than the Brahmin who lectured in Prince’s Hall on October 22. Clothed in the long orange-colored robe of the Buddhist priest, with a monk-like girdle round his waist instead of the usual Indian cummerbund, and wearing the massive turban of Northern India on his head, the Swami Vivekânanda discoursed for an hour and a quarter in the most faultless English, on the cardinal doctrines of the school of religious philosophy to which he is devoting his life. The name by which he makes himself known is a name assumed, on his becoming an apostle of his school, in the style of many philosophers and doctors

of antiquity in the Middle Ages. As the Chairman, Mr. E. T. Sturdy, explained, the first of his names is a Sanskrit word signifying ‘Master,’ and the second is also a Sanskrit term signifying ‘the bliss of discrimination’. The lecture was a most fearless and eloquent exposition of the pantheistic philosophy of the Vedânta school, and the Swami seems to have incorporated into his system a good deal also of the moral element of the Yoga school, as the closing passages of his lecture presented, in a modified form, not the advocacy of mortification, which is the leading feature of the latter school, but the renunciation of all so-called material comforts and blessings as the only means of entering into perfect union with the supreme and absolute Self. The opening passages of the lecture were a review of the rise of the grosser form of materialism in the beginning of the present century, and the later development of the various forms of metaphysical thought which for a time swept materialism away. From this he passed on to discuss the origin and nature of knowledge. In some respects his views on this point were almost a statement of pure Fichteism, but they were expressed in language, and they embodied illustrations and made admissions, which no German transcendentalist would have made or used. He admitted there was a gross material world outside, but he confessed he did not know what matter was. He asserted that mind was a finer matter, and that behind was the soul of man, which was immovably fixed, before which outward objects passed, as it were, in a procession which was without beginning or end—in other words, which was eternal, and finally which was God. He worked out this pantheistic conception of the personal identity of man and God with great comprehensiveness and an ample wealth of illustration, and in passage after passage of great beauty, solemnity, and earnestness. ‘There is only one soul in the Universe,’ he said, ‘there is no “you” or “me”; all variety is merged into the absolute Unity, the one infinite existence—God.’ From this, of course, followed the immortality of the soul and something like the transmigration of souls towards higher manifestations of perfection. As already stated, his peroration of twenty minutes was a statement of the doctrine of renunciation. In the course of it, he made some remorselessly disparaging criticisms on the work that factories, engines, and other inventions and books were doing for man, compared with half a dozen words spoken by Buddha or Jesus. The lecture was evidently quite extemporaneous, and was delivered in a pleasing voice free from any kind of hesitation.”

His was, unquestionably, a strong and striking personality. He made a profound impression at the Chicago Parliament of Religions, and by his lecturing tour

called into being a body of warm adherents and disciples, who hold his memory dear to the present day and who have for his sake, primarily, and afterwards for their own merits, given welcome and patronage to such of his co-disciples of the Râmakrishna Mutt who have subsequently visited the United States. Who can say what might have happened in India if he had not been prematurely snatched away from a field of labor that promised to yield a good harvest.

Now to come back to the good ship "Irawaddy" which was bearing me homeward. We had ideal weather throughout the whole voyage. I note that hardly a single passenger was seasick, so it may be imagined that the voyage down the Mediteranean was as calm as a pond. They even asked me to lecture [407] on Theosophy which, for a French maritime audience, is the best possible proof of their immunity from physical discomfort. On the 16th (October) I held a conversation on Theosophical matters and occult science which occupied some three or four hours. Naturally such of us passengers as could, slept on deck every night, for this was the hot season and the cabins were stuffy. On the 17th we reached and left Port Said, and at the other end of the canal my old friend, Captain Dumont, Traffic Superintendent of the Suez Canal, came aboard to see me. The fine weather followed us down the Red Sea but the mercury began to climb up in thermometer, and from the 21st until we reached Aden it stood at about 95 degrees Fahrenheit. On the 22nd we reached Obock, a French settlement on the African Coast, discharged freight and some passengers, and lay until 4 a.m. on the 23rd, when we left for Djibouti, also a French settlement, in Abyssinian territory, which the French have made their chief coaling station, so as to free themselves from the necessity of going to Aden for the purpose.

At 5 p.m. we left for Aden, reaching there the next day. The passengers for Bombay were here transferred to "La Seyne," a smaller steamer of the French Company, and we sailed in her at 1 p.m. and immediately began to experience rough weather, for we had now come within reach of the monsoon. The majority of our passengers, who had been so cheerful since leaving Marseilles, now succumbed to the miseries of sea-sickness. I enjoyed immensely the company of one [408] of the ship's officers, a native of Gascony and one of the brightest, jolliest fellows I had met in the course of my travels. He took with the greatest good humor my remarks about the characteristic traits of his countrymen, as illustrated in the D'Artagnan of Dumas, and the Tartarin of Daudet. He even went so far as to sing for me that delicious song, "Si la Garonne avait voulu," in which the limitless possibilities within reach of the great river of Gascony are most

humorously specified. If the Garonne had only chosen to do so, it seems, it could have turned its course in any direction of the compass, crossing continents, deserts, other rivers and seas as far as the North Pole or, if it preferred, could have traversed Europe and Asia to empty itself in whatsoever distant sea it liked. I do not think there exists a more clever illustration of the pure gasconade which takes its name from the province of Gascony.

We reached Karachi at 10 p.m. on the 29th and anchored. The majority of our passengers left us the next morning. We were busy all day taking in cargo, but the monotony of the time was charmingly broken by a volunteer concert given by the wife of the local agent of the Messageries Company. She was a splendid pianist and vocalist and a more exquisite performance than hers I never enjoyed. The steamer sailed at 6 p.m., with a smooth sea and fine weather, which kept with us all the next day and until we reached our destination, Bombay, where we came to anchor at 12 noon on the 1st of November.

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Through a misunderstanding as to the time of my arrival no one came aboard to meet me, so, after waiting two hours, I took a boat to the landing and went up to our headquarters, where I attended a lecture on “Lalla Rookh” by that learned Parsi scholar, Shamsool Ulema Ervard Jivanji Jamshedji Modi. By request the venerable Parsi scholar, K. R. Cama, and I made some remarks at the close. It appears from an entry that I find in my Diary for the 2nd of November, that the remarks which I made on the subject of the duty of the Parsis to their religion made a strong impression on them. The address formed a new tie between that community and myself. I shall have something more to say on this subject a little later. On the 2nd I attended the Thread Ceremony of the son of my friends R. K. Modi, and was glad to find that the interpretation given by Theosophy made clear the importance and mystical value of the ceremony.

That evening I lectured at headquarters on the “Mission and Future of Theosophy,” and, later, saw the Hindu play of “Harischandra” extremely well done at the Parsi theatre. This dramatic composition has for me a perennial interest, and although I have seen it many times yet I am always glad to see it once more. For in all literature there is no more sublime conception of heroic devotion to honor than this story of the Indian King, prototype of the Biblical Job, but infinitely superior as a literary concept.

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Some hours of the next day (Sunday, November 3rd) were devoted to a private conference with Dr. Jivanji about the interests of the Parsi religion. It seemed to me simple enough to carry out the scheme of an organised Parsi exploration fund, and if I had been a Parsi I am quite sure that I should have carried it through and obtained great results, years ago. It always saddens me to think of the golden opportunity wasted by this intelligent, enterprising, and wealthy community in face of the splendid harvest of archæological discovery made by the Christian backers of Professor Flinders Petrie. However, we must let karma do its work.

I presided that afternoon at a lecture in our hall on "Jainism," given by Mr. Gandhi, the Jain delegate at the Parliament of Religions, and whom I found, in my late American tour, to have made so favorable and lasting an impression in my native country. Unfortunately for the interests of his religion and for the enlightenment of the world on that speciality, he has died in the prime of life and the full activity of his mental powers. A pathetic feature of his case is that he died within a few months after being admitted to the English Bar. None of the representatives of India who have lectured in Western countries came out of the ordeal more creditably, nor preserved throughout a more clean and admirable record of personal conduct.

The next day was devoted to the receiving of visitors and the bidding of farewells. In the evening a large number of our kind friends bade me adieu at the  Victoria Terminus station and I left by train for Madras. The monotony of the journey was broken by the being ferried across a river in flood which had recently destroyed a grand stone bridge: over another river the train passed at a snail's pace on a temporary bridge. On the 6th (Wednesday) I reached home and found it looking as charming and fresh as it always does to me upon my return from foreign travel. My old enemy, the gout, lay in wait for me, and by taking possession of my hands effectually prevented my doing any writing myself; so I had to resort to dictation. Being able to walk, however, I could get around and superintend the building works, which are always in progress at Headquarters. This time we were tearing down the walls of H.P.B.'s temporary kitchen upstairs, to make a new bedroom, then greatly wanted.

On the 13th I received a letter from the Secretary of His Excellency, Lord Wenlock, Governor of Madras, saying that he would visit my Pariah School, the precursor of the rest, and would come and have a look at our library. The appointment was duly kept and His Excellency expressed himself as extremely

well satisfied with what he saw. I remember an incident that was rather amusing. A class of Pariah children were being examined in Arithmetic: the teacher would give out the sum, the pupils write it down on their slates and when they had worked it out would lay their slates on the floor at our feet and stand at attention; we would examine such as we chose and then dismiss the class to their seats. At the extreme right (412) of the class of boys was a pudgy little chap, with very dark complexion, large, agate-like eyes and a winsome smile. The Governor and I noticed how he kept himself on the alert when the sum was being given out, and how he flung himself into the work when the dictation was completed and he had to make his calculations. Among the early ones to finish the sum and lay the slate upon the floor, was our little pigmy outcaste. I do not remember exactly the sum but it was something like this: "Divide £279 l3s. 11d. by 5." The Governor picked up the little boy's slate and found, on reference to the Key in the master's hands, that the calculation was correct. When the boys were going back to their seats he whispered in my ear: "I am quite sure that I could not have done that sum myself in double the time." Altogether, those of us who were responsible for the school felt very happy that it had passed so well the test of inspection by the highest functionary of the Madras Presidency.

The next day His Excellency's Private Secretary sent me the text of his remarks to the Managers and Teachers of the school, of which the following is a copy:

"His Excellency thanked Colonel Olcott for giving him the opportunity of inspecting his school which he was pleased to hear from the report was doing such good work. From a close study of the problem of how best the amelioration of the Pariah and lower classes could be brought about, he was satisfied that there was no step which could be taken with more (413) likelihood of success than that of education. He did not believe that any heroic measure could be undertaken by Government which would be successful, but he believed that by the gradual introduction of education, the lower classes could best be helped to help themselves. By this means they would be enabled to take their part on a more equal footing with the rest of the population, and that though this would be a work of time, he fully believed that an amelioration in the condition of the Pariahs would eventually be brought about by this means. It was therefore a matter of especial satisfaction to him to visit this school this morning and see for himself how the experiment started by Colonel Olcott was progressing. He wished to express his thanks to Colonel Olcott for all that he had done and while congratulating him on the success which had so far attended his efforts, he

sincerely hoped that his school would long continue to carry on the good work which it had started so auspiciously.”

The strong common sense shown in this brief but pregnant address will strike the reader. Lord Wenlock puts his finger upon the pivot of the whole Pariah question, for it is by education alone that their unhappy lot can be ameliorated; only thus can they learn how to help themselves. No Government in the world can lift a great body of five millions of people from the degradation of brutish ignorance to the dignified condition of a self-respecting, self-sufficient community, save by passing their children through the [415] schoolmaster’s hands. It was the realisation of this fact which induced me to try the experiment of the free Panchama schools. The kindly hope expressed by His Excellency that the schools for Pariahs might be successful has happily, as we all know, been fully realised. Instead of one school which I had then, we now have four and all prosperous and most promising. The one discouraging fact in connection with the work is that with very, very few exceptions, the high-caste Hindus have shown no disposition whatever to take upon themselves the merited reproach of the wretched condition of the Pariahs, and to give me practical proof of their sympathy and good will in my work. They have simply held aloof and let me struggle on as best I can, seemingly quite indifferent whether I succeed or fail. Some of my esteemed colleagues have even gone so far as to say to third parties that it was very doubtful if my time was not being wasted in trying to uplift the Pariahs, for they were intellectually incapable of being given any marked degree of culture. What makes this the more remarkable is that these very people are staunch believers in evolution, and must know that however little may be the uplifting of the Pariah pupil in this incarnation it, at least, makes it much easier for the entity to take a long stride in advance during his next rebirth.

Before leaving Bombay I had been asked by the venerable Mr. K. R. Cama to put in writing the views verbally expressed to him with respect to the best way to subserve the interests of the Zoroastrian religion.

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This promise I redeemed on the day after Lord Wenlock’s visit and sent the manuscript to the printer. The subject is too important, however, for me to bring it in at the close of a chapter and so it will be continued in our next.

CHAPTER XXXI

ON ZOROASTRIANISM

(1895)

IN the last chapter reference was made to my discussions at Bombay with learned Parsis about the best way to begin a work of reformation and revitalising of their ancient and sublime faith, and to a certain written draft of my views upon the subject prepared on my return to Adyar at the request of the universally respected Parsi scholar, Mr. K. R. Cama. This document, of which I fortunately saved a copy, will be presently given. Meanwhile, a few preliminary observations will be in place.

Among the religions of the world, none is more lofty in its concepts or more worthy of the devotion of its followers than that taught by the successive Zoroasters who figure in history. Its key-note and corner-stone is Purity; purity absolute in thought, word, and deed. For the sages of Persia knew that if the individual would raise himself to the sublime height of perfection and approximate in essence to the characteristic of the Divine Ruler and Source of all things, he must disembarass himself of every [117] taint of baseness and corruption which drags him down to earth and makes entrance upon the superior planes impossible. A simpler code of teaching is inconceivable. Unmixed with dogmas, without confusing iteration of details, the mandate of personal purity shines like a star in Heaven upon the path of the man who struggles upward and onward. To worship the one Supreme Deity and to hate all bad opposing influences, whether human or superhuman, are the fundamental articles of the Parsi creed. Prayer, obedience, industry, honesty, hospitality, alms-deeds, chastity, and the great virtue of truthfulness, are enjoined, and envy, hatred, quarrelling, anger, revenge, and polygamy, are strictly forbidden; the worship of idols, and indeed of any being except Ormuzd, is held in abomination; but a reverence for fire and the Sun is inculcated, as they are emblems of the glory of the Supreme Deity.

The New American Cyclopaedia, from whose article on the "Guebres" (VOL. VIII, p. 546) I summarise the foregoing, says: "It is probably true that the

multitude in the course of time have forgotten that discrimination between the symbol and the object of their adoration which was undoubtedly taught by Zoroaster.” However this may be (and after many years of intimacy with the Bombay Parsis I am not prepared to admit that any considerable number of them have forgotten that in the Sun, the fire, and the sea they worship anything more than the visible symbols of Ormuzd), it is almost certain that the majority of people outside their faith, particularly all Western peoples, regard them (418) as and call them fire-worshippers, hence, in a sense, as much idolators as any others who adore idols, pictures, trees, or any other images of the Unknown Power. Those who wish to get a clear and satisfactory idea of the interpretation of Zoroastrianism from the standpoint of Theosophy should read the admirable compendium of the subject made by Mr. Nasarvanji F. Bilimoria, of Bombay, under the title, *Zoroastrianism in the Light of Theosophy*.²⁰ Professor Darmesteter says that “the Parsi sacred books are the ruins of a religion,” and Dr. Martin Haug, Ph. D., the greatest Western authority on Zoroastrianism, reminds us that Pliny reports on the authority of Hermippus, the Greek philosopher, that Zoroaster composed two millions of verses; while Abu Jaffer Attavari, the Arabic historian, assures us that Zoroaster’s writings comprised twelve thousand parchments. Of all this literary wealth but a beggarly handful is in the possession of our modern Parsis. The writings of Zoroaster comprised twenty-one parts or Nosks, the largest portion of which has been destroyed, and it is the belief of the Zoroastrians, confirmed by the accounts given by classical writers, that they were destroyed by Alexander at the time of his invasion and conquest of Persia. “We find,” says Dr. Haug, “from Diodorus and Curtius that Alexander really did burn the citadel at Persepolis, in a drunken frolic, at (419) the instigation of the Athenian courtesan, Thais, and in revenge for the destruction of Greek temples by Xerxes.” Naturally enough, one would infer that the sacred books kept in the Royal Archives must have been destroyed along with the place. From Mr. Bilimoria’s book and the compendium given of Dr. Haug’s essay in question (p. 55), we learn that during the five and a half centuries of Macedonian and Parthian supremacy which followed Alexander’s conquest, Zoroastrianism had fallen into neglect, and as a natural consequence, much of the Zoroastrian literature was lost. “Whatever may have been the cause, this is the fact that, at the Sassanian period when the revival of the Zoroastrian religion took place, the largest bulk of the sacred writings was gone and only a very small portion, and that, too, except the Vendidad, in a fragmentary state, was left. These fragments, the learned men of the Sassanian period put together according to their

understanding, to make something like a consistent whole, and, to explain them, wrote commentaries in Pahalvi, which was the vernacular of the time. The portions thus preserved and brought together and now extant with the Parsis, are Yaçna (Izeshne), Visparatu (Visparad), Vendidâd, Yashts, Hadokht, Vistâsp Nosk, Afringan, Niayish, Gah, some miscellaneous fragments and the Sirozah (thirty days) or calendar.”

Here is the lamentable fact which, for the past twenty-two years²¹ I have been trying to press home (¶20) on the Parsis as a reason why they should, through their Panchayat, or Governing Body, emulate the successful attempts of the Christians to unearth (in Egypt and Palestine) buried archaic remains of their religion, by organising a Parsi Exploration Fund, to pursue researches in Persia and Bactria under, if possible, some other man of the supreme fitness of Professor Flinders Petrie, on the chance of finding buried tile libraries and inscribed stones which might give them back some of the priceless teachings of the Zoroasters, now lost. As for finding forgotten manuscripts in European libraries, I am afraid the hope must be abandoned. In fact, as M. Blochet, of the National Library, Paris, wrote me, the Zoroastrian books and manuscripts in European libraries, with very few exceptions as, for instance, the most ancient manuscripts of the “Bundahish,” at Copenhagen, and known in Europe as “K20,” have been brought from India since the middle of the eighteenth century and are, presumably, but copies of originals which the Parsis have kept in their own possession. Says M. Blochet:

“It will always be a serious obstacle to the progress of Mazdian study that we, Europeans, cannot know exactly what interesting documents of this religion are available to-day in India, and that the Parsis, on the other hand, do not know exactly what documents are at our disposal in Europe. Of course I have not in mind simple list of titles, which would not help us forward in the least unless we could have in our hands the manuscripts themselves, but a catalogue (¶21) scientifically prepared and in great detail. To meet this difficulty to the extent of my means and to fill this gap, I have composed a catalogue of Zend manuscripts, etc., in the Bibliothèque Nationale, which, however, I do not offer as a model of the sort, but which circumstances of a very material nature oblige me to keep in manuscript.

“The Parsis are rich enough to be able to indulge themselves in the luxury of making known to the world the treasures of their libraries and private collections, and this is the sole basis on which it will ever be possible to build up

an exact knowledge of the Mazdian religion. I believe that your relations with the Indians, dear Colonel, are such that you will be able to convey to them the ideas which I have now ventured to express to you.”

From the foregoing it is very plain to see where exists the deadlock which prevents the progress of Zoroastrian literary research—both parties, the European Orientalists and the Bombay Parsi scholars, are equally ignorant as to the portions of the literature which are respectively in the hands of the other party. Of course, the very first thing to do is to have two catalogues carefully compiled and exchanged between them; this done, a well-ordered policy of mutual help would inevitably hasten the day when a clear and comprehensive knowledge of the body of surviving literature would be attained. I am afraid that there exists among the Parsis a very prejudiced and narrow-minded class of priests who do not wish outsiders to know too much about their sacred writings.

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Probably this feeling is due to the selfish desire of keeping to themselves the hereditary right to dole out to the laity and interpret as they choose the teachings of the Founder. I may be wrong, but I think that the backwardness of the community to catch up the suggestion of a Parsi Exploration Fund is, in some measure, due to this priestly obstructiveness.

Granting that the libraries of Christendom contain, for the most part, only copies of existing Parsi books, there is yet another field of inquiry which I pointed out in a letter to the late M. Menant, de l’ Institut, in 1896, which is not touched upon either in his reply of the same year or in the letter of M. Blochet above cited. What I wanted him to tell me was whether in “any public library, in any part of the world... there are ancient books, MSS., or fragmentary Gâthâs, etc.” I had no idea of confining our inquiries to European or any other libraries in Christian countries. The conquering armies of Islam were almost invariably accompanied by learned mullahs whose writings have given the world most important information about countries and people with whom they came in contact. In a letter to Professor Flinders Petrie, of University College, London, one of the questions I put to him on behalf of the Parsi Panchâyat, was whether it would not be profitable to search in the older libraries of Oriental countries for missing fragments. A great deal that we know of Zoroastrianism has been derived from the fragments preserved by the Greeks and since we know that the scholars in the train of [423] Alexander carried these away on their return to their countries, what more natural than that a careful search in the libraries which are

the repositories of Islamic literature would yield rich results? The one fact which it behoved the Parsis to understand is that the old adage, "Heaven helps those who help themselves," will indubitably be proved true in their case, as it has in the cases of the Christians, the Hindus, and the devotees of research into the buried records of other ancient faiths. But no power, human or divine, will help any community, nation, or individual who does not make an honest effort on his own behalf. As I have reiterated again and again, the Parsi Panchâyat might have got possession by this time of precious additions to their religious records if they had but accepted the offer of H.P.B., embodied in my lecture aforesaid, to get them the confidence and help of her friend, the then Viceroy of the Caucasus, Prince Dondoukoff Korsakoff, for the Parsi Exploration Fund which I then suggested. But they have preferred to go on all these years in the old beaten track, with the exception of the comparatively few who have become Theosophists and whose lives have become embued with the feeling of reverence and love for their glorious religion.

It may seem strange to some that I feel and speak so strongly on this subject of the revival of Zoroastrianism, but, as a student of comparative religions, I have been charmed and impressed by its beauty and deeply grieved to see that the Tatas, the Jijibhoys, (424) the Petits, and other Parsi millionaires who have excited so much admiration by their royal charities, should not have devoted a portion of their gifts to this most necessary object. Of course, it will be no proof to anyone outside the number of us in the Society who believe in the existence of Âkâshic Records and the possibility of tracing in them the world's history, that the interest felt by some of us non-Parsis may be due to relations with the race and religion in past ages.

If I have filled up this chapter mainly with discussions about the Zoroastrian religion, it is because I feel that the revival of all ancient religions is a very important part of the work of the Theosophical Society, and that what has been done by us towards it should be mentioned in any veracious history of the movement.

As to Hinduism, see the revival of Brahmanism and of Sanskrit Literature, the foundation of the Central Hindu College and our Sectional activities; as to Buddhism, see the 200 Schools and the three Colleges opened by our members in Ceylon, the enthusiasm in Buddhist Japan, the unprecedented friendly union between the Northern and Southern Buddhists, The Buddhist Catechism circulating in nearly twenty languages. Zoroastrianism is our next great care, and

I pray that I may live to see it revived by the combined devotion and efforts of our Parsi Theosophists.

Let us now return to my letter to Mr. K. R. Cama, the text of which is as follows:

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“Permit me to enlarge somewhat upon the views which I expressed in our recent conversation at Bombay, about the best way to improve the state of the Zoroastrian religion. Since the date of my Town Hall lecture upon this topic, in the year 1882, I have been, as you know, one of the warmest friends of your religion. In private conversations and public utterances, I have tried to influence your leading men to combine together for its interests. I have pointed to the Palestine Exploration Fund and other societies as examples set by the Christians of what the followers of every ancient faith which has suffered by wars, migrations, and other causes, ought to do if they would recover long lost knowledge and complete their present mutilated Scriptures, and inaccurate codes of teaching, I have often said, and now repeat, that Zoroastrianism is one of the noblest, simplest, most sublime religions in the world. If there is any religion whatsoever which deserves the love and loyalty of its adherents, yours is such a religion. If there is a religion backed by a body of men of high intelligence, moral courage, having a spirit of loyalty to it, and at once the tact for business and vast wealth—the reward of generations of industrious workers—it is to be found among the Parsis of Bombay. And yet, where shall we find a community so little valuing spirituality as the highest ideal of human life; so little understanding their Scriptures; so indifferent to the religious training of their sons? One would suppose that the Parsi summum bonum was a houseful of rupees and a body covered with purchased [426] decorations. I am not forgetting the numberless acts of charity which have made the Parsi name almost the synonym of benevolence throughout the English-speaking world, and for which I hold your people in deep respect. But my eye is fixed upon the type of the true Zoroastrian which history paints for us in the band of persecuted exiles, who left Ormuzd and landed at Sanjan, eleven centuries ago. They were great in all worldly capacities, for their present great mercantile and manufacturing descendants sprang from their loins and inherit their blood. But they were greater still in their sublime religious devotion, which made them—like my own Pilgrim forefathers—quit country, wealth, friends, comfort and all, and smilingly face every unknown danger for the dear sake of their religion. Moreover, they

were led by the holy Dastur Darab, whose purity and spirituality were such as to make it possible for him to draw from the boundless Âkâsh the divine fire of Ormuzd, to light the flame which you have ever since kept burning. Are you such men to-day, with your wealth, your luxuries, your knighthoods, your medals, and your mills? Have you a Darab Dastur among you, or even a School of the Prophets, where neophytes are taught the divine science? Alas! nay. Of your Scriptures you have saved out of the terrors of persecution no more than a small fraction; and only the other day we read of Western Orientalists trying to show that even these are modern compilations from various sources. The question your humble friend and defender asks is whether you mean to keep idle [427] and not stir a hand to revive your religion, to discover all that can be learnt about your sacred writings, to create a modern school of writers, who shall invest your ethics and metaphysics with such a charm that we shall hear no more about Parsi men preaching Christianity at Dhobi Talao, or Parsi girls marrying Mahomedans or becoming Zenana missionaries. Do you prefer to wait until hearts are broken in an hundred more Parsi homes; until scores of once happy families are broken up by apostasies of ignorant, untaught, or feeble-minded children? I believe not; my faith in the practical good sense of your community forbids my believing such criminal indifference to be possible after your leaders open their eyes to the terrible dangers that are slowly gathering around you in consequence of your excessive worldliness.

“What practical remedy do I suggest? Simply this. That your Panchâyat should adopt a formal Resolution declaring that, henceforth, the promotion of the interest of the Zoroastrian religion shall be one of its recognised duties; that its sympathy and help may be counted on by every scholar, society, explorer, or other person who, in any part of the world, may now be engaged, or hereafter shall engage, in the collection of Parsi document and antiquarian relics; the exploration of districts connected with Parsi history; the publication of books, maps, drawings, etc., upon Zoroastrian religion which may be found worthy of its aid; and in any other important effort to throw light upon that religion. The Secretary of the Panchâyat should be made, ex-officio, the channel [428] through which shall pass from and to the Panchâyat all correspondence and negotiations growing out of this matter; and he should send copies of this Resolution throughout the world to those interested. The Government of India and the Home Government should be petitioned by the Panchâyat that all British Ministers and Consuls should be requested and encouraged to help in the promotion of this laudable work.

“The accumulated funds of the Panchâyat being ample, there is no necessity for creating a special fund for this purpose, at least for some time to come; although I feel quite sure that as soon as the importance of these researches become known, large sums will be given by individuals which, otherwise, would be given to public works of infinitely less noble character. I recommend no haste, no lavish outlay, no sudden outburst of zeal; but a quiet, calm, wise adoption of the policy sketched above, and the dogged carrying out of practical methods for its full and complete accomplish-ment. If your people had accepted my offer in 1882, I might have given you much assistance, for the then Viceroy of the Caucasus was an old and intimate friend of my lamented colleague, Madame Blavatsky, and for her sake he would have done all that lay within his power. However, it is now useless to recall lost opportunities; only lose no more. Every month’s delay lessens the chances of success; every wasted year is a misfortune for your community.

“I have ventured to offer the foregoing suggestions at the request of a number of respectable Parsi friends, [429] and I make them for what they may be worth. I feel that I can do so the more freely since I have no personal ends to accomplish, no money recompense to ask, no honors to solicit. This is your work, not mine; all I can give you is my loving sympathy and my best wishes.”

At the time when I was writing my lecture of 1882, our Bombay Headquarters was visited by a certain Master,²² happily unknown by the public and even the majority of our members, who had but recently gone over the ground in Armenia, where the ancient Parsis lived. He told H.P.B. that, at the Monastery of Soorb Ovanness, in that country, there were in 1877 three superannuated priests, whose number had been reduced to one within the subsequent five years; and that the library of books and old manuscripts heaped up as waste paper in every corner of the pillar-cells, tempting no Kurd, were scattered over the rooms. “For the consideration of a dagger and a few silver abazes I got several precious manuscripts from him”—the old priest. Moreover, H.P.B. and I were assured that in a certain large mountain cave, effectually closed against all intruders and vandals, and, like the many other of the same kind scattered throughout the world, constantly watched over and guarded by the Masters of Wisdom, the whole body of valuable [430] Zoroastrian literature is stored up against the proper time for its restoration to mankind. Old readers of our literature will remember that it has been affirmed on the best authority that no book that is important to our race has ever been irretrievably lost. Despite the worst endeavors of bigoted

Khalifs, like Omar, who burnt the Alexandrian library, and drunken soldiers like Alexander, who gave the citadel of Persepolis to the flames, the world's intellectual and spiritual evolution are never stayed; for the motto is *Nulla vestigiaretrorsum*.

CHAPTER XXXII

AMERICAN VISITORS AND THE CONVENTION

(1895)

AMONG the heroes of the Japan-China war of ten years ago was one whose name shone conspicuously in the list of great soldiers. General Vicount Nodzu, the man of whom I speak, commanded one of the two armies which, marching from different points, united at the appointed time and place and crushed the enemy. It was my good fortune to make him my friend during my Japanese tour of 1889, at which time he commanded the military district of Hiroshima, if my memory serves me. His was a deeply religious nature and it was that which drew us together. He presented me with a copy of a thick book which he had written on a Buddhistic subject, and which is now in the Adyar Library, along with the fifteen hundred other volumes which, thanks to the kindness of friends, I was able to bring back from Japan. When, at the close of the war with China, the Japanese arms were victorious, I wrote my friend to beg him to use his influence, then very great, to prevent his fellow-countrymen from being swept away from the religious level on which I had left them by the [1892] tidal wave of the bloody thirst for fighting and conquest. I knew the man so well that I felt assured that, although he had won the admiration of his people by his military achievements, he was still at heart the devotee of religion and the aspirant after spiritual knowledge. I sincerely regret that, as this chapter is being written at my Nilgiri cottage, I cannot lay my hand upon either of the letters which passed between us. I remember, however, that he told me that he was now too old to turn aside from the profession of his life to enter the field of religious teaching; this, he added, was my special province: he thanked me for what I had done during my tour of 1889 and hoped that I might be able to come again to his country and continue my work. This matter is brought back to my recollection by the entry of November 19th in my Diary for 1895, where the dispatch of my letter to him is recorded.

On the next afternoon an American traveller, a Dr. Scrogin, of Kentucky, paid

me a visit. It seems that he had been attracted to India by the extravagant stories of Yogis and Mahatmas, outrivalling even the imaginative flights of Louis Jacolliot, which had been circulated in England and America by one Dr. Hensoldt. I have never known anything whatever about that individual beyond what I read in the public prints. So I am not qualified to pronounce ex cathedra as to his narratives of alleged personal experience. But I can say that, from first to last his stories were so improbable and romantic, albeit clever, that I was inclined to classify him as another Munchausen.

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His report, for instance, of his visit to Lhasa and interview with the Dalai Lama is almost too circumstantial, for when I read it I just went to our Library, got out Thomas Manning's report of his Embassy to Lhasa in 1811-12 (London, Trubner & Co., 1876, p. 287), and found that our contemporary sensationalist had, apparently, drawn upon Markham for his account of the interview in question. For example, compare the following:

HENSOLDT (1894). MARKHAM (1811).

“A youth indeed, I “The Lama’s beautiful
found him—a boy per- and interesting face and
haps eight years of age, manner engrossed almost
certainly not over nine— all my attention. He
but instead of a face of was at that time about
idiotic meaninglessness seven years old: had the
and indifference, I en- simple and unaffected
countered a look which manners of a well-edu-
at once filled me with cated princely child. His
astonishment and awe. face was, I thought,
It was a face of great poetically and affectingly
symmetry and beauty, beautiful.”
a face never to be forgotten
on account of its singular
melancholy expression,

which contrasted strangely with the childlike features; but what startled me most were the eyes.”

As I remarked, when calling attention to this literary feat (Theosophist, Vol. XVI, p. 269), the preservative action upon flesh of the dry climate of Lhasa is known, [484] but justice has never been done to it if it can keep a boy at the age of seven or eight years from 1811 to 1893-4. But, unfortunately, the reigning Dalai Lama was twenty-two years of age at the time of Hensoldt’s alleged visit! At any rate, poor Dr. Scrogin had become fired with the ambition to see the wonders and Mahatmas described by our author, and had left his medical practice at Lexington, come to India, worked his way north as far as Kashmir without seeing the least bit of a wonder-worker or miracle, had contracted a dreadful fever in the Terai jungle, been laid up a month in hospital, discharged as cured, and then come to Adyar, which he ought to have visited in the first instance and learnt the truth. Perhaps some of my readers may remember a similar case, where three Russian gentlemen, two of them officers, with whom I crossed from Colombo to Tuticorin some years ago, had come to India on the strength of the fascinating stories told by H.P.B. in her Caves and Jungles of Hindustan: they ardently hoped to enjoy some of the weird experiences depicted by her. That they were disappointed, as have been scores of others who have come to India on the same quest, goes without saying. Mahatmas and other miracle workers are not on show like the freaks in the Dime Museum; if they are encountered and if they do exhibit any siddhis it is with another object than the gratification of mere vulgar curiosity.

I was so pleased with my Kentucky visitor that I invited him to come from his hotel and stop with us [485] for some weeks. He thankfully accepted the invitation and came to us on the following Sunday (November 24th). Very shortly after his arrival his Terai fever threatened to break out again, so I asked some of our servants if they knew of any plant used in India as a febrifuge. The butler pointed to a grand old margosa tree near the house and said that, with permission, he would make a decoction out of the young leaves which he thought would prove efficacious. Dr. Scrogin gladly made the experiment, drank a lot of the bitter dose—for the leaves are as bitter as aloes or quinine—and within a few days the fever symptoms entirely disappeared and there was no

return during the time that he was with us.

November being included within the period of the North-east Monsoon, my notes show that it was raining heavily every day at that time, to the great obstruction of our building work. But by covering the space with a temporary roof of palm leaves the masons and their work were effectually sheltered and we could push on the erection of the room which Dr. English has occupied ever since its completion.

The entry of 26th November in my Diary relates to the payment of Copyright on *Isis Unveiled*, by J. W. Bouton, the New York publisher. As H. P. B. had transferred her author's rights to me in her Will I had collected in 1892, through the agency of Mr. Judge, a certain sum, which I turned over to the American and some other Section, but I have no recollection of receiving a penny of copyright since [486] that time. In fact, from the pecuniary point of view, the book paid neither of us two anything to speak of, although it has passed through a number of editions and the publisher covered his cost before we left New York for India. I have recently heard of his death, from Professor Wilder, who tells me that he was victimised like ourselves.

On the 2nd of December another American traveller, a Mr. Clark, of Detroit, landed from a Clan steamer and drove out to see us. As he was interested in Theosophy I invited him to stop with us over the Convention, so he did and was with us for some weeks. The following day brought still another gentleman, a Mr. Grece, also of Detroit, who came from Ceylon, and he also was glad to be able to stop over and attend our Annual Meeting. Naturally enough the succeeding days were largely devoted to Theosophical discussions and explanations with our two American visitors, both of whom profitably employed themselves as well in reading the books in our library.

“To have the honour of meeting Their Excellencies the Viceroy and the Countess of Elgin” is the heading on the official invitation card from the Governor, Lord Wenlock, which I find pasted in my Diary of Friday, December 6th. I wish that some of my fellow countrymen who aspire to the acquaintance of titled foreigners could attend one of these brilliant State functions. In the grounds of the Governor's official palace in the city of Madras stands a large detached building in the Ionic style, which is known [487] as the “Banqueting Hall”. It is an imposing structure, pure white without and within. The inside forms one lofty and spacious hall, with a broad gallery running around the four sides and resting upon massive white columns; light is furnished by enormous

lustres with crystal drops; at the further end is a large raised dais for the chief personages in attendance. At the appointed hour His Excellency and party drive up in grand style in open barouches drawn by four or six horses, with postilions and numerous outriders. Ranged along the other side of the avenue in front of the hall, are troops who come to the salute as the Governor drives up; the military band breaks out into the National Anthem, the dignitaries clad in Court costume, mount the long flight of steps to the terrace between parallel lines of the picturesquely clad, lance-bearing Sepoys of the Body Guard, the invited guests within form a hedge, and the exalted personages, bowing right and left, walk to the dais and thence saluting the company, turn and speak to the principal officers of Government, Civil, Military and Ecclesiastical, take their seats, and after a few minutes the Ball opens with the State Quadrille; thence onward, until the approach of morning, the snow-white hall presents a scene of brilliant animation.

On such occasions as this one has the chance of seeing the Indian Rajahs and Zemindars of the Presidency in their most gorgeous attire; some wearing clusters of jewels that would make most ladies green with envy. One evening, at a function of the sort, I was chatting with the late Maharajah of Vizianagaram, [1488] an educated and courteous gentleman who had earned by his lavish hospitality and pleasant manners with the Anglo-Indians the sobriquet of "Prince Charming". In his rich turban he wore an aigret of diamonds and around his neck a string of enormous emeralds. Accidentally, the string broke and the precious gems rolled about him on the floor. Of course, I helped him to gather them together and was rather amused at the nonchalance he showed, handling the precious stones as though they were common pebbles. I suppose that, if the truth were known, the obligation to wear these loads of jewels must be to many of our Indian Princes an intolerable nuisance: I am quite sure it must be so with an educated and thoughtful man like the present Gaekwar of Baroda. For that matter, is it not so with Kings and Rulers all the world over?

Among the Indian notabilities of Madras is Rajah Sir S. Ramaswamy Mudaliar, Kt., C. I. E., who has made his fortune as "Dubash," or broker for the great house of Arbuthnot & Co. His name is seen on drinking-troughs and rest-sheds all over Madras, while diagonally opposite the Central Railway Station is an extensive Dharmasala for the use of Hindu travellers who want some convenient place of accommodation when visiting the city. He is in high favor with the authorities, and as he likes that sort of thing, the Government is glad to get him

to give great receptions more or less in the Oriental style, to distinguished visiting personages, like the Viceroys of India, the Czarevitch of Russia, the Princes of Royal Families, [499] etc. He gave a reception to Their Excellencies, the Earl and Countess of Elgin on the evening of December 9th. His extensive grounds were brilliantly illuminated, his mansion was one blaze of light, here and there in the compound were small kiosks and other structures in which amusements were provided by native performers: after that, supper and refreshments and at the end of all a superb pyrotechnic display. The programme accompanying my ticket may, perhaps, interest Western readers. There was a Hindu dance by a Madras girl; playing on the vina by a renowned musical pandit; Indian marionettes; amusing performances by parrots; kolattum, a rope-braiding dance, by eight girls (very much like our Maypole dance); an Indian drama; then the supper and fire-works. At intervals the company would be set into fits of laughter by the performances of specialists who would wander about the grounds and mimic the voices of birds and beasts, the noise of machinery and other familiar sounds.

I was very pleased to receive on the 10th of December a letter from the Viceroy's Private Secretary to the effect that His Excellency took an interest in my work for the Pariahs and that he wished me every success.

On the 15th of the month Mr. Grece made application for membership The 16th was rather a memorable day for me, since I received from London advance copies of the first volume of my]. On the afternoon of that day a Vaishnava Hatha yogi came and, in illustration of the power of the mind over the body, showed us some experiments [400] that I am sure would not be credited by any college of physicians and surgeons without the evidence of their own senses. The subject is not one that can be laid before the mixed public of my readers, but for the benefit of the profession I may say that, by a reversal of the peristaltic action he could fill himself up with water at will. The working of the abdominal muscles during the experiment was most striking.

In the early morning of the 17th I had a visit from H. P. B. in her astral body, which was very pleasant. She presented herself in the same appearance with which I was perfectly familiar. On the same day all my three American visitors acquired membership. All this time, despite the heavy rain, I was pushing on the building work with good success. On the 21st Mrs. Grece arrived from Colombo and rejoined her husband. The Convention time was now very close and on the 23rd Mrs. Besant arrived with Mr. Keightley, Upendranath Basu, Tookaram

Tatya, Dr. Edal Behram, and seven or eight more from Bombay. In the evening Mrs. Besant held one of her splendid conversaciones in the great hall; as usual, charming her auditors with her replies to questions and explanations of difficult subjects. Delegates were now arriving by every train and, as the whole space on the ground floor was needed for the accommodation of delegates, I turned out the European occupants of the bedrooms on that floor and made them ready for the Indian visitors. The European gentlemen I housed in the octagon room in the river bungalow and put Mr. and Mrs.

[441]

Grece in one of those very comfortable leaf huts that are now so largely employed at Conventions. Mrs. Besant's disquisitions that evening at the usual meeting were upon dreams, the astral body, and kindred subjects. I do not know when I have been more interested than in her descriptions of the experience of watching the dream-life of sleeping persons—the magical creations of the wandering imagination, the reproduction of actual experiences during the waking state, and the instantaneous transformations caused by the rush of thought and the impulse of sensations. The narrative recalled vividly Moore's description of the dream state as

... that dim twilight of the mind,
When reason's beam, half hid behind
The clouds of sense, obscurely gilds
Each shadowy shape that fancy builds.

But the student who would really wish to see the subject ably and thoroughly worked out, should read Mr. Leadbeater's monograph on the subject of "Dreams".

Until the Council Meeting at London in 1896, when the Rules of the Society were crystallised into their present shape, there were, as we all know, periodical tinkering at them, often but to pacify the caprices of whimsical members. I note that, on Christmas Day, 1895, Mr. Keightley and I collaborated on a new draft of the Rules for presentation to the Convention. By the 26th we had a house full of delegates, by the 27th [442] we were crowded. At noon on that day the Convention met, and an unusually large number of delegates answered roll-call. An interesting feature was the presence of American members coming from the States of Vermont, New York, Kentucky, and Michigan. With the assembling of

this Convention, the Society celebrated the completion of the twentieth year of its history. Of course I noticed the fact and recalled the incidents of the early times and of our tempestuous journey from New York to Bombay. Deducting fifteen days passed in London, the journey occupied just forty-nine days, 7 X 7. The American secession having occurred during that year had to be referred to, but I made my allusions as brief as possible. One point, however, I dwelt upon, as our statistics so completely refuted the false assumption of the secession leaders that New York had always been the vortex of our movement, while the activities of H. P. B. and myself, after reaching India and establishing Headquarters at Bombay, were but the extension of the functions of the New York Society. The figures are so instructive that I had better copy from my Annual Address the paragraph which contains them:

“Before leaving the American question I shall just cite a few figures to show you where the vortex of this movement of ours was from the time of our leaving America to, say, the close of 1887. In 1879, 1880, and 1881 those in charge of the New York centre formed no new Branches, H. P. B. and I formed 24. In 1882 the St. Louis (Arjuna) and Rochester Branches  were formed, we had formed 52; in 1883 the dead New York (original) Society was reincarnated in the Aryan T.S., Mr. Judge obtaining the charter from us; in the whole United States there were three Branches at the close of 1883, but we had formed 95; in 1884 there was one Branch formed in the United States, making 4 in all, while we had 103 elsewhere; Mr. Judge met the Founders in Europe in that year, was home again in 1885, and two new Branches sprang up, we had chartered 124 in all; in 1886 two were made in America and 136 charters were extant; finally, to the end of 1887—twelve years after our beginning, and nine after the Founders came to India—eleven charters had been issued by me to American Branches and 147 to others in other countries. Whether de facto or de jure, it is evident that H. P. B. and I were doing the hard work of building up the Theosophical Society and making its name and objects known throughout the whole earth.”

The theme of Mrs. Besant's morning lectures at this year's Convention was “the Path of Discipleship”. However well they may read, the printed reports of her lectures are but as husks in comparison with the life and charm that she gives them in her utterances. People came, as they always do, from the distant heart of the City of Madras in the very early morning so as to secure places, and the audiences increased from day to day. We got through the work of the two Conventions (of the T.S. and the Indian Section) in perfect harmony and the

Victoria [||||] Town Hall in Madras, where we always celebrate our Anniversary on the 28th of December (biennially now, since the new rule makes us hold our Conventions alternately at Adyar and Benares) was crowded to such an extent that the Trustees were a little fearful for the safety of the building. The speakers of the occasion were Mrs. Besant, and Messrs. Keightley, Grece, O. D. Sarma and, of course, myself.

Mrs. Besant's fourth and last lecture of the course, on the 30th, drew the same huge audience and was most eloquent. The Hon'ble Mr. Justice S. Subramanier returned thanks on behalf of the Indian public, after which the delegates began leaving and the house soon emptied itself. The psychological effect upon my mind of this year's Convention seemed to be that of a great explosion of harmony on the astral plane and, as I note in my Diary, Mrs. Besant seemed more than ever inspired by the current of thought and good-will sent out by the Masters.

This closes the record of the Society's twentieth year.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE MAHA-BODHI

(1896)

THE year we are now entering is, of course, that of the majority of the Theosophical Society. The fact was to me so important that I sat up with my thoughts to see the old year out and gather strength to carry us through the coming twelvemonth.

On New Year's Day Mrs. Besant, with Mr. Keightley and Babu Upendranath, left for Poona, where she had a lecturing engagement. Our three American visitors, Clark, Grece, and Scrogin, true to the national instinct, made themselves useful by taking the account of stock in the Theosophist Office, a job which lasted four days. I myself had all I could do in writing for the foreign mail and reading through large arrears of exchanges. On the 6th and 7th I wrote an Old Diary Leaf, and on the former day had the distinguished honor of a visit from that smooth talker and consummate humbug, "Prof. R. Guelph Norman," who pretends to be a son of the ruling sovereign. He left his legitimate wife and children at Moulmein, and ruined the life [148] of a highly respectable American lady at Boston by contracting with her a bigamous marriage. The man has, or had, strong healing power, which he exercised to the great profit of Countess Wachtmeister by rescuing her eyes from certain blindness; but he seems to be a thorough scamp in his financial dealings and his relations with the other sex. He is on the black list of the Burma Police.

On the 8th Mr. and Mrs. Grece left for Colombo, and Dr. English followed them on the 9th, as he had to get together and bring to Adyar the personal effects which he had left in the Musaeus School, his permanent connection with the Theosophist editorial department having been settled. On the same day Mr. Tokuzawa, the clever young Japanese student, had his order of recall. On the 16th he embarked on the Messageries steamer for Japan and I saw him on board, reluctant to lose him. This left in the house only two Europeans besides myself.

On the following day Mr. Yoshitomi Hiraga, Director of the Commercial Museum at Osaka, Japan, brought letters of introduction to me and asked my assistance to collect information and specimens for the important Government department over which he presides. I met him at the station, brought him home to breakfast, and later introduced him to the leading commercial houses of Madras, who were glad to render him any assistance within their power. We had long talks together on the subject of the condition of his country, which gave me a still deeper impression as [\[47\]](#) to the perfect system on which all its affairs were managed.

The foreign mail of the 18th, by the swift P. & O. S. S. "Caledonia," brought me letters from New York on the 24th day after posting. Among other things which I learned was the fact that the first Treasurer of the Theosophical Society, Mr. H. J. Newton, a confirmed and obstinate Spiritualist, whose early interest in our Society had long since faded out and who had done everything within his power to discredit us, was killed by a cable car in New York City. Poor man! I felt sincerely sorry for his horrible death, the more so because he had died rejecting the truth which he had been taught about the after-death state. Mr. Newton was a wealthy man and particularly well known as the inventor of the dry-plate process of photography. It may be remembered that it was at his private gallery that the pretended power of Mlle. Pauline Libert to cause spirit photographs to come on an exposed plate by simply laying her hand on the camera, was thoroughly tested and disproved. Mr. Newton and I were both anxious to have her prove the truth of her claim, for its value as a scientific fact would have been great.

The days of this week were fully occupied with going about with Mr. Hiraga and day and night correspondence and writing for the Theosophist. I was at that time connected with the Mahâ-Bodhi Society as Honorary Adviser, and Dharmapala, being in a peck of trouble about the property at Gaya, telegraphed me [\[48\]](#) to come on to Calcutta. So I recalled Dr. English by telegraph, and on the 24th, in company with Mr. Hiraga, sailed for Calcutta in the "Eridan". We arrived on the 27th, Dr. Hübbe-Schleiden came aboard and took me to Dr. Salzer's house, where I had a nice welcome from his wife and himself. At 6 p.m., on the same day, I presided at Mrs. Besant's first lecture of that season, on the subject of "Caste".

On the morning of the 28th I was confined to my bed by a passing illness. Dharmapala came to consult me about Mahâ-Bodhi the Zemindary which

touches the enclosure about the great temple at one side, and which we were talking about buying. I sent him to arrange with Mrs. Besant for an important meeting on the following evening. Dr. Hübbe-Schleiden came up to town from Uttarpara to be with me. In the evening I presided at Mrs. Besant's second lecture on "Karma Yoga: Building of Character". On the next morning Dharmapala and Tookaram Taty, who happened to be in Calcutta at the time, came to see me, the latter to consult me about the employment of his time henceforth, as he had the intention of retiring from business. I advised him to devote himself to the inspection of Branches in connection with the Indian Section. At 4.30 p.m., Mrs. Besant gave a splendid lecture on "Vivisection," in the Town Hall, which awakened great enthusiasm, especially among the Jains who are, as is well known, the foremost opponents of cruelty to animals. An enormous audience filled the building to overflowing. After the lecture [448] Mrs. Besant and I met Tookaram, Dr. Hübbe, Upendranath Basu, Norendro Nath Sen, Dharmapala and his pleader, Babu Nunda Kissore Lall, of Gaya, and after a full discussion of the points, pro and con, we decided that the Mahâ-Bodhi Zemindary should not be purchased. We advised Dharmapala to buy a house in the town of Gaya as a temporary residence for priests, and I attended to other business with him.

Mrs. Besant was giving lectures and holding conversation meetings daily, to the great edification of the Hindu public. Her final lecture on "Education," was given on the 1st of February, and an hour later I put her into the train for Benares. The Secretary of the Calcutta Literary Society, profiting by my presence in Calcutta, persuaded me to give a course of three lectures before his Society. On the 2nd, at 3 p.m., I held a meeting of the Himâlayan Esoteric T. S. (of Simla) and admitted three members. By request I granted permission to the Branch to sit in Calcutta during the cold weather season, as the members were Government employees and were obliged to go up to and return from Simla yearly with the heads of their respective offices. My first lecture on "The Fate of Hindu Boys" was given at the rooms of the Patriotic Institution on Monday evening; my second on the two subjects of "Unselfishness" and "Mesmerism," the next day, with Dr. Hübbe-Schleiden in the chair. The third, on "Soul," at Ripon College, on the 5th. Day by day there was a good deal of discussion going on as to the whole Mahâ-Bodhi business and I was receiving [450] visitors and going about town pretty much all the time.

A grand Military Tournament was held at this time on the broad maidan, under

the auspices of the Military authorities. It fully deserved the success it earned, for the troops selected to take part in it were in good training and the exhibitions of drill, horsemanship and driving were very fine. There was also a sham assault upon an Indian Fort, ending with its capture which was very blood-stirring. On the occasion of my second visit I had for companion Mr. W. Forbes-Mitchell, one of the historians of the Indian Mutiny, a very intelligent and interesting Scotchman, who had his mind filled with vivid pictures of the incidents of that fearful tragedy. My old friend, Mark Twain, then on his lecturing tour around the world, happened to be at Calcutta simultaneously with myself, and here is the note he sent me to ask me to come around and see him.

“Friday.

“MY DEAR OLCOTT,

“I’m shut up here in the Continental Hotel with a brisk new cold in the head.

Come and cheer me up!

Yours sincerely,

S. L. CLEMENS.”

Now fancy that. The sober-sided President of the Theosophical Society invited to come to the bedside of Mark Twain and cheer him up, who, for more than a generation, has been cheering up the whole world of English readers. But I went, and a delightful meeting did we have; recalling old incidents of our association in the famous Lotos Club, New York, and our meetings at Boston, Hartford, Washington, and elsewhere. We smoked our pipes and chatted and laughed, and almost forgot that we were in India, at the other side of the world from our former haunts. And his dear wife and daughter, how tenderly they ministered to him and what a deep impression their sweetness of character made upon me²³. For no man of my acquaintance have I a greater respect than for this man, whose purity of character was so completely shown in his undertaking of this very world-round tour, to pay off the great burden of debt that had been cast upon him, as similarly happened to Sir Walter Scott, by the failure of the publishing house which had the publication of his works and in which, to his undoing, he had acquired a co-partnership interest. He was unable to lecture until after the lapse of three days, when he made his appearance at 5.30 p.m. before an immense audience. Needless to say, he kept them bubbling over with mirth and breaking out into applause throughout. I laughed to the shedding of tears at his comical descriptions of his struggles with the German language, and other good

points. May blessings attend him to the close of his life. He will leave none but friends behind him.

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE HEALING PENTAGON

ON the 11th I lectured at the Saraswati Institution and had in the audience some of my oldest Calcutta friends, who brought back to me the recollection of my first visit to the city with H.P.B. My dear hostess, Mrs. Salzer, was stung that day by a wasp or a scorpion or some other beast of the kind and for a while suffered excruciating agony; her finger swelled up and she could get no relief from the pain until she consulted me. I thereupon tested and proved, for the hundredth time, the efficacy of that, as yet unexplained, remedy of writing on the patient's flesh above the wound and at the extreme point to which the pain has travelled along the nerve, the pentacle or five-pointed star. Within three or four minutes the pain had subsided and the swelling was reduced; after a half-hour or so, nought remained but the little inflamed puncture to show that anything out of the way had happened.

Though, as above stated, I have made numberless cures by this simple process, and the back volumes of the Theosophist (vide Theosophist, Vol. II, pp. 58, 92, 215, and 240, etc.), contain certificates from different people, both in India and the United States, of hundreds [453] of cures, this one of Mrs. Salzer possessed great interest from the fact of my having been in the house at the time of the occurrence and been an eye-witness of her excruciating suffering. Somewhere in a back volume of the Theosophist is a statement from my beloved friend, the late Prince Harisinhji, that he had successfully tried the pentacle remedy in a very large number of cases of scorpion sting and, I think, also of fever. In recording the cure of Mrs. Salzer's finger I had intended to let the incident go with the bare mention as being simply of the nature of cumulative proof of the healing efficacy of this ancient and mystic symbol. But on second thought it seems to me that the subject possesses enough intrinsic importance to be mentioned somewhat more at length. A search of our back numbers reveals the fact of the almost unfailing efficacy of the remedy in question; that is indisputable and, to judge from my own observations, the obtaining of the proof is within the reach of everybody, high or low, literate or illiterate, psychopath or ignoramus, who can sketch the symbol on a sufferer. True, scorpions are not plentiful outside the tropics, but

spiders, bees, wasps, mosquitos, and other stinging insects are ubiquitous: they follow the traveller even into the Arctic and Antarctic regions. Is it not worth while, therefore, to devote a little space in this narrative to a discussion of so simple and apparently so infallible a remedy as the one in question?

The correspondents of the Theosophist do not seem unanimous as to the explanation of the working of [454] the five-pointed star; some, for instance H.P.B. (Vol. III, pp. 31, 32, and 33), ascribe the cure to the action of the will of the operator; a friend at Partabgarh says (Vol. III, p. 303) that the writing of the name “Allah” in Arabic characters in the palm of the left hand with the index finger of the right, then placing the same finger perpendicularly on the spot and making a strong pressure, will give instantaneous relief; our old friend, Mr. C. H. Vander Linden, writes from Jacksonville, Florida, about a sort of waking vision that he had of “a person in ancient garb, with a long, black, flowing beard, a peculiar head-dress with characters on it unknown to me; upon his fore-head some figures or marks, etc., etc.,” who told him that the use of the five-pointed star, when accompanied by the recitation of—well, a mantra—would be of wonderful curative efficacy, “when known generally would change the practice of medicine to a very great extent... Used in the right way, it would be a preventive against the most vehement diseases, epidemic or endemic; the bites of scorpions and poisonous animals would be made harmless by its applications; the diseased parts of the respiratory and other organs of man and animals would be cured by it; pain, no matter how excruciating, would be relieved by its application, which will also recuperate the diminished nervous power”. This secret, the mysterious visitor was willing to impart to Mr. Vander Linden on the condition that it should be used for the good of all, without, distinction, but that the secret should never be revealed to anyone [455] outside the three members of his family. An ascetic to whom, in the year 1848, Mr. Stricke, an apothecary attached to the Madras Medical Department, did a favor, gave him in return the words of a charm with which he could destroy the pain of a scorpion-sting. The recipient did not believe in the least in its efficacy but, as he says, not liking to hurt the feelings of the byragi, wrote it down in his notebook. Disbeliever though he was, he did not fail to experiment with the remedy and, to his unbounded surprise, found it efficacious. At the same time that he was repeating the charm he had to make passes over the painful part of the patient’s body with a twig, contriving that the wound should be touched during each pass. The treatment was followed up for years, both by Mr. Stricke and his friend, Mr. Brown, to whom he gave a copy of the mantram, and from whom the words were obtained

by us for the benefit of our readers. They are as follows:

“Om Parathmay Pâchâminyâ Sardhâmath Keetvas Sampradhâ Choo.”

This reads like awful rubbish, for it is not taken, we should say, from any living language, but is probably a phonetic travesty of real words. However, this does not matter in the least, for the possessors of the charm, to say nothing about the wandering ascetic who had doubtless used it numberless times, effected the cures desired. One time, on the Coromandel Coast, I heard a person pronounce a mantram over the head of a boy, who was reading for us in a [156] magic mirror, and it was a mixture of Arabic and Sanskrit and brought in the names of deities recognised by the Arabs and Hindus. One remembers that Tennyson’s mantra was simply the repetition of his own name; so that, apparently, the form employed does not matter so long as there can be some awakening of power in the individual who can bring himself momentarily into relation with the astral plane. As to H.P.B.’s theory that it is the will which works the wonder, that may be accepted after the first cures are made by the experimenter, but how one could say that his will (backed, of course, by belief and confidence) could effect the first or first sequence of cures, when their occurrence was an absolute surprise to the healer, is not clear to me. I know, for instance, that when I first used the five-pointed star I had not the least idea that anything would happen, nor had our learned and always respected colleague, Pandit Pran Nath of Gwalior, who had received information about the sign from the Maulvi Zahur-ul-Hassan, of Jodhpur, and who cured a number of persons in his presence. He writes us (Vol. II, p. 58): “Obtaining his permission I accordingly did try it in his presence and, to my surprise, met with great success. Subsequently I saw the Maulvi cure as many as thirty or forty persons.”

Pandit Pran Nath tells us that native sculptors (meaning, of course, Mussalmans), “when teaching their trade to their children, always cause them to use their chisel first in cutting this figure though they have no knowledge of the mystery behind it. They [157] traditionally regard it as a good omen to begin teaching their children with it, just as the Hindus first teach the word ‘Om’ at the beginning of a course of instruction in Sanskrit”. The Pandit gives us an account of a cure he effected at Eranpur on a man who was the servant of a friend of his. As the story circumstantially describes what happens while the cure is being made, I think it worth while to quote it:

“He had been bitten by a scorpion in the great toe. The pain gradually increasing and rising up in his body he had bandaged tightly his whole leg to try

and check it. When brought before me he could not stand upon the leg. I bade him open the bandages, but, as he hesitated, I myself opened them with my own hand and drew the figure described several times. After waiting a moment I asked him where the pain was now. He said it had descended to the knee; then I further unbound the bandage as far as the calf, drew the same figure as before and again asked him where the pain was. His reply was that now it extended no higher than the ankle. I then drew the figure on the foot, whereupon the pain was brought to the very point of the toe where he had been bitten, and, finding that it had become a mere trifle which he could easily bear, he declared himself cured and walked away after expressing his gratitude.”

On page 92 of the same volume of our magazine is a communication on the subject of the five-pointed star by a surgeon who writes from Jalna that he had tried the remedy at first in joke, never imagining that (458) it would do any good. He “marked the diagrams on the extreme end of the pain right over the shoulders of two patients, who had been stung in the finger, and desired them to tap their palm on the ground. The pain instantly receded from the elbow. The next tracing of the diagram was near the elbow, with the same precautions, and the pain receded to the wrist; a third tracing on the wrist brought down the pain to the finger-ends where the sting took place”. His third patient was a woman of the working class who had been stung in the toe and the pain had risen to her hip-joint. In this case, the doctor reports that he had the same success as in others. His former remedy in this complaint “was a saturated solution of alum dropped in each eye, which also often acted like a charm”. It is a pity that the doctor has not enlightened us as to the modus operandi of the last named remedy, telling us what connection there is between a drop of alum solution in a patient’s eye and a scorpion sting at the inferior extremity of the body. That it had no kinship with the writing of the star is evident, for he says that “the present remedy has equally surprised both myself and those who were present about me”.

So many letters were received by us after the appearance of Pandit Pran Nath’s communication that H. P. B. devoted to it a second article, full of erudition, of course, in which she explains the great importance which is given to this Pentagram in Kabalistic magic and among Western occultists of the ceremonial magical school in general. The article is well (459) worth reading for anyone who wishes to know the mystical meaning of this sign of power. The writer of the article “Magic,” in the New American Cyclopædia says that the occult qualities of the symbol are due to the agency of elemental spirits. Before employing it

ceremonially the magician must put it through a very solemn process. It “must be consecrated by the four elements, breathed upon, sprinkled with water, and dried in the smoke of precious perfumes, and then the names of great spirits, Gabriel, Raphael, Jophiel, and the letters of the sacred tetragram, and other kabalistical words are whispered to it, and are inscribed upon it, etc.”

With this, I think, we may close our chapter, for Mrs. Salzer’s finger has been cured, and we have obtained at least some little explanation of the phenomenon, or, rather, abundant proof that the writing of the symbol on a stung and suffering patient will speedily drive away the pain.

CHAPTER XXXV

INTERNATIONAL JUGGLERY

(1896)

THE matter of the purchase of the house at Gaya for visiting priests connected with the Mahâ-Bodhi Society was the subject of frequent discussions among us, and it was decided that the title should be taken in my name. The Treasurer of that Society, my dear old friend, Neel Comul Mukerji, gave me a cheque for rupees three thousand, and on the 19th of the month (February), I took the mail train at Howrah for Gaya. On reaching there the next morning I was met by Babus Nanda Kissore Lall and Indrasekara, with whom I spent the day in viewing the house and also a plot of land which Dharmapala had bought. I decided not to buy the house but to recommend the building of one on Dharmapala's ground. The evening was agreeably spent in the company of the above-named two gentlemen and another Theosophist, Babu Priya Nath Mukerji, Overseer of the District Board. I left Gaya for the return journey on Friday morning at 10.30, spent the day and night in the train and reached Calcutta at 5.45 a.m., [461] on Saturday. An important meeting was held that day between myself and Messrs. Manmohan Ghose and Cotton, the Counsel of the adversary to our Maha-Bodhi project, the Hindu Mahant of Buddha Gaya, whose remote predecessor had squatted on the Buddhist land, got a grant for it from the then ruling Mussalman Sovereign and had erected a monastery with stones taken from the ruined Maha-Bodhi Stûpa. We agreed upon a draft of heads for discussion with our respective principals. But nothing conclusive was arrived at and the thing dragged on through the Courts, involving very heavy expenses for both parties.

I forgot to mention that during this visit to Calcutta I successfully arbitrated in a dispute between the Bengal Theosophical Society and one of its members, Dr. Rakhai Chandra Sen, about the title to the building occupied by the Branch. The basis of the dispute was really the conflict of opinion as to the propriety and legality of teaching the Vedas to Sudras. While it lasted the dispute was

acrimonious, but it ultimately subsided.

Among other visits paid by me in Calcutta was one to a famous astrologer named Pandit Tarini Prasad Jyotishi, whose visiting card is a bit of a curiosity. He describes himself as what one might call the possessor of universal occult knowledge. For example, he is “Exhibitor of Great Universal Horoscope of the Queen, Late Master of Yoga and Astrological Exhibition in Calcutta, Professor of the Yoga-Darshan, Astrology, Tantra Vidya, Physical and [1462] Occult Sciences, Palmist, Thought-Reader, Natural Clairvoyant, Present Antiquarian, Prophet and Zadkiel of India”. One wonders how he could sleep sound with such a burden of titles weighing upon his mind.

A Western person can form no idea whatever of the universality of recourse to astrologers in India. I suppose that not a child is born but that its horoscope is cast at the time, and this document is kept as a family treasure throughout life and consulted on all occasions. I have mentioned above that sometimes the prophecies of the astrologers have been surprisingly correct. Their fulfilment is sometimes due to an entirely unexpected circumstance as, for instance, an accident occurring at the very time foretold. It is not for me to undertake the defence of Astrology when it has such clever champions as Alan Leo, Walter Old, George Wyld, and others whose fame has been heralded in Western papers.

On the 23rd, at 7 a.m., I left by train from Sealdah for Diamond Harbor, where I boarded the “Eridan” and sailed for Madras; Dr. Hübbe-Schleiden seeing me off. This being the fair weather season of the year, the Bay of Bengal, breeding-place of cyclones and other terrific tempests at other times, was now as tranquil as a river, and the sun shone brightly, to the great comfort of us, voyagers. Among the passengers I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. and Mrs. Allen Forman, of New York, and Mrs. Alexander Forman, his mother. Reaching Madras on the third day I [1463] took these friends to Adyar to spend the day and sent them back in the afternoon to the ship delighted. During my absence Dr. Scrogin had left for America, but Mr. Clark and the Englishes were left to keep me company. Office work filled up my time during the next few days and the editorial work of the Theosophist occupied a good deal of my attention, naturally enough.

Something which had occurred about that time caused me to search the Library for matter for an article on “Jugglers and Sorcerers,” which will be found in Vol. XVII, p. 419, of the Theosophist and is worth reading. For the benefit, however, of those who have not access to a complete file of our magazine, I will make citations from the article in question, upon this always interesting and instructive

subject. I took advantage of the presence of Mr. Tokuzawa in the house, to get him to write me some notes on his personal experience with jugglers in his native land—Japan. They possess the special value of coming from a gentleman of undoubted veracity and great intelligence, one selected by the High Priest of his sect to form one of the group of young theological students (Samaneras) who were to come to Ceylon to study the Pali language and then return to assist in the comparison of the sacred books of Northern and Southern Buddhism. Mr. Tokuzawa says:

“When I was a boy of fourteen I was taken to the house of a famous juggler, and after we had paid an [464] admission fee, we were introduced into an apartment where Japanese cushions were spread on the floor for the use of visitors. The juggler threw upon a brazier of lighted charcoal some drug or other which, presently, caused a strange odor to spread throughout the room. He called his own boy, and, making him stand near him, placed a small pitcher on the floor, within reach, and began an incantation, which I now know to have been a monotonous repetition of what the Hindus call Mantras. After a while I saw, through the perfumed vapors, the boy becoming smaller. I could not believe my senses, but as I looked the phenomenon proceeded. The child visibly decreased in bulk and height: every moment a year’s growth seemed to have disappeared. I have heard stories of a thing something like this happening at American mediumistic seances, where the figure of a child ‘spirit’ will gradually descend through the floor of a room until it disappears, in full sight of the spectators, again reappear by a reverse process, and finally vanish. Of course, I do not know if the stories are true or not. This is very clever, but, as above appears, not identical with what I saw in Japan: in the latter case the juggler’s boy does not sink through the floor, but only grows smaller and smaller while standing in the same spot. He finally reduced himself to the dimensions of a child’s doll. He was then picked up by the juggler, put by him—like another Hop-o’my-thumb—into the jug, and covered over with his hand. The next minute we were amazed to see him coming, [465] at the call of his father, from another part of the room and giving us a salutation with a smiling face.

“On a certain occasion, a renowned juggler came to my father’s house and exhibited his skill. Among the things which he did, one struck me with extreme wonder. The cross-beams of the roofing of our buildings come down quite low, as everybody knows. This juggler put a drop of water—whether plain or medicated, I do not know—on the under surface of one of these beams; then

lighting a candle of the vegetable wax commonly used in my country, he held it in mid-air under the drop of moisture, muttering spells, and moving it up down and to right and left, as though he were seeking a point where some force of attraction would affect it. Having at length apparently found what he desired, he carefully removed his hand and the candle remained, as it seemed, self-supported in the air. The flame burnt on steadily and the candle was motionless. The juggler kept his eyes fixed upon the spot of moisture and the candle until the last vestige of the former evaporated, and the candle then dropped to the ground. How it was done, unless by an invisible thread, I cannot imagine. At the same time it seems to me that if a thread had been used it would have been burnt by the flame, and it could not have been stuck to the beam without a pinch of wax, which must have been large enough to have been seen by us all.

“One of the most famous juggling tricks is to make a flood of water inside a house. This is often seen and can be attested by thousands of witnesses. The [466] juggler sprinkles water all over the floor, pronounces his charms, and fans all over the place. Then water begins to pour into the house, as though a river were in flood. Of course, there is nothing of the kind, but it has all the appearance of reality. The water rises and rises until all the furniture in the room seems soaked and ready to float away. This continues about twenty minutes, when the water subsides and the closest examination shows no sign of anything having been wet.²⁴

“The following trick is often seen in Western countries in a modified form. The juggler brings a pan of charcoal, ignites it, and after fanning it briskly until all the coals are alight, swallows the pieces one by one. Before beginning, he, of course, shows his mouth to the audience and asks them to satisfy themselves that no chemical or other trickery is used.

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When the last glowing coal has been swallowed, he again opens his mouth for examination. After the lapse of ten minutes or so, he begins to throw up the coals, one by one, until the pan is full as before. The peculiarity of this trick is that the coals are as red-hot when ejected as they were when he swallowed them.

“We have in Japan a certain class of religious ascetics called Yamabushi, whose lives are devoted to religious austerities, and they are said to have power to do what the vulgar call miracles. They are, in fact, the Yogis or white magicians of Japan; and, so universal is the belief in them, that if a person is suffering from

any trouble brought about by supposed non-human agency, he is sure to consult them. Numberless stories are connected with them.²⁵ But the following will be sufficient for giving an idea of this singular sect.

“Once upon a time—say, about five years ago—there lived a certain well-to-do man in a village situated a few miles from Tokyo. One night some villagers under the disguise of Negroes, with blackened faces, entered his house and robbed him of a large sum of money. The police and detectives tried very hard to find the culprits, but in vain. As a last resource he applied to a Yamabushi. It was a strange sight when the holy man began his work. He caused the whole village to assemble and, glancing around, said he [468] should most assuredly find the robbers; a cauldron which he had brought was placed upon the ground, a lot of pebbles were poured into it, and he ordered that a strong fire should be built and fed until the pot and the pebbles were red-hot. When this had been done, he addressed the audience to the effect that he would throw handfuls of the hot pebbles at the crowd indiscriminately, and that, while they would not in the least harm the innocent, they would stick to the faces of the robbers. Then, plunging his hands into the pot, he threw double handfuls of the hot pebbles into the crowd until the quantity was exhausted. It was then seen that, out of those present, some persons had their faces stuck full of pebbles and were writhing in agony. The Yamabushi thereupon charged them with the robbery, and, to the astonishment of the whole village, they confessed their guilt.”

It would appear that there has been in Japan from remote antiquity a great centre of magical science. Whether the knowledge travelled, as some suppose, from India eastward through Tibet, China, and Korea, or was developed primarily in Japan itself, is not known. I think it quite likely, however, that the magic which Marco Polo saw practised at the Court of Kublai Khan was of Japanese derivation, for—and this I only learnt the other day from Mr. Tokuzawa—Ghengis Khan, the great conqueror, was a Japanese Prince of whose exploits record is made in Japanese history. Readers of Marco Polo’s invaluable narrative—see Bohn’s Edition, page 156—will remember him as saying:

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“When the Grand Khan sits at meals, in his hall of state, the table which is placed in the centre is elevated to the height of about eight cubits, and at a distance from it stands a large buffet, where all the drinking vessels are arranged. Now, by means of their supernatural art, they cause the flagons of wine, milk, or any other beverage, to fill the cups spontaneously, without being touched by the

attendants, and the cups to move through the air the distance of ten paces, until they reach the hand of the Grand Khan. As he empties them, they return to the place from whence they came; and this is done in the presence of such persons as are invited by his Majesty to witness the performance.”

From the same book we learn that the Tibetans “are necromancers, and by their infernal art perform the most extraordinary and delusive enchantments that were ever seen or heard of. They cause tempests to arise, accompanied with flashes of lightning and thunderbolts, and produce many other miraculous effects”. What will Colonel Younghusband say to this?

In the Island of Socotra, says Marco Polo, the inhabitants are great sorcerers “and if any vessel belonging to a pirate should injure one of theirs, they do not fail to lay him under a spell, so that he cannot proceed on his cruise until he has made satisfaction for the damage”—an exhibition of practical hypnotic skill remarkable enough to make Professor Bernheim jealous!

All ancient histories teem with accounts of magical wonders. We find them among the Greeks, Romans, [170] Hebrews, Norsemen, Bohemians, Etruscans, Chinese, Egyptians, and Saxons, and, in fact, among all European nations. When the Troubadour degenerated to a vagabond he became a jongleur, whence the word juggler. The names of the most remarkable jugglers of modern times among us, Westerns, are familiar to all. Among them, the most eminent was Robert Houdin who—as the American Cyclopaedia justly observes—“applied to his art not only true genius but the resources of science”.

Hermann, a very noted expert, has astonished the Americans by allowing six sharp-shooters to fire at him marked bullets from army rifles without his having touched the bullets, and then showing the latter—still hot to the touch, and perfectly identified by the private marks—on a plate. This is no new trick, for Madame Blavatsky tells us, in *Isis Unveiled*, that she saw it done in Africa by a sorcerer; and Laing, the first European to visit the Soulimas, “saw a native chief perform the same trick on a grand scale and in a curious manner, the muskets always flashing in the pan when aimed at him, but shooting well when turned, however unexpectedly, to other objects”. This is far better than Hermann has done.

The real plant-growing phenomenon of India, an imitation of which is shown to every globe-trotter, is well-known among the North American Red Indians, especially among the Arapahoes and Cheyennes. Their “mystery-men” will go

out on the bare, sunburnt, sandy plain, in full daylight; huddle together (471) in a close circle around a certain spot; chant some peculiar verses, move away from the spot; and lo! a crop of fresh, green grass is seen to be growing there. The late General Cass, of Michigan, described what he had seen done by a Chippewa squaw who, like himself, was looking on at a great “medicine dance”. She was holding in her hand a curious bag made of a dried snake-skin which, on being asked by him, she said contained certain charms and articles of magical value. He laughed at her assertion, whereupon, growing very angry, she threw the bag on the ground; the next minute it was changed into a living snake and chased the General out of the tent. This was at Mackinaw, where he was in an official capacity at the time.

A recent writer in the San Francisco Examiner says:

“The late Garrick Mallery of the Bureau of Ethnology once told me of something quite unaccountable which he witnessed at White Earth, in 1860. There was present a famous mystery-man, who made a bet with the local Government agent that the latter could not tie him with ropes in such a manner that he would not be able to disengage himself offhand. The agent, assisted by Mallery and other white men, tied the Indian up in the most elaborate fashion and put him inside a conical wigwam in the middle of an open space. Nobody else was permitted to come near him. As quickly as they had withdrawn, tremendous thumping sounds were heard from the hut, which swayed from side to side as if it would be torn to pieces. Two or three (472) minutes later the Indian called out, telling them to go to a certain house several hundred yards away, where they would find their ropes. One of the white men was sent to the house, and he found the ropes, with all of the complicated knots untied. The tying committee opened the wigwam then, and found the wizard smoking a pipe, with his black magic stone in his lap. Neither pipe nor stone had been there previously. The head priest of the wizard’s society, having heard of this exhibition, sent word that he would be killed if he repeated such a performance for gain. Evidently it was deemed improper that religious business of that sort should be thus prostituted.

“The Wabeno tribe has a great reputation for certain kinds of juggling. These Indians are called by others the Players with Fire. They perform many horrible ceremonies at night, in which fire is concerned. They handle fire and walk through it. It is said that they can cause flames to issue from their ears, mouths, and nostrils. It is a common belief that they are able to transform themselves into

animals with fiery eyes. One trick which they really perform seems fairly unaccountable. A Wabeno mystery-man seats himself in his lodge, while the young men surround it entirely with a ring of brightly blazing fire. At the same time an empty lodge at a distance of fifty paces will be encircled with fire in like manner. Both lodges are closed tightly, all the people of the village looking on intently, and yet, after the space of a few moments, the magician, the faggots having been kicked away, [178] is discovered calmly sitting in what was before the empty lodge, while the one which he previously occupied is left vacant.

“Belonging to a tribe with which I had acquaintance was a no-account Indian, generally despised by his fellow redskins, who always carried about with him a medicine bag made of an old duck skin. On one occasion—so the story was told to me—he joined a fishing party. While they were off on the expedition, several boat-loads of hostile savages appeared. They tried to escape, but their foes could paddle faster, and apparently they had no chance to get away. The pursuers came on so swiftly that the pursued were demoralised. One of the latter remarked to the no-account Indian: ‘If your duck-skin is any good, make medicine with it now; and make it quick.’ In response the owner of the duck-skin bag held it in the water, and at once the speed of the boat increased so much that the hunting party escaped. Seemingly, the spirit of the duck operated after the manner of a paddle-wheel and pushed the craft along.”

The officer above quoted, Lieut.-Colonel Garrick Mallery, U. S. A., was an old army friend of mine, and at the time of his death occupied a position of influence in the scientific world, in connection with the Bureau of Ethnology.

Egypt has always been a home of magic and sorcery, the Copts having, perhaps, derived it from their forbears, the Atlanteans. Mr. E. W. Lane narrates—see his *Modern Egyptians*, Vol. II, p. 106—some very [179] wonderful things. They are all worth reading, but I mention only one:

The juggler, stripping himself to his pyjamas, “tells two persons to bind him, hands and feet, and put him in a sack. This done, he asks for a piastre, and some one tells him that he shall have it if he will put out his hand and take it. He puts out his hand free; draws it back; and is then taken out of the sack bound as at first. He is put in again; and comes out unbound; handing to the spectators a small tray upon which are four or five little plates filled with various eatables, and if the performance be at night, several small lighted candles placed round. The spectators eat the food”.

I saw a few things of the kind, myself, in Japan but not nearly so much as I wished. They were mostly feats of balancing and legerdemain. Whether to include among the latter the following, I can hardly say. It was in a temple at Nagoya, where I was put up. The juggler gave me several examples of his marvellous skill in top-spinning, and finally called for a bowl of water, over which he passed his hand two or three times, and then, re-winding his top, drew the string and made the top spin on the surface of the water. If anyone can explain that, by any mechanical theory, I should like to know it. Perhaps it was hypnotism.

CHAPTER XXXVI

MR. JUDGE'S DEATH

(1896)

THE present is the last chapter but one of the Fifth Series, or volume, of my reminiscences of the Theosophical Society's history. It has been a pleasure to me to write them and, to judge from my correspondence to others to read them. I consider it a most fortunate circumstance that I should have lived through all these one hundred and fifty months of history-writing, for the details are known to no person but myself, now that H. P. B. is gone, and it would have been a pity if this movement, so clearly destined to exercise a beneficent influence upon many nations and to do so much good in disseminating noble religious teachings among mankind, should have gone without an accurate record of its history; the more so when the incidents have been so stirring and the struggles so severe. It is consoling to me to know that, even if I should be snatched away now from my work, correct versions of crises in our fortunes have passed into this written record, enabling our future historian, if so inclined, to tell the truth about us.

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The term of H. E. Lord Wenlock as Governor of Madras approached its end. With Mr. Clark, on the evening of the 1st of March, I attended his farewell Levee at the Banqueting Hall and saw an unusual display of bright uniforms and glittering princely robes. Three days later a Wenlock Memorial Committee, headed by the Maharajah of Vizianagram and Rajah Sir S. Ramaswamy Mudaliar, gave a farewell entertainment to His Excellency and Lady Wenlock at the same place, which was also a very gorgeous function.

The next day I received an invitation by telegram from Mysore to come there and form a Branch. On the 15th I saw Mr. Clark off by the "Clan Mackenzie" for Colombo and England. On the 17th I wrote an address to the American Convention and issued an Executive Notice appointing that veteran Sinhalese nobleman, Dullewe Adigar, General Manager of Buddhist Schools in the Kandy District. The same evening I left for Mysore, travelling all night, and reaching

Bangalore at 7 on the following morning. The local members met me at the station, gave me breakfast, and saw me off again. After a train journey taking the whole day I arrived in the evening at Mysore, the capital of the Maharajah of that State. Here, again, friends met me at the station and conducted me to the house where I was to be put up. That great native statesman, Sir Seshadri Iyer, whose remarkable abilities are being more and more recognised since his death, in the ever-increasing prosperity of Mysore, [477] came to have a talk with me on that subject nearest to his heart—the Vedânta Philosophy

As usual, I had been garlanded, besprinkled with perfume, and made the recipient of very complementary addresses. This was all very nice; but after a time the stomach became clamorous for food. Unhappily for me, the local committee had not bethought them of supplying me with cooking utensils and so I had to make a scratch dinner on cold boiled rice, a loaf brought from the bazaar, and milk. But the morning brought better luck, for an officer of the Mysore Durbar, the Marquis Viviani de Ferrayzani, sent me the necessary pots and pans, but too late to save me from an attack of indigestion which lasted all day.

I called at the house of the sister of Mr. Govindacharlu, a learned Visishtadwaita Brahmin, a retired Government servant, who had been good enough to offer free quarters to the proposed Branch. I also went to the Oriental Library, directed by my friend Pandit Mahadeva Sastri, under whose wise management it had become a most useful collection of ancient manuscripts and printed books. I also paid my respects to the Marquis Viviani and thanked him for the loan of the utensils. In the evening I addressed a crowded audience on the subject of “Theosophy”. The most zealous advocate of female education in the Madras Presidency has been Mr. Narasimiengar, F.T.S., Treasurer of the Mysore Durbar. With him, on the 20th, I visited the large and prosperous girls’ school which he had established, largely with his own money.

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The indigestion stayed by me all that day, but in the evening I gave my second lecture on “Soul and Karma” to another large audience. The signing of application papers for membership began that day and continued through the next until evening, when I organised the Mysore Theosophical Society, with twenty-five members. Mr. Narasimiengar was elected President and Pandit Mahadeva Sastri, Secretary. On Sunday, the 22nd, I received visitors, held a conversation meeting, lectured in the evening on “The Best Education for Hindu

Boys,” and at 10.50 p.m. left for Seringapatam.

I see by my Diary that it was on that very day that W. Q. Judge died at New York, after three hundred and twenty-nine days of rule as the Secession leader. Poor man, to barter all he had gained in Theosophy for such a mess of pottage!

At Seringapatam next day I saw the famous summer palace of Tippoo Sultan, the great warrior whom the English had so much trouble to beat. “Red, gilt, and gaudy” is the impression which it made on me. Around the outer walls of the building is a series of pictures of battles in which one sees the British troops dressed in the curious uniform that prevailed at that time. In the afternoon I lectured in a large school-house on a variety of subjects that were given me and turned it into a conversation meeting. By the night train I left for Bangalore.

Of course, I reached Bangalore the next morning, where I was put up at the rooms of our prosperous Branch and received many visitors. For many years [178] now Bangalore has been a centre of Theosophical activity, a select minority of the members devoting themselves ardently to the work of spreading our ideas. A lecture by me on “Theosophy,” at Rai Bahadur A. Narainswamy Mudaliar’s High School, to the usual crowded audience, ended the day’s work. On the next day, not feeling very well, I stayed indoors, except when I was photographed with a large group of the members. The subject of my lecture that evening was “The Best Education for Boys,” traversing the same ground as at Mysore. Later, I left for Madras by the mail train.

On the 29th I received a second cable from New York, this time from Mr. Neresheimer (the first one was from Mr. Fullerton) about Judge’s death. This involved the necessity of a reply by cable, and the cabling of the news out to Mr. Staples, General Secretary of the Australasian Section. In officially announcing the fact in an Executive Notice (see Theosophist, April, 1896, Supplement) I bore testimony to the services which the deceased had rendered the Society and deprecated the entertainment of any but kindly thoughts towards him. I said:

“Mr. Judge’s services to our Society, from the beginning and until the date of the secession of last year, were conspicuous for their value and the zeal and practical judgment which were displayed throughout his work. As it was his Karma which brought him into the movement, so is it the same mysterious and inflexible power which has snatched him away in [180] the prime of life and the fulness of his hopes, but with his plans unrealised. It behoves us all to keep in mind his many good deeds, to bury our private grievances out of sight, and to

express to his family and our respected late colleagues, our regrets for their crushing bereavement.”

I am willing to let that stand as an offset to all the cruel things Mr. Judge’s followers and successors have said about myself and others.

CHAPTER XXXVII

A RAJPUT WEDDING

(1896)

AN official visit to Europe by myself having been Planned, I received from Mrs. Besant, Judge Khandalvala, and the Bombay Theosophical Society, advice not to go at present as they thought it needless. But I preferred to follow my own intuitions and decided to go, with what result will appear further on.

Among the helpful things that were done in the United States to keep alive the courage of our members and show them how they could render useful service to the Cause pending the settling down of the new Section to work, was the organisation at Chicago, of a committee of devoted ladies—Mrs. Darling, Dr. Weeks-Burnett, Mrs. Tisdale, Mrs. Brainerd, and Mrs. Trumbull, with the active concurrence of Mr. Fullerton, which called itself “An Extension Centre of Theosophy”. In its printed prospectus it says that it “has been organised to render active aid to the great spiritual movement implied by that name, whose ‘Parent Society’ is in India under Colonel H. S. Olcott, and whose Sections now spread over the entire civilised world”. It asks each reader what he (or she) can do for the Great Cause; whom he knows in his vicinity [1482] willing to unite with him as one of a group to arrange for meetings; would a speaker sent to his place be able to draw audiences; or would a class conducted by correspondence, i.e., by circulating printed leaflets and instructions giving questions and suggestions for books of reference, be feasible. Some of these ladies were extremely active, Dr. Weeks-Burnett, Mrs. Darling, and Mrs. Brainerd conspicuously so, and they made their influence felt throughout the whole Section.

Meanwhile the first of my Pariah schools was flourishing to such a degree that the Manager wrote to the Madras Mail that we should soon have to refuse further admission of pupils. On the 2nd of April Dr. English and I attended the Anniversary of the local S.P.C.A., at which we had the opportunity of seeing the new Governor, Sir Arthur Havelock, for the first time. My personal relations with him were satisfactory throughout the whole term of his office. On the 4th I

issued the Charter for the formation of the New Zealand Section, empowering the Branches at Auckland, Dunedin, Christchurch, Wellington, Pahiatua, Woodville, and Waitemata to form a separate Section, appointed Miss Lilian Edger, M.A., F.T.S., General Secretary pro tem., and cabled her the facts. On the 6th I breakfasted at Government House and was kindly received; the Governor inquiring cordially after Mrs. Besant and saying that she had been a friend of Lady Havelock's for years. On the 8th Mr. Holder, Superintendent of the School of Arts, came in the afternoon to advise with me about the new shelves [488] which were being put up in the Library to accommodate the recent additions to our collection of books.

On the 11th I left for Bombay in a tremendous heat, the thermometer climbing rapidly up the tube. At Bombay I had consultations with Dr. Jivanji, Mr. K. R. Cama and old Sir Dinshaw M. Petit, about Zoroastrian affairs. At 5 p.m. I presided at a lecture by Mr. Gandhi at our rooms and in the evening left for Sihor to attend the wedding of Prince Harisinhji's daughter. My companion of travel was Prince Har-bhamji Rawaji of Morvi, the bridegroom-elect. That was one of the hottest rides I ever had; the heat was stifling and I almost feared a stroke of heat apoplexy. But even hot days cannot last indefinitely and we got our chance to breathe that evening at Sihor.

Prince Harisinhji's country place is at Varal, and this was our point of destination. From Sihor onward our journey was continued in carriages and by a road which was the worst I ever drove over. It ran over rocks, through gullies and long slopes; two springs of the Prince's carriage and one of ours were smashed. Harisinhji met us a mile from the village, and we entered it in procession through a crowd of more than three thousand spectators. At the entrance to the village a bevy of women stopped Prince Harbhamji's carriage, sang Gujerati songs and made the tilak (red spot) mark on his forehead. The Prince's camp was pitched in "Olcott Bagh," an extensive garden called after me, while I was quartered in Harisinhji's house. After the princely fashion a special bungalow had been [489] built for the young bridal couple, and it was there that they would pass their honeymoon.

As this narrative will, when collected with others in book form, go to distant lands where the magazine may never follow it, and as the wedding at Varal was a highly picturesque and interesting function, I shall transfer to this chapter the description of it which appeared in the Theosophist for June, 1896.

On the arrival day I was so tired after the fatiguing journey from Bombay and

the terrific heat that I went very early to bed.

The next day we had the ceremony of “setting the posts” of the mandap, or marriage-house, a temporary and highly decorated structure in which the wedding was to take place. A mandap is, properly speaking, a shelter, a place where in ancient times the maiden chose her husband from among the throng of Rajput suitors assembled. They exhibited their skill in warlike and athletic exercises and the victor was her choice. We have seen the survival of the custom in the jousts and other feats of arms in the mediæval tournaments, at which the victor had the right to nominate the Queen of Love and Beauty. In *The Light of Asia* the custom is graphically described and, according to Buddhistic legend, the peerless young Prince Siddhartha excelled all others in these contests as he did in disputations on philosophy and metaphysics with the learned pandits.

To sanctify the mandap, a red post, with two pegs passed through it at right angles to each other, is set [485] in a hole previously dug, at that corner of the room which corresponds with the sun’s place at the time. The god Ganapati (the impersonation of Occult Wisdom) is always first invoked by prayer and libation. He is chief of the Ganas, or races of elemental spirits, and in all undertakings among Hindus his favor is first sought. The Brahmins recite a mantra, holding the palms of their hands upward. Then the hands are reversed to indicate the spot where the Shakti, or energy of the god is to be concentrated. A white cloth is spread over it and sprinkled with raw rice, reddened with kumkum powder. Then it is worshipped with many mantrams; libations of milk are poured into the post-hole; stalks of durba grass, some betel-nuts, a dried fruit of the Madana phal—Cupid’s tree—and one piece of money are cast in; kumkum powder is applied to the post, and leaves of five different trees, the peepul, of Vishnu, the mango, the banyan, of Brahma, the asopalo, and the umra, all possessing the auspicious influences of good elementals, are bound to the post, and invocations are made to the house goddess (Gotra Devi) and fourteen other deities representing the shaktis, or force-currents, of Siva, Vishnu, Brahma, Indra, Vayu, Varuna, Surya (the seven sun-rays), Agni, Lokamatra (the Cosmos), Devasena (the whole army of gods), etc., etc. I found that the stipendiary priests of Prince Harisinhji’s house were so ignorant as not to have even a clue to the meaning of the cosmic powers whose euphonious names they chant in their Sanskrit mantrams. All [486] they knew was that it was intended to invoke for the young couple health, longevity, and fruitfulness. I was particularly incensed against the Purohit, or family guru, who, as the last chants of the marriage-ceremony were dying away, called out to

the Prince that he must give him Rs. 500, a piece of land, some mango trees, and other backshish! The above ceremonies are performed both at the bride's and bridegroom's houses.

The corner post of the mandap, now red-painted wood, but formerly of stone, properly inscribed—according to the prescriptions of the “Silpa Shastra,” or rules of architecture—being duly set, the bride's father performs the ceremony of invoking the nine grahas, or planetary influences, with Rahu and Ketu. He builds a fire at the proper spot in the mandap, and while the Brahmins chant their mantrams, throws into it rice, which has just been cooked over it, and clarified butter (ghee), fuel of samidha, one of the nine kinds of wood prescribed for such occasions, raw til (sessamum seed), and jow, (a grain something like rice). The bridegroom does the same at his own house.

The same evening I was allowed to witness the unimpressive ceremony of invoking the favor of Ranadev (corrupted into Randal) or Suryadeva, the spiritual, central power which is within the visible orb of day, the real vortex of the attractive power which binds to him the worlds of our solar system. It was a most noble ideal, most shockingly degraded in this ignoble puja. A hideous, black, bedizened image betokened the mighty sun-god, and the celebrant was an untidy [487] wretch who sat before it until he was seized by a fit of trembling, exactly like that of a modern medium, when he leapt to his feet and jumped about, with raucous cries. If questions are put to him then, he is supposed to answer under inspiration and to prophesy about coming events. I watched him closely and was persuaded that he was a humbug. To test him, however, I put him two questions—one as to the results of my present journey, the other as to the death of a certain person—and time will decide between us. Certainly, as to the second question, his prophecy was the reverse of my own expectation.

On the following day the bridegroom's presents to the bride were brought in procession and deposited in the mandap, along with the bride's dowry. The two together made a most gorgeous show, a glittering bed of color and sparkle. Kusumavati will have dresses enough, one would think, for her natural life. There are over 200 of the gay-colored short jackets worn by high-caste Rajput ladies, and no end of saris in gold cloth, purple, crimson, rose, amber, tea-rose, dark and pale blue, emerald, eau-de-nil, violet and other silks, with deep ends and continuous borders deftly and luxuriously embroidered—some worth over Rs. 1,000 each. Then there were trays and tablefuls of Indian jewellery, in simple gold and encrusted with gems, some given by the bridegroom, more by her

father. Then vessels, trays, and lamps of silver, of brass, and of composite materials; quilted silken bed-spreads, filled with downy tree-cotton and other things [488] too numerous and bewildering to mention. All these presents to a chieftain's daughter, the daughter of an ancient race, were brought in the shields of clansmen—old, age-blackened, brass-embossed bucklers of thick buffalo hide, that looked as if they might have been borne centuries ago. When Kusumavati and her father wished me to take away some jewel in memory of the wedding, I expressed my preference for one of these grimy shields, and it was given me to hang on the walls of "Gulistan" as a perpetual reminder of one of the most romantic events of my life.

The wedding ceremony proper is most interesting to a non-Hindu. Its inner meaning is the visible union of the man and the woman, their joint invocation of all good powers, the establishment of the domestic hearth and the making of the home. Both the parties—the bridegroom coming first—are welcomed at the threshold of the mandap with Sanskrit mantras, the placing of the red spot (tilak) on the forehead, the libations of holy water poured from a leaf of one of the auspicious trees, the waving of small models of the implements of tillage and of the household—the plough, the distaff, the rice-pounding pestle, etc, Before his coming, the bride's parents sit facing the priests on separate cushions, but linked together by a silken scarf, one end of which each holds in his or her hand. Because in a Vedic ceremony the wife may not hear the verses save when thus, as it were, united with and merged in her husband. The pair are then made to pass through a special ceremony whose purpose [489] is to purify them so as to make them fit to give over their child to her chosen husband, and the same is done to the latter to make him fit to receive the precious gift.

The bridegroom being received and seated, the bride is brought, veiled, by a procession of females singing auspicious songs and led to her cushion facing that of the bridegroom. Then follow various ceremonies, including giving over the bride by the parents, with an accompanying libation of water, the most ancient sign of the gift, the joining the hands of the young couple, the tying to the wife—she is now a "hand-fasted" wife—of an end of the scarf which is tied to the groom and so kept throughout the rest of the function, and the fourfold circumambulation of the hearth-fire by the couple, the wife at her husband's right hand. The wife is always thus placed except on three occasions, viz., when sleeping, making Pitri Karma (ancestor worship), and when giving gifts of land and elephants, for particulars of which latter, see the slokas in Dâna Chandrikâ.

All high-caste Hindus are said to belong to one or the other of the Four Vedas, and at their marriage ceremonies the mantrams and other slokas recited are from their particular Veda. The verses are the same for Kshattriyas as for Brahmins, but custom has introduced changes in puja and offerings according to the gunas of the castes. Thus the guna of the Brahmin is Sattva, that of the Kshattriya the Rajas guna, and, therefore, there is a splendor illustrative of princely [490] magnificence which is absent from the corresponding ceremony of Brahmins. Harisinhji's family belonging to the Yajur Veda and Harbhamji's to Sama Veda, a double set of mantras had to be chanted for each side.

At the completion of each circumambulation of the fire, the young couple offer ghee, java and tala, three kinds of fuel. They finally sit side by side and receive the congratulations of friends and such gifts as may be offered. They then go to the bride's father's house and make the curious ceremony of pouring seven small quantities of ghee from either mango or asopalo leaf cups, so as to make them trickle down the house-wall, at the same time invoking the favor of the Trimurti—Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva. This finishes the marriage, and the twain are thenceforth one flesh.

Those familiar with Hindu religious customs are aware of the fact that the guarding power of religion follows the being throughout. The first pregnancy of the mother being announced, there is a fixed ceremony for the benefit of herself and her future offspring, which is performed in the seventh and ninth months, the mantras being taken from the Rik, Yajur, and Atharva Vedas, while in the eighth month those of the Sama Veda are employed.

The bridegroom was brought to the present ceremony in a grand procession, with wild strains of martial music, the shrill notes of reed instruments, and the resonant boom of the war drum, beaten by a grey-bearded old warrior riding a horse. An escort of Bhavnagar cavalry headed the cortege, and Prince [491] Harbhamji was a shining blaze of gold and jewels, riding a milk-white steed and surrounded by the glare of many torches. The return of the wedded pair to the bridegroom's house was a much quieter affair and they were left in due time to the sweet intimacy of their new relationship. A handsomer, more winsome pair it would be hard to find; he, intellectual, dignified, and high-minded; she, an Indian beauty of rare physical and mental endowments, for she has been thoroughly well educated and her life has been lighted by the sunshine of a happy home and the companionship of a most loving father and mother.

A wedding in Kathiawar draws hundreds of people together, as honey attracts

flies. The cost of feeding the multitude is a burdensome item, as the following statistics of the Harisinhji wedding will prove.

Of Prince Harbhamji's party there were in all but 52—kinsmen and servants—he having come a distance of over 1,400 miles, from Bhurtpore to Varal. Harisinhji's relatives numbered 100, and their followers 400. There were 150 horses and 100 bullocks (together drawing 50 vehicles), which consumed daily 80 tons of hay. Fifty troopers were entertained. Of milk 200 gallons were drunk daily.

But there were also the noble army of bards to be reckoned with, to the number of 827. They are of two classes, Dasundis, or those who are attached to a family or clan, of whom there were present 154; and Charans and Bhats, commoner fellows, wandering minstrels and recitationists, numbering 673. These [487] by immemorial custom, are entitled to receive from the bridegroom's side, presents of value, and from the bride's, food throughout the ceremonies. Then the tatterdemalion horde of beggars, swarming from the whole country-side, no one knows whence. There were Mirs and Lunghas, who follow Islam but are given alms: they numbered 367; then Kathis—a race supposed to be of Scythian origin, who now occupy the whole of Central Kathiawar, to which, as it will be seen, they gave their own name. Of them, there were 388. Of other mendicants, Brahmins, Bawas (Hindu ascetics), Fakirs (Mussalman ascetics), etc., there were 2,066; of Bhands (buffoons) 3; a troupe of 5 clever village actors, a class of people who sometimes render with great dramatic ability scenes from the Purânas, and legends of heroes and heroines; of musicians, there were 7; and, finally, a troupe of Tanjore dancing-girls from Baroda, brought by request to amuse the wedding guests. It will thus be noticed that poor Harisinhji had to cater for no less than 3,663 bidden and unbidden guests, besides the 600 odd of the kinsmen and clansmen of both sides. That I was not far wrong in calling the Rajputs hard drinkers is shown in the fact that two gentlemen drank daily four bottles of brandy each, and another, five bottles of strong country spirits: the first two looked it—the other, hale old man, tall and straight as a spear-shaft, did not.

So was made the beginning of another princely Kshattriya family, with whom be peace.

Notes

[←1]

The word Shâstra must surely not be taken as that only which is printed or written down, but must include whatever instruction the Guru gives his disciple. Every sacred book of India is but a certain block of religious teaching supplemented by the verbal interpretations, commentaries, and additions imparted by the Guru. Is it not true that one is constantly meeting with blanks in the texts where the reader is referred to the teacher for explanations, which cannot be made public, but can be imparted only to those who “deserve” and have made themselves fit for it? Professor Müller himself admits that these teachings are very helpful towards a right understanding of the Sanskrit texts and commentaries; but his error is in supposing that they are “freely extended even to Europeans”.

[←2]

1See page 118 of the Tamil Classical Dictionary (Abidhana Kosa), published at Jaffna in 1902 by A. Muttutambi Pillai, and praised by the vernacular press as a standard work.

[←3]

1Theosophist, Vol XV, p. 12.

[←4]

History of Indian and Eastern Architecture, London, 1891, p. 506.

[←5]

1Among the many comical mistakes that occur in our headquarters correspondence, one of the funniest was that recently made by an Indian gentleman in ordering a copy of this book, which he innocently wrote Nature’s Final Farce?

[←6]

[The publication of these old letters of Mr. W. Q. Judge was begun in the Theosophist in January, 1931, and continued till December 1931.—ED.]

[←7]

My beloved Indian son, who, alas! has just died in my presence (at 7 a.m. on the 2nd January, 1903). For particulars see the obituary notice in this same number. [Prince Harisinhji Rupsinhji died as the result of asphyxiation from the fumes of a charcoal. He was a delegate to the Convention at Benares, and the nights being cold the charcoal was placed in the room to warm it during the night.--ED.]

[←8]

The impression they made on the Buddhist public is shown in the exclamation I heard on leaving the

lecture-hall one evening: “If we can hear such Bana-preaching as that, we need not trouble ourselves to listen to our priests.”

[← 9]

The option was placed before him in the following terms: “By virtue of the discretionary powers given me in Article 6 of the Revised Rules, I place before you the following options:

1. To retire from all offices held by you in the Theosophical Society, and leave me to make a merely general public explanation, or
2. To have a Judicial Committee convened as provided for in Art. 6 Sec. 3 of the Revised Rules, and make public the whole of the proceedings in detail.

In either alternative, you will observe, a public explanation is found necessary; in the one case general; in the other, to be full and covering all the details.”

[← 10]

Two scripts, not one only, in red and blue, purporting to be the handwriting of the two Masters, “M.” and “K. H.” appear in the material now at Adyar in connection with the charges against Mr. Judge.—C.J.

[← 11]

[This appeared in the Theosophist for April, 1903.]

[← 12]

[In three hours in 1932.]

[← 13]

In point of fact, this principle has since been applied, and with the best results, Charters for the Dutch, Scandinavian, French, German, and Italian Sections having been issued by me.

[← 14]

Viz., send him about his business with a complimentary certificate and no means of support. But Judge to be “President for Life,” of his Section, and each other Section to be similarly fitted out.

[← 15]

1Resolutions adopted by the Ishwara Branch of the T.S. at a Regular Meeting held Tuesday evening, March 19, 1895.

Whereas; In consequence of certain charges being brought against our Vice-President, Mr. W. Q. Judge, and that said charges have not been answered to the satisfaction of the majority of the members of the Theosophical Society, and

Whereas; These charges together with the pamphlet *Isis Very Much Unveiled* are of such serious nature as to disturb the unity of the T.S., and bring discredit on the true aims of the Society.

Be it therefore Resolved; That while the Ishwara Branch of the T.S. has always recognised the long and earnest work done for the Society by the Vice-President, Mr. Wm. Q. Judge, we feel that it is but right that he should free himself from this accusation of untruth now pending over him, even if such accusation did not contain the shadow of a probability, and especially as the motto of our Society is, “There is no Religion Higher Than Truth,” and

Be it further Resolved: That although the Ishwara Branch of the T.S. does not constitute itself a Court to decide whether or not Mr. Wm. Q. Judge is guilty, and furthermore, as we have the strongest hope that he will clear himself of the accusation now pending, therefore, we, the members of Ishwara Branch of the T.S. in Convention assembled, demand that Mr. Wm. Q. Judge delay no longer the call that has been made upon him by the European, Australasian, Indian, and the minority of the American Section, to immediately resign the Vice-Presidency of the Theosophical Society until such time as circumstances will make it possible to refute the charges made against him, and

Be it further Resolved: That these resolutions be presented to the American Section of the T.S. in Convention assembled, by our Delegate or his proxy, that the same be spread upon the minutes of this Branch and a copy thereof be sent to the President-Founder, H. S. Olcott.

(Signed by fifteen yeas and seven nays).

[← 16]

[Colonel Olcott’s first visit to Germany was from July 24 to October 3, 1884, but evidently he did not visit Berlin then.]

[← 17]

[THIS REFERS TO THE LIVES OF “BRATO” WHICH HAD BEEN INVESTIGATED BY C. W. LEADBEATER IN MAY, 1895. THEY HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED IN THE THEOSOPHIST, APRIL-SEPTEMBER, 1912.—C.J.]

[← 18]

Dream Land and Ghost Land, by E. P.Hood.

[← 19]

[See the chapter, “Faithful unto Death,” by C. W. Leadbeater, in the book “Reminiscences of Colonel H. S. Olcott for a fuller description of this incident of long ago—C.J.]

[← 20]

In one volume 8vo., pp. 362. To be had of the Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras, and of other dealers in Theosophical books.

[← 21]

My lecture on “The Spirit of Zoroastrianism,” which forms the opening chapter in Mr. Bilimoria’s book, was delivered in Bombay in February, 1882.

[← 22]

[The Master Hilarion. Colonel Olcott has written in his Diary, under date February 19, 1881, as follows: “Hilarion is here en route for Tibet and has been lookig over, in, and through the situation.

Finds Bates something awful. Views on India, Bombay, the T.S. in Bombay, Ceylon (love), England and Europe, Xtianity, and other subjects highly interesting.”]

[← 23]

By a coincidence, on the very day when this was written a cablegram appeared in the Indian papers that Mrs. Clemens had died, and added that she was a lady possessed of great grace, gentleness and intelligence. Poor, dear “Mark,” what a blow this must be for him!

[← 24]

Hynotism of course. Rain-making is a well-known art among the African tribes, both when in their own country and in slavery. A number of instances are cited by the author of the pamphlet on “Obeah Wanga”. Among other rain-making stories Mr. H. J. Bell, in his work on Obeah, tells us about a little girl (race not mentioned) in St. Lucia (W.I.) “who possessed the undesirable power of making rain fall wherever she might be. The first shower came on quite suddenly, and one day the mother of the child was astounded on being told that rain was falling in the bedroom at that moment occupied by the little girl. Rushing upstairs, at once, the lady actually did find a smart shower of water falling from the ceiling and soaking into the floor. . . although perfectly fine and dry outside, rain was undoubtedly falling in broad daylight in the room. The child was taken into another room with the immediate effect of producing another equally smart shower, whereas the room she had just vacated became quite dry again”. They took the child into the garden where the vegetables badly needed watering, but no shower fell; the phenomenon occurred only indoors.

[← 25]

1For an admirable example see Madame Blavatsky’s stirring narrative of “A Bewitched Life,” in her Nightmare Tales. A Yamabushi gave me, in Japan, a scroll picture of En-no-gio-ja, the founder of their sect, in which he has two elementals crouching at his feet. I gave it to H. P. B.