

Burnett as Commissioner and sent him to London to lay the matter before Col. Olcott, the President of the Theosophical Society. We shall give the charges formulated by the American section of the Theosophical Society against Mr. Leadbeater in the words of Mrs. Dennis, the Corresponding General Secretary, American section, Esoteric Section. Here is her letter to Mrs. Besant.

Chicago, January 25th, 1906.

DEAR MRS. BESANT,

I have suddenly learned the cause of the boy's bitter hatred and contempt for Mr. Leadbeater, of which I spoke to you in London and which cause he had at that time refused to reveal. It is not, as I had supposed, a childish and personal grievance, but as you will see from the charges and evidences formulated below, was the result of morally criminal acts on the part of Mr. Leadbeater himself. Before he was allowed to go to with Mr. Leadbeater, Mr. Leadbeater had told the parents of this boy that his first effort in training boys was a frank talk on the sex question with careful instruction to them of the necessity of an absolutely pure and virgin life. He stated that he liked to gain their confidence while they were very young and before they had erred through ignorance. He wished to inform them before even a first offence, which he said was fatal, so absolute must be their virginity. This was the understanding between Mr. Leadbeater and the boy's parents in arranging for his travels with him, and in connection with which the following charges are made against Mr. Leadbeater.

THE CHARGES

First, that he is teaching young boys given into his care habits of demoralising personal practices.

Second, that he does this with deliberate intent and under the guise of occult training or with the promise of increase of physical manhood.

Third, that he has demanded, at least in one case, promise of the utmost secrecy.

Then Mrs. Dennis proceeds to give the testimony of two boys. The testimony as contained in Mrs. Dennis's letter is not fit for publication.

One boy said to his mother " Mr. Leadbeater told me that it would make me strong and manly." The other boy said, when asked what excuse Mr. Leadbeater gave for such conduct :—" Mother, I think that was the worst part of the whole thing. Somehow, he made me believe it was Theosophical !"

Mrs. Dennis then continues as follows :—

Only after searching questions by the parents was the foregoing evidence given ; they have persisted maintaining secrecy as long as possible. At the present time neither of these boys knows of the other's experiences, neither is aware that the other has told his story. There is, therefore, no possibility of collusion as they live some distance apart and practically never see each other. This constitutes the substance of the charges and the evidence which I went to New York to submit to the officials who sign this statement with me. They agree that these charges are so grave, the evidence so direct and substantial, the possible consequences to the movement so calamitous, that immediate consideration, searching investigation and prompt action are demanded. Together

we decided that in justice to the cause which has associated us, to Mr. Leadbeater and to you, we could do no less than place this whole matter before you asking you to advise us what action you will take. We, therefore, await your reply and scarcely need to say that we will do everything in our power to protect the good name of the Theosophical Society, and to keep this matter from the public, not merely to screen an individual but to protect the cause. To this end, those who know have pledged each other to the utmost secrecy and circumspection so that no hint of it shall escape them. A copy of this letter and statement is sent to Mr. Leadbeater registered in the same mail with this. You will also receive by registered book-post, a copy of the "Adams Cable Codes" on the fly leaf of which is written my cable address. This is the code which I use. With deep regret over the necessity for sending you this statement, I assure you that I hope to stand by you in your effort for wise action all along the line.

Faithfully,

(Sd.) HELEN. I. DENNIS.

I Subscribe,

(Sd.) E. W. DENNIS.

The undersigned having heard the statement of Mrs. Dennis respecting her investigation into the alleged fact concerning Mr. Leadbeater are emphatically of opinion that justice to Mr. Leadbeater, as well as to the American section and the whole Theosophical Society, require from Mrs. Besant, as head of the Esoteric Section of Theosophical Society, the most thorough enquiry. And they no less emphatically concur with Mrs. Dennis in her opinion that the gravity of the case demands that such an enquiry

should be carried out with all possible promptness and Mrs. Besant's decision to be made known to them.

(Sd.) ALEXANDAR FULLERTON,

*General Secretary,
American Section,
Theosophical Society.*

FRANK F. KNOTHE.

Asst. General Secretary.

HELEN. I. DENNIS.

*Corresponding General Secretary,
American Section, Esoteric Section.*

ELIZABETH. M. CHIDESTER,

*Asst. Corresponding Secretary,
American Section, Esoteric Section.*

To this Mr. Leadbeater at once replied in the following terms :—

Shanti Kunja, Benares, India,
February 27th 1906.

MY DEAR FULLERTON,

I have received the document signed by you, Knothe, Mrs. Dennis and Mrs. Chidester. Fortunately it arrived while I was staying with Mrs. Besant, and I at once took into her room and discussed it with her as my copy came before hers. She concurs with me in thinking it best for me to answer it by explaining to you the principle underlying my action and then commenting upon the particular cases adduced. I hoped that my friends in America know me well enough not to attribute to an immoral motive anything that I do, but since this is apparently not yet so I must write with entire frankness about some subjects which are not usually discussed at the present day.