

MODERN RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS IN INDIA

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***T*HE HARTFORD-LAMSON LECTURES ON "THE RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD" ARE DELIVERED AT HARTFORD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY IN CONNECTION WITH THE LAMSON FUND, WHICH WAS ESTABLISHED BY A GROUP OF FRIENDS IN HONOUR OF THE LATE CHARLES M. LAMSON, D.D., SOMETIME PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS, TO ASSIST IN PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE FOREIGN MISSIONARY FIELD. THE LECTURES ARE DESIGNED PRIMARILY TO GIVE SUCH STUDENTS A GOOD KNOWLEDGE OF THE RELIGIOUS HISTORY, BELIEFS AND CUSTOMS OF THE PEOPLES AMONG WHOM THEY EXPECT TO LABOUR. AS THEY ARE DELIVERED BY SCHOLARS OF THE FIRST RANK, WHO ARE AUTHORITIES IN THEIR RESPECTIVE FIELDS, IT IS EXPECTED THAT IN PUBLISHED FORM THEY WILL PROVE TO BE OF VALUE TO STUDENTS GENERALLY.**

LITERATURE. — LIFE: *Rāmākṛishṇa, His Life and Sayings*, by F. Max Müller, London, Longmans, 1910, 5s. (This book contains the best biography, and also a collection of his sayings.) *Gospel of Sri Rāmākṛishṇa*, according to M. (i.e. Prof. M. N. Gupta), Part I, Madras, Rāmākṛishṇa Mission, 1912, Rs. 2-8. (A picture of Rāmākṛishṇa's life with his disciples and his teaching: see above, p. 194.) *My Master* (a lecture), by Swami Vivekananda, Calcutta, Udbodhan Office, 1911, 8 as. VIVEKĀNANDA: *Swami Vivekananda, His Life and Teachings*, Madras, Natesan, 4 as. *Speeches and Writings of Swami Vivekananda*. Madras, Natesan, Rs. 2. NIVEDITĀ: *Sister Nivedita, A Sketch of her Life and Her Services to India*, Madras, Natesan, 4 as. *The Web of Indian Life*, by Sister Nivedita, London, Heinemann, 5s. An account of the Rāmākṛishṇa Mission appeared in the *Hindu Patriot* of October, 1912.

3. THEOSOPHY

Theosophy is a system of religion, science and practical life, first taught by Madame Blavatsky, and incorporated in a society founded by her and Colonel Olcott in New York in 1875, but carried much farther by Mrs. Besant and C. W. Leadbeater in recent years. It purports to be the final truth of the universe, taught in different lands and at different times by various founders of religion and teachers of philosophy, but revealed anew to Madame Blavatsky by certain Masters, or Mahātmas (i.e. Great Souls), said to live in Tibet and elsewhere. The system and the society are both of great interest because of the large literature which has sprung from the movement, and the very remarkable growth of the society in many parts of the world.

The attempt to write an unvarnished account of Theosophy is beset by a number of tantalizing difficulties. No trustworthy history of the movement, no reliable biography of the foundress, is in existence. Theosophic accounts both of Madame Blavatsky's life and of the history of the society are extremely unreliable.¹ Colonel Olcott and other leaders

¹ See Appendix, p. 447 ff.

of the movement themselves tell us with the utmost frankness that Madame Blavatsky was a liar, that she told lies at any time, both in fun and in earnest.¹ This habit of hers issued in two extraordinary myths, the story of the pretended Mahät-mas in Tibet and their communications to her,² and the legend of her own virginity.³ Since 1879 and 1885, respectively, these two myths have very seriously contaminated Theosophic literature. Every statement has to be checked by reference to other documents and authorities.

Fortunately, after her death, a number of letters, which she had written to two well-known Russian men of letters between 1874 and 1886, were published in Russia, and shortly afterwards were translated into English. These give us a great many peeps into her life. The first of these correspondents was M. A. N. Aksakoff, editor of the Leipzig *Psychische Studien*, who had long taken an interest in every kind of psychical question. Her letters to him run from the 28th of October, 1874, to the 6th of November, 1877, and there are a few from 1879 also. Her second Russian correspondent was M. V. S. Solovyoff, whose acquaintance she made in Paris in May, 1884. Her numerous letters to him all fall between that date and the spring of 1886. There is not the slightest question about the genuineness of these letters. They appeared originally in a series of articles, entitled *A Modern Priestess of Isis*, by M. Solovyoff in a Russian magazine. Madame Blavatsky's sister, Madame Jelihovsky, denied several of M. Solovyoff's own statements, but she did not challenge the authenticity of any of the documents which he had reproduced. The articles were published in book-form in Russia; and the book was then translated into English by Mr. Walter Leaf. Whoever wishes to understand Madame Blavatsky ought to read this brilliant and reliable work. We shall not use anything chal-

¹ *Hints on Esoteric Theosophy*, No. 1; ODL., I, 264-5.

² P. 227, below.

³ P. 260, below.

lenged by Madame Jelihovsky, and indeed shall rely almost entirely on the letters.

Similarly, for later periods, documentary evidence which enables the student to get somewhat nearer the facts, has become available in various ways. Thus, the full exposure of Judge would have been quite impossible, had it not been that one of the officials of the society, disgusted at the course of events, resigned, and then handed over copies of all the incriminating documents for publication ;¹ and, in the Alcyone trials in Madras,² Mrs. Besant inadvertently handed over to the prosecution a bundle of letters written by Mr. Leadbeater, which threw much light on certain events.

It is very unfortunate that, at present, so far as I can make out, there is no scholar in England or America, outside the Theosophic circle itself, who has made any serious study of the literature and history of Theosophy. Hodgson, Coleman and Solovyoff are dead ; and every scholar to whom I have spoken on the subject has said that the quality of Theosophic literature has altogether driven him away from the subject. This is greatly to be regretted.

I have had interviews with scores of people who are, or who were, Theosophists, and have learned much from them ; but it is harder to get information of a helpful and reliable kind from Theosophists than from members of any other religious movement I have dealt with, except possibly the Rādhā Soāmis ; and the pledge of secrecy exacted from those who join the Esoteric School makes it impossible to get light on Theosophic methods of occultism. I have learnt most of all from a few individuals who were once at the centre of things, but are now outside. Some have returned to Christianity, but most retain a larger or smaller amount of Theosophic belief.

I have been seriously hampered in writing my account

¹ See p. 270, below.

² See pp. 276-7, below.

of Theosophy for want of space. An adequate outline of its history would fill the whole volume.

Madame Blavatsky

1. Helena Petrovna was born on the 12th of August, 1831, the daughter of Col. Peter Hahn, a member of a German family settled in Russia. She was connected with a number of the best Russian families. From her childhood she seems to have been a medium. Spiritualistic phenomena are said to have constantly attended her.¹ In 1848, when she was but seventeen, she married N. V. Blavatsky, a Russian official, a man a good deal older than herself,² but ran away from him three months after the marriage.

2. Of her life from 1848 to 1872 we have no connected and reliable account. It is clear that she travelled a great deal in many lands, but both dates and places are altogether doubtful. Two facts, however, are absolutely certain, both of great importance.

The first of these is that for many years she lived a very wild and evil life. Her relatives in Russia knew quite well the kind of life she led. M. Aksakoff wrote in the autumn of 1874, to Andrew Jackson Davis, an American journalist, interested in spiritualism :

J'ai entendu parler de Madame Blavatsky par un de ses parents, qui la dit un medium assez fort. Malheureusement ses communications ressentent de son moral qui n'a pas été des plus sévères.³ (I have heard Madame Blavatsky spoken of by one of her relatives, who said she was rather a powerful medium. Unfortunately her communications bear marks of her morality, which has not been of the severest type.)

¹ Sinnett, *Incidents*, 33-37 (edition of 1913); Aksakoff in *MPI.*, 227.

² According to her story, he was nearer seventy than sixty in 1848 (Sinnett, *Incidents*, 39), but as he was still alive in 1892 (*MPI.*, 116), she must have greatly exaggerated his age.

³ *MPI.*, 227.

Mr. Davis handed this letter to Madame Blavatsky herself to translate. Naturally the reference to her past caused her intense excitement; and she at once wrote a letter to M. Aksakoff from which we give a few sentences:

Whoever it was told you about me, they told you the truth in essence, if not in detail. God only knows how I have suffered for my past. It is clearly my fate to gain no absolution upon earth. The past, like the brand of the curse of Cain, has pursued me all my life, and pursues me even here, in America, where I came to be far from it and from the people who knew me in my youth. . . . I hated hypocrisy in whatever form it shewed itself; ergo, I ran amuck against society and the established proprieties. Result: three lines in your letter, which have awakened all the past within me and torn open all the old wounds. . . .

I have only one refuge left in the world, and that is the respect of the spiritualists of America, who despise nothing so much as 'free love.'¹

Later she wrote again:

I really cannot, just because the devil got me into trouble in my youth, go and rip up my stomach now like a Japanese suicide in order to please the mediums. My position is very cheerless; simply helpless. There is nothing left but to start for Australia and change my name for ever.²

In February, 1886, she sent a document, headed "My Confession," to M. Solovoyoff, in which the following sentences occur:

I have already written a letter to Sinnett *forbidding him* to publish my *mémoires* at his own discretion. I myself will publish them with all the truth. So there will be the *truth* about H. P. Blavatsky, in which psychology and *her own* and *others'* immorality and Rome and politics and all *her own* and *others'* filth once more will be set out to God's world. I shall conceal nothing. It will be a Saturnalia of the moral depravity

¹ *MPI.*, 228, 229, 230. Cf. also her later letters, 233, 268.

² *Ib.*, 268.

of mankind, this *confession* of mine, a worthy epilogue of my stormy life.¹

Her sister, Madame Jelihovsky, also spoke and wrote to M. Solovyoff quite frankly on the subject.² Amongst her letters to Madame Coulomb³ was one consisting of twelve closely written quarto pages, giving a detailed account of her life from 1851 to 1875. She spoke of it as a page which she wished to see "torn out of the book" of her life. For some considerable time she lived with a man named Metrovitch, and was known as Madame Metrovitch. There was also a boy whom she acknowledged as her son for several years; but in 1885, when she created the virginity myth, she told a new and wonderful tale about him.⁴ There is thus the most irrefragable evidence that she lived a very immoral life for many years.

The other fact which stands out clear in these years is that in 1858 she returned to Russia for some time, and that spiritualistic phenomena followed wherever she went.⁵

3. From 1872 onward we can trace her life in outline without much difficulty. Some part of that year she spent in Cairo, endeavouring to make a livelihood by giving spiritualistic séances. There, she met an Englishwoman who later married a Frenchman, named M. Coulomb. This lady went to one of the séances, in the hope of hearing the voice of a dearly loved brother who had just died. The spirit-show was a complete failure, but the two women became friends. Madame Blavatsky was in great need of money, and the Englishwoman gave her a loan, which she was unable to repay during her stay in Egypt. In 1884, when the Coulomb letters made these facts public,⁶ Madame Blavatsky denied them, but her

¹ *MPI.*, 181.

² *Ib.*, 193, 195, 202.

³ See below, p. 239; also *Proceedings*, IX, 314-5.

⁴ *MPI.*, 141.

⁵ *Sinnett, Incidents*, chaps. III-VI.

⁶ See below, p. 239.

own correspondence shews clearly that the séances were held and proved a failure.¹ A paragraph also appeared in *The Medium* for April 26, 1872, inviting mediums ready for engagements to apply to Madame Blawatsky (sic) in Cairo.

On the 7th of July, 1873, she arrived in New York, and settled down there. In her first letter to M. Aksakoff, written on the 28th of October, 1874, she said :

I have been living in America for about a year and a half, and have no intention of leaving.²

She continued to reside in the States until the end of 1878, becoming a naturalized citizen in the interval. Clearly there was some reason for this decision to give up her wandering life and to settle down, not in Russia, but in an alien land. In her letters to M. Aksakoff she gives a clear intelligible reason for this policy. Her youth was now over; she was forty-two years of age. She wanted to escape from the results of her dissolute life; but that was impossible in Europe, above all in Russia, where her past was so well known.³ So she decided to go to America "to be far from" the curse of her past life and "from the people who knew" her in her youth.⁴

No detailed account of how she spent her first fifteen months in America has been published. Events are clearly traceable only from October, 1874, onwards, when she began to correspond with M. Aksakoff. But her plan seems to have been to live by writing on spiritualism, which at that time was making a great noise in America. It is probable that it was this consideration which drew her to New York rather than to Melbourne, Calcutta, or some other city equally distant from the Russia which she longed for but

¹ *MPI.*, 131.

² *Ib.*, 225.

³ *Ib.*, 228.

⁴ Above, p. 212.

dared not approach. At any rate, she made the acquaintance of several journalists and writers, one of whom was Andrew Jackson Davis, who has been already mentioned, and kept in close touch with spiritualism.

During the summer and autumn of 1874, a group of people interested in spiritualism had gathered round a family named Eddy, at Chittenden in the State of Vermont. Amongst those who were there to watch and to see what was to be seen was Henry Steel Olcott, who had served in the federal army during the Civil war and bore the title of Colonel, but who was now a journalist, and had been sent by the New York *Graphic* to report the happenings at Chittenden. Thither went Madame Blavatsky; and there, in October, she met Olcott.

On the 28th of the same month, at the advice of Davis, she wrote to M. Aksakoff, telling him of the great vogue of spiritualism in America, and asking whether she might not send him for publication from time to time Russian translations of articles on spiritist subjects appearing in American magazines. The proposal was accepted, and the correspondence continued for some years. In her first letter, the boom in spiritualism is represented as very great,¹ and the phenomena at Chittenden are described as most wonderful.²

The letter was scarcely despatched when Aksakoff's French letter to Davis about Madame Blavatsky's character already quoted,³ arrived; and in her reply, an extract from which has been also quoted, she declares that she is a convinced spiritualist and has been such for more than ten years:

I am a 'spiritist' and 'spiritualist' in the full significance of the two titles. . . . I have now been a spiritist for more than ten years, and now all my life is devoted to the doctrine.

¹ *MPI.*, 225.

² *Ib.*, 226.

³ Above, p. 211.

I am struggling for it and trying to consecrate to it every moment of my life. Were I rich, I would spend all my money to the last farthing pour la propagande de cette divine vérité. But my means are very poor, and I am obliged to live by my work, by translating and writing in the papers.¹

In later letters she wrote :

I was in deepest darkness, but I have seen the light, and to this light I have given myself up entirely. Spiritism is a great truth, and I will serve it to the grave. . . .

For spiritism I am ready to work night and day, so long as I have a morsel of bread, and that only because it is hard to work when one is hungry. . . .

I have already sacrificed myself for spiritualism, and in defence of my faith and the truth I am ready at any moment to lay my head on the block. . . .²

If you hear that the sinful Blavatsky has perished, not in the bloom of years and beauty, by some surprising death, and that she has dematerialised 'for ever,' then you will know that it is for spiritualism. In thee, Lord, do we put our trust, and we shall not be confounded for ever. . . .

I have quite ceased to get any letters from my aunts and sisters; they have evidently all forgotten me, and so much the better for them. I am no credit to them, to tell the truth. I shall now never go back again to Russia. My father is dead, nobody wants me, and I am altogether superfluous in the world. Here I am at least a human being; there, I am—Blavatsky. I know that everybody respects me here, and I am needed for spiritualism. Now the spirits are my brothers and sisters, my father and mother.³

From her letters it is plain that Olcott used every possible means to bring her into notoriety and popularity, raising her to the rank of Countess, mixing her up with "princes, boyards and imaginary governors-general,"⁴ and making her out a second Livingstone in her travels in Africa and the

¹ *MPI.*, 228, 229. ² *Ib.*, 236, 240-1. ³ *Ib.*, 242, 243. ⁴ *Ib.*, 244.

Soudan ;¹ and she did him a like service. While the vogue of spiritualism lasted, things went well. Everything that they wrote was widely read, and they rose steadily in public estimation. There was a spirit who was peculiarly friendly with her. Here is what she says about him :

My John King alone is a sufficient recompense for all ; he is a host in himself to me. And yet they call him the double of the medium, him and Crookes's Katie King. What sort of double can he be when the medium Williams is not here at all, but John King in his own person, with his own black beard and his white Chinese saucer-upside-down cap, going about here in America from one medium to another, and doing me the honour of visiting me incessantly, though he has not the least resemblance to me ? No, John King is a personality, a definite, living, spiritual personality. Whether devil or good spirit, he is at all events a spirit, and not the medium's prototype.²

Olcott tells us that she had known John King since 1860, and had seen him and talked with him in different countries.³

But a peculiarly odious piece of fraudulent spiritism was exposed early in 1875, and public interest in the subject began to die down. The comrades tried various plans to keep their hold on the people, but it was useless. On May 24th, Madame Blavatsky writes :

Disaster has come upon us. Dr. Child has appeared in the character of the spiritist Antichrist, and, as the Judas of the seven councils, has destroyed spiritualism. Even the most advanced spiritualists begin to be afraid of public opinion, and their 'high respectability' induces many to continue to believe in spirits in secret only, and privately. . . .

I am ready to give my life for the spread of the sacred truth. Olcott is helping me as much as he can, both with his pen and with pecuniary sacrifices for the cause. He is as passionately

¹ *Ib.*, 245.

² *Ib.*, 243. Cf. also 247 ; 253, 254.

³ *People from the Other World*, 454.

devoted to spiritism as I am. But he is far from rich and has nothing to live on but his literary labours, and he has to keep a wife and a whole lot of children.

Olcott is sitting on heaps of his *People from the Other World*, like Marius on the ruins of Carthage, and thinking bitter things. Not a thousand copies of his book have been sold in five months.¹

On the 18th of July she writes again :

Here, you see, is my trouble, to-morrow there will be nothing to eat. Something quite out of the way must be invented. It is doubtful if Olcott's 'Miracle Club' will help; I will fight to the last.²

Things were in a very bad way. Spiritualism was worked out, and the partners were threatened with want. Some new source of income had to be found. The Miracle Club was clearly meant to be something new and startling to catch public attention. But it did not succeed. Her letter of the 10th September is still very despondent.

4. Such were the circumstances in which the Theosophical Society was founded. Colonel Olcott gives us the dates and the steps in the following passage :

The formation of such a society was suggested by myself on the evening of September 7th, 1875, in the rooms of Madame Blavatsky, at 46 Irving Place, New York City, where a small gathering of her friends had assembled to listen to a discourse by a Mr. G. H. Felt on the lost canon of proportion of the Ancient Egyptians. My views as to the necessity of such a society were embodied in a short impromptu address and, receiving general assent, a motion was made by Mr. W. Q. Judge and adopted, *nem. con.*, that I be elected chairman of the meeting, and on my motion Mr. Judge was elected secretary. A committee to frame Bye-laws was chosen. A report of the proceedings including a digest of my little speech, was published in a local daily paper, copied into the *Spiritual Scientist*, of Boston, and thence transferred by Mrs. E. H. Britten into her large

¹ *MPI.*, 251, 250, 252.

² *Ib.*, 253.

work, "Nineteenth Century Miracles" (p. 296), where the curious reader may find it in detail. No previous consultation had been held about the matter between Madame Blavatsky and myself or any body else; the suggestion was entirely unpremeditated and grew out of the discussion provoked by Mr. Felt's lecture. . . .

On the 17th November, the Society was launched as a perfected organization.¹

Olcott became President, Judge Vice-president, and Madame Blavatsky Corresponding Secretary. To her friend in Russia Madame Blavatsky wrote on the 20th of September :

Olcott is now organising the Theosophical Society in New York. It will be composed of learned occultists and cabbalists, of philosophes Hermétiques of the nineteenth century, and of passionate antiquaries and Egyptologists generally. We want to make an experimental comparison between spiritualism and the magic of the ancients by following literally the instructions of the old Cabbalas, both Jewish and Egyptian. I have for many years been studying la philosophie Hermétique in theory and practice, and am every day coming to the conclusion that spiritualism in its physical manifestations is nothing but the Python of Paracelsus, *i.e.*, the intangible ether which Reichenbach calls Od. The Pythonesses of the ancients used to magnetise themselves—read Plutarch and his account of the oracular currents, read Cornelius Agrippa, Paracelsus, the *Magia Adamica* of Eugenius Philalethes, and others. You will always see better, and can communicate with the spirits by this means¹—self-magnetisation.²

On December 6th she wrote :

It is the same spiritualism, but under another name. Now you will see if we shall not start the most learned investigations. Our vice-treasurer, Newton, is a millionaire, and president of the New York spiritualists.³

¹ *A Historical Retrospect*, 2.

² *MPI.*, 256-7.

³ *Ib.*, 265.

These are most instructive paragraphs. It is, above all, to be noted that the purpose of the Theosophical Society is "to make an experimental comparison between spiritualism and the magic of the ancients." There is as yet no mention of Buddhism or Hinduism. There is no suggestion that the foundress receives her wisdom in ample measure, without trouble, through "Masters" from the ancient sources. She still struggles forward by experimental comparison; and her occult communications are not with living Masters in Tibet, but with the spirits of the dead. "Mahātma Morya" has not yet appeared above the horizon. "John King" is still "the Master of her dreams."¹

The facts are simple and natural. Madame Blavatsky had been a medium from childhood, and had practised spiritualism since 1858, if not from an earlier date, though it does not appear that she ever worked as a hired medium. She started a spiritualist show in Cairo in 1872. She lived by spiritualist writing, and made the most serious protestations of belief in spiritualism from 1873 to September, 1875. The Miracle Club and the Theosophic Society were successive attempts to start something new and successful, when public interest in spiritualism declined. Theosophical doctrine at a later date became a blend of Buddhism, Hinduism and various forms of occultism; but, when first launched, it was merely an addition of the magic and mysticism of Egypt and of mediæval Judaism to spiritualism, with a view to stimulating the jaded appetite of the people of New York.

It is clear that she had been interested to some extent in all these mysterious things for years. She was a woman of most unusual temperament, possessing the powers of the medium, the clairvoyant, the clairaudient and probably also of the automatic writer. She had met "Eliphaz Lévy" in

¹ *MPI.*, 254. See below, p. 447.

Paris; and she had probably given some attention to juggling, devil-dancing and such like in Egypt and the East. The following sentences are probably quite reliable. We should not have had this curious passage in her letters at all, had it not been that her correspondent took in the American papers, and she felt she must apologize once more for Colonel Olcott's outrageous exaggerations:

In a detailed account of the story of Katie King Olcott makes out of me something mysteriously terrible, and almost leads the public to suspect that I have either sold my soul to the devil or am the direct heiress of Count Germain and Cagliostro. Do not believe it; I have merely learnt in Egypt and Africa, in India and in the East generally, a great deal of what other people do not know. I have made friends with dervishes, and I do indeed belong to one mystic society, but it does not follow that I have become an Apollonius of Tyana in petticoats.¹

She now began to study modern works on occultism seriously. About the same time she began to draw away from her old full belief in spiritualism and to hint that it was not spirits, but merely "shells" that caused the marvels. This theory comes from "Eliphaz Lévy." He taught that when a man dies, the spirit departs completely, leaving behind in this world only an empty "shell," which, however, has the power of producing phenomena.

Five months before the foundation of the Theosophical Society, on the third of April, 1875, Madame Blavatsky married in Philadelphia an Armenian, a Russian subject, named Michael Bettalay.² Yet N. B. Blavatsky was still

¹ *MPI.*, 246-7. The date is the 12th of April, 1875.

² The account of this marriage given by Olcott in *ODL.*, I, 54-57, having been written after the creation of the virginity myth (see below, p. 260), cannot be trusted. He is wrong even with the date. Solovyoff (*MPI.*, 165) tells how Madame once described the match to him. For the end of the marriage see below, p. 226.

alive; and there had been no divorce. It was a case of bigamy pure and simple. Doubtless she said she was a widow; for she practised that piece of deceit for many years. She put down her age in the marriage-register as thirty-six, while she was actually forty-three.¹

The new society was scarcely started when serious trouble arose from her old spiritualist allies; for they felt that she was faithless to them. She had publicly declared that the spirits had brought her a medal and clasp from her father's grave, and Olcott had published in his *People from the Other World* a drawing of the medal and clasp. This enabled the medium Home to trace her antecedents and to obtain information about her private life. He had also got to the bottom of some of her fraudulent spiritualistic phenomena. He then attacked her publicly on both counts.²

The new society went fairly well for a time, and then interest steadily waned. Yet the comrades held on, never allowing the organization to fall to pieces.³

5. For two years Madame Blavatsky toiled at her new studies, and on the 2nd of October, 1877, her *Isis Unveiled* was published. It is a really noteworthy book, and that for two reasons. First, it was the earliest vigorous attempt made to defend the ancient religions against the harsh judgments still only too common at the time. Secondly, it took up a striking attitude to that great shady borderland which lies between jugglery and religion. Everything mysterious, weird, occult or magical, the unexplored powers of the human mind, and all suggestive, or symbolic words, acts or things, had an overpowering fascination for her. It

¹ I owe the facts in the text to Mr. W. Irving Lewis of the Young Men's Christian Association of Philadelphia, who did me the great kindness of searching the public records and copying out the details.

² *MPI.*, 267-8.

³ *A Historical Retrospect*, 3.

is also clear that at a fairly early date she began to realize, in a more or less hazy way, certain facts which science has only recently perceived and acknowledged. The most important of these are (a) that spiritualism, clairvoyance, hypnotic trances, faith-healing and many of the phenomena of dreams and apparitions are, in essentials, identical with practices and occurrences which are vouched for in the literature of Classical and early Christian times, and with much which happens among modern savages; (b) that a considerable proportion of the marvels are genuine, whatever the ultimate explanation of their reality may be; and (c) that those who make such practices their profession sooner or later have recourse to fraud.¹ In the *Isis* these questions are not raised or treated in any scholarly fashion; and the evidence, good, bad and indifferent, is simply thrown down in indiscriminate heaps; so that the book as it stands is practically of no scientific value; yet the personal knowledge the authoress had of many of the practices dealt with, and her perception that there was something genuine in them, gave the book a certain value, and made it very attractive to many people.

One of the most notable characteristics of the book is its violent polemic against modern science and Christianity.

The authoress so wrote as to lead her readers to understand that she was a woman of vast learning, and that she had mastered all the great works on occultism in existence; while the truth is that all the learning it contains is borrowed, or rather stolen, from modern books; for in most cases there is no acknowledgment. Mr. Wm. Emmette Coleman of San Francisco spent three years in making an exhaustive analysis of the contents of Madame Blavatsky's writings. The following is his statement with regard to the *Isis*:²

¹ See art. *Clairvoyance* by Andrew Lang in *ERE*.

² *MPI.*, 354.

By careful analysis I found that in compiling *Isis* about 100 books were used. About 1,400 books are quoted from and referred to in this work; but, from the 100 books which its author possessed, she copied everything in *Isis* taken from and relating to the other 1,300. There are in *Isis* about 2,100 quotations from and references to books that were copied, at second-hand, from books other than the original, and of this number only about 140 are credited to the books from which Madame Blavatsky copied them at second-hand. The others are quoted in such a manner as to lead the reader to think that Madame Blavatsky had read and utilized the original works, and had quoted from them at first-hand, — the truth being that these originals had evidently never been read by Madame Blavatsky.

Col. Olcott stated in the *Theosophist*¹ that Madame Blavatsky's library contained about 100 books when she wrote the *Isis*; so that Mr. Coleman's critical judgment is confirmed. The following is a list of the books from which the largest numbers of quotations were taken :²

	PASSAGES
Dunlap's <i>Sod: the Son of the Man</i>	134
Ennemoser's <i>History of Magic</i> , English Trans.	107
<i>Demonologia</i>	85
Dunlap's <i>Spirit History of Man</i>	77
Salverte's <i>Philosophy of Magic</i> , English Trans.	68
Dunlap's <i>Sod: the Mysteries of Adoni</i>	65
Des Mousseaux's <i>Magie au Dix-neuvième Siècle</i>	63
Des Mousseaux's <i>Hauts Phénomènes de la Magie</i>	45
King's <i>Gnostics</i> , 1st edition	42
<i>Supernatural religion</i>	40
Mackenzie's <i>Masonic Cyclopaedia</i>	36
Zeller's <i>Plato and the Old Academy</i>	35

There are some students who, while recognizing frankly that the bulk of the *Isis* is built out of materials from modern works, are yet inclined to think that it may be true, as was stated by Madame Blavatsky and Col. Olcott,

¹ April, 1893, p. 387 f.

² *MPI.*, 356.

that large sections of the book were written automatically. If this be true, then the explanation must be that her sub-conscious mind had retained all that she had read on these subjects, and gave out the materials when each fit of automatic writing came on.

The book contains innumerable errors, many of them of the most rudimentary type. The commonest Sanskrit words are misspelt; the Buddhist doctrine of transmigration is grossly misrepresented; and the *Bhagavadgītā* is confused with the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. The following sentences give a sample of the scholarship of the book :

Apart from the now-discovered fact that the whole story of such a massacre of the Innocents is bodily taken from the Hindu *Bagavedgītā*, and Brahmanical traditions, the legend refers, moreover, allegorically to an historical fact. King Herod is the type of Kansa, the tyrant of Madura.¹

Yet, to-day, we are asked to believe that all this is the wisdom of the Mahātmas. When Madame Blavatsky went to India, an elaborate myth was created, to the effect that for many years she had been receiving her wisdom from these Masters in Tibet. Thus all who accept this myth are compelled to explain the *Isis* as an early exposition of orthodox Theosophy. As a matter of fact, it represents the state of the writer's mind in 1877: it does not teach the doctrine of reincarnation;² it teaches that man is a being of a threefold nature, while the orthodox doctrine makes him sevenfold; there is no mention of the great doctrine of brotherhood; and a great deal of the furious attack on Christianity is contrary to the professed standards of to-day.

6. About the time when the *Isis* was published, Home's *Lights and Shadows of Spiritualism* also appeared, and its exposures of her frauds agitated her so much, and influenced public opinion so seriously, that she decided to leave Amer-

¹ II, 199.

² Olcott acknowledges this frankly, *ODL.*, I, 278.

ica for ever and go to India. Here is how she wrote in December, 1877, two months after the publication of the *Isis*:

It is for this that I am going for ever to India, and for very shame and vexation I want to go where no one will know my name. Home's malignity has ruined me for ever in Europe.¹

Home's evidence must have been irrefragable; for Olcott did not attempt to meet it, though asked to do so.²

In anticipation of their voyage to India, Olcott wrote to a Hindu friend, whom he had met some time before on a voyage across the Atlantic, and through him got into correspondence with Svāmī Dayānanda Sarasvatī, the founder of the Ārya Samāj. As a result of an interchange of letters, the two societies were connected the one with the other. This continued after the Theosophists reached India; but finally they separated in anger.³

On the 25th of May, 1878, Madame Blavatsky was divorced from her Armenian husband.⁴ Olcott says that the husband obtained the divorce on the ground of desertion.⁵

7. In December, 1878, "the Theosophical Twins," as Madame Blavatsky had named herself and Olcott, sailed from New York. They arrived in Bombay in January; and that city, for almost three years, was the headquarters of the society. Madame Coulomb and her husband, who had meantime lost all their money, reached Bombay late in the spring of 1880, and were established at headquarters as friends and assistants of Madame Blavatsky.

The opinions and the teaching of the Twins now became much more distinctively Indian than they had been in America. They declared themselves Buddhists, and entered into close relations with Buddhism in Ceylon.

The Theosophic Myth also began to take definite shape.

¹ *MPI.*, 278. ² *Ib.*, 278. ³ *ODL.*, I, 394-407. Above, p. 110.

⁴ P. 221, above. ⁵ *ODL.*, I, 57. Cf. *MPI.*, 165.

They diligently taught the existence of the Great White Brotherhood and their Lodge in Tibet. The theory took shape gradually, and some of the more showy parts have been added only recently. The completed myth is as follows: A large number of men have reached the stage of Adepts in the Wisdom; and many have become members of the Hierarchy which governs this world.¹ These beings are far beyond death and transmigration; yet they live upon earth, mostly in Tibet; and a few of them are willing to take as apprentices those who have resolved to devote themselves to humanity. Since they take pupils, they are known as Masters. On account of their greatness they are called Mahātmas, great souls. Madame Blavatsky, we are told, was selected from the whole human race in our days to receive the ancient wisdom from these Masters. Her own particular master was Mahātma Morya; but Koot Hoomi and others were also ready to help. From them she received Theosophy: it was in no sense her own creation. As far back as 1851 she had met Mahātma Morya, "the Master of her dreams";² she had spent seven years in unremitting study in Tibet; and in the intervening years the wisdom had been poured into her mind in amplest measure.

Our narrative has provided sufficient disproof of the myth. As late as 1874 she was neither Buddhist nor Theosophist, but a Spiritualist, and was ready at any moment to lay her head on the block in defence of her faith.³ Instead of learning from a living Master, she was the confidant of a disembodied spirit, John King.⁴ Even when the Theosophical Society was founded, there was no mention of India but only of the Kabbala and the Hermetic system.⁵

¹ See below, pp. 279-80.

² P. 447, below.

³ Pp. 215-6, above.

⁴ P. 217, above.

⁵ P. 219, above.

The two travelled a great deal in various parts of India, and were usually received by the Hindu community with acclamation. The society steadily grew in numbers and popularity, largely as a result of the new theory of the Masters. For, wherever they went, miraculous events, which they called "phenomena," appeared; and Madame Blavatsky attributed all to her Masters, or to the occult knowledge she had derived from them. If some prominent European were inquiring about Theosophy, a letter from Koot Hoomi would be sure to fall on his head. Telegrams from the Masters would come tumbling through the air — "precipitated" in Theosophic phrase — but, strangely enough, bearing the stamp of the British Telegraph office. The Masters shewed themselves now and then in one of their bodies to selected people. Lost articles were found, and new things arrived in unheard-of ways. Half a cigarette, or a lock of Madame Blavatsky's hair, would be transported from one place to another by "occult" means. Probably a percentage of the phenomena were genuine, as we should expect in the case of a woman of Madame Blavatsky's powers; but no carefully sifted evidence has ever been given for any of them; while evidence exists which proves clearly that many of them were fraudulent; and, as to the Masters, nothing worth the name of evidence has ever been produced for their existence.¹

8. One of the most famous occurrences took place at Simla. There was a dinner-party there one evening, in the house of Mr. A. O. Hume, a distinguished Indian Civilian, holding very high office under Government. After dinner it was proposed that Madame Blavatsky should give an example of her powers. After some talk she asked Mrs. Hume whether she had lost anything she would like very much to recover. In reply she described

¹ P. 447, below.

a brooch, which some little time before had passed out of the family. Madame Blavatsky indicated a spot in the garden where they might look for it. They looked, and the brooch was found.

Mr. and Mrs. Hume accepted the occurrence as a genuine occult phenomenon. It was described in glowing terms in the papers; and it has been continuously used by Theosophists ever since as evidence of the truth of their system. Yet the explanation is simple and undeniable. The truth came out in the following way :

The publication of the incident in the *Pioneer* gave rise to a good deal of discussion in the daily papers of the period. The *Englishman* pointed out a number of awkward lacunæ in the account given, and was especially anxious to know something of the "person" who had allowed the brooch "to pass out of their possession." It remarked —

"There is nothing to show to whom Mrs. Hume's friend, to whom she had given the brooch, parted with it. It might have been to some one who had communicated the fact and given the brooch to Madame. A very slight hint in the conversation might have turned Mrs. Hume's thoughts, almost unconsciously, towards her lost brooch," etc.

The *Bombay Gazette*, of October 13th, 1880, after noticing this article, went on —

"We can furnish the *Englishman* with a small item of intelligence. At the end of last and the commencement of this year, a young gentleman who had resided at Simla previously, and was, we believe, well known to the Hume family, sojourned for some months in Bombay, and was part of the time a guest of Madame Blavatsky at Girgaum. The latter lady's connection with this gentleman may or may not have had anything to do with the affair of the brooch, though to our mind it is as probable as that the presence of the brooch in the flower bed was due to 'occult' phenomena."

Three days later a correspondent of *The Times of India* wrote —

"It may interest some of your readers on the other side of

India to learn that some months ago an individual who had been immediately connected with some of the members of Mr. Hume's family at Simla arrived in Bombay. He was, I believe, hospitably received by Madame Blavatsky, if, indeed, he did not spend some weeks at her house in Girgaum, and when he left for England eventually, the arrangements for his passage were made through the agency of Colonel Olcott."

All this is very suggestive; but still more so is a pretty idyll narrated by the *Civil and Military Gazette* a month or two later:—

"Once upon a time a certain Daphnis had received as a gage d'amour from his Chloe, a brooch, an ancestral gem, formerly the property of Chloe's Mamma, which probably poor Chloe considered would in the course of happy time revert to her possession, when Daphnis and all that was his should be her own. But the course of true love never did run smooth, and the unhappy Daphnis, separated from Chloe, and driven by impetuosity, deposited his pretty gift with an accommodating pawn-broker—for a consideration—meaning doubtless in future time to redeem the precious pledge. The trinket chanced, however, to attract the notice of a very famous spiritualist and medium, a lady who dealt in mysteries of psychic force and powers of disintegration and reintegration of matter. There is nothing to prevent a spiritualist, however magically endowed, from dealing also in mundane affairs after the usual humdrum and worldly fashion, and in this instance the famous lady chose to achieve the possession of the object of her fancy by the ordinary method of paying for it. Time rolled on, and it happened in the fulness thereof that the celebrated medium and Chloe's Mamma became acquainted, and under some circumstances, which attained perhaps an undeserved notoriety, the brooch became again the property of its original possessor.¹"

Two further points came out after this account was printed. Mr. Hormusji Seervai, a Bombay jeweller, saw an account of the miracle in the papers, and realized from the description of the brooch that he had repaired it for Madame

¹ *Collapse*, 46-7.

Blavatsky.¹ Finally, the Rev. George Patterson, when on a visit to Bombay at the end of 1884, learned that Madame Blavatsky bought the pawn-ticket from the young man and redeemed the trinket.

There cannot be the slightest question as to the truth of the explanation; for not one of the facts has ever been so much as questioned. Mr. Hume himself publicly acknowledged that the famous phenomenon was a piece of well-planned fraud. Yet the Theosophical Society still uses this fraud, indefensible and undefended, as an example of occult agency.²

9. The Theosophic conception of the world, man and religion, which is nowhere given in the *Isis*, now gradually took shape. A brief analysis of the system is given below.³ The main channel through which the fresh teaching found its way to Theosophists and the public was a series of long letters, which Madame Blavatsky averred were written and sent by the Master known as Koot Hoomi. Parts of these letters were published by Mr. Sinnett, an Englishman who was editor of the *Pioneer* and had become a Theosophist, in his books, *Esoteric Buddhism* and *The Occult World*; but much of the material was so poor that it had to be eliminated as rubbish.⁴

The Occult World was published in June, 1881. Mr. H. Kiddle of New York read the volume, and discovered in one of the letters a long passage copied almost verbatim from an address delivered by him at Lake Pleasant, August 15, 1880, and reported the same month in *The Banner of Light*. The date of the letter was two months later. When this was made public, a ridiculous reply, purporting to come

¹ Mr. Hodgson called and learned the facts from him personally. *Proceedings*, IX, 267.

² Sinnett's *Occult World*, pp. 66-79 (eighth edition, 1906).

³ P. 278 ff.

⁴ *Proceedings*, IX, 304.

from the *Mahātma*, was published, but no one was deceived. It was a case of deliberate plagiarism; and the final proof that it was so is found in the fact that in the more recent editions of *The Occult World* the passage is omitted.¹

10. In December, 1882, the headquarters of the society were moved to Adyar, Madras. The Coulombs went along with the rest of the staff. M. Coulomb was Librarian, while his wife was Assistant Corresponding Secretary of the society. Besides that, Madame Coulomb acted as housekeeper, while her husband took charge of all repairs or additions to the buildings.

Madame Blavatsky occupied a large upper room in the main bungalow. See plan *B* on page 235. Early in 1883 a new room for occult purposes was built against the west wall of her room. There were two windows in the west wall. The south window, transformed into a door, became the ordinary entrance into the new room, which was called the Occult Room. The north window was removed, and a single layer of bricks filled up the aperture on the Occult Room side, leaving a recess about 15 in. deep on the other side, in Madame Blavatsky's bedroom. Part of the Occult Room was screened off by means of a curtain to form a small room for the Shrine. This was a wooden cupboard which, by means of two stout wires, was hung on the wall over the thin brick partition where the north window had been. In the Shrine was placed a portrait of the Master, Koot Hoomi. The doors of the Shrine were occasionally thrown open to Theosophists, that they might see the master's portrait. Hindus bowed reverently

¹ Let any one compare pp. 101-2 of the third edition with pp. 125-6 of the eighth edition. The plagiarized passage begins at "Ideas rule the world," and runs down to "speck of dirt." No acknowledgment of the omission is made. I owe this point to the Rev. John Hackett of Hampstead. Cf. also what occurs on p. 257, below.

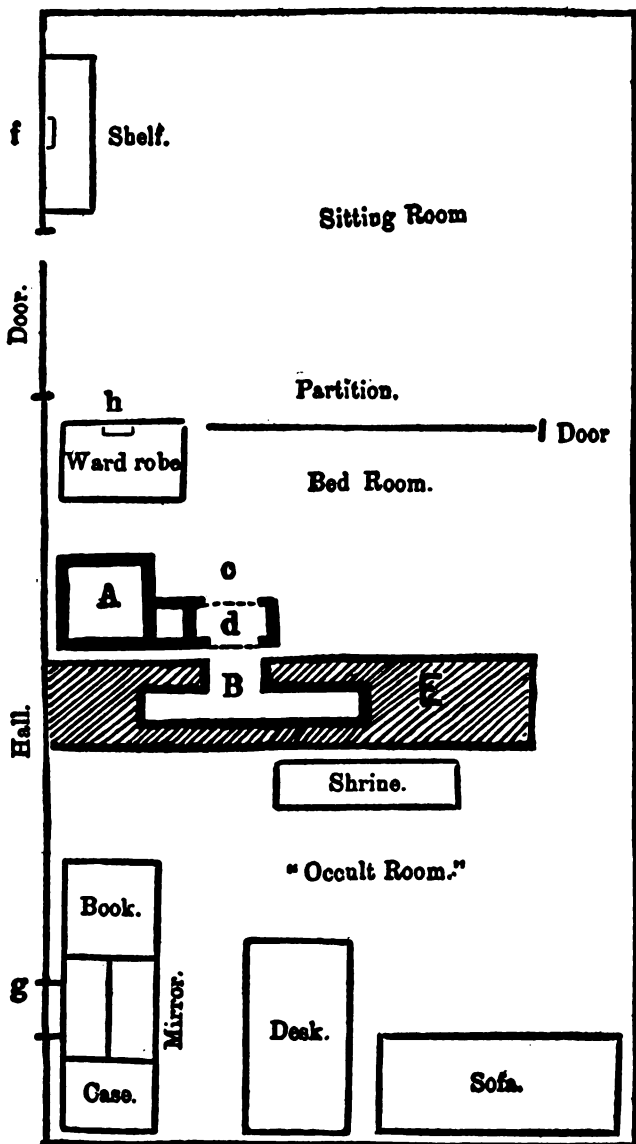
before him and burned incense to him.¹ Both Indians and Europeans were accustomed to present their requests in the form of letters. The door would then be shut; and, when it was re-opened, a reply from the Master would be found within it. On one occasion a broken saucer was put in beside him. When the Shrine was re-opened, it was found intact. From this time onward many of the most striking phenomena were connected with the Shrine.

By the year 1884 the Theosophical Society had attained great proportions. There were over a hundred branches in India, and Hindus everywhere rejoiced in its work. Nor is their enthusiasm hard to understand. Theosophy provided a new defence of Hinduism for the thousands of educated men whose Western education had filled them with shivering doubts about their religion. It condemned Christian missionaries as impudent and ignorant intruders, who dared to criticize Hinduism and Buddhism, the two faiths which alone among all the religions of the world still taught clearly the truths of the Ancient Wisdom. All the great and good of every age had known and taught this wisdom; but, while it had been lost or beclouded elsewhere, Hinduism and Buddhism still retained its priceless principles; and in Tibet lived immortal teachers who were now, through Madame Blavatsky, revealing the Wisdom in all its glory to the whole human race. Yet even this most flattering proclamation would not have won its way as it did apart from the phenomena. There can be no question that it was these marvels that trumpeted the cause throughout India, and convinced the Hindu of the truth of the new propaganda.

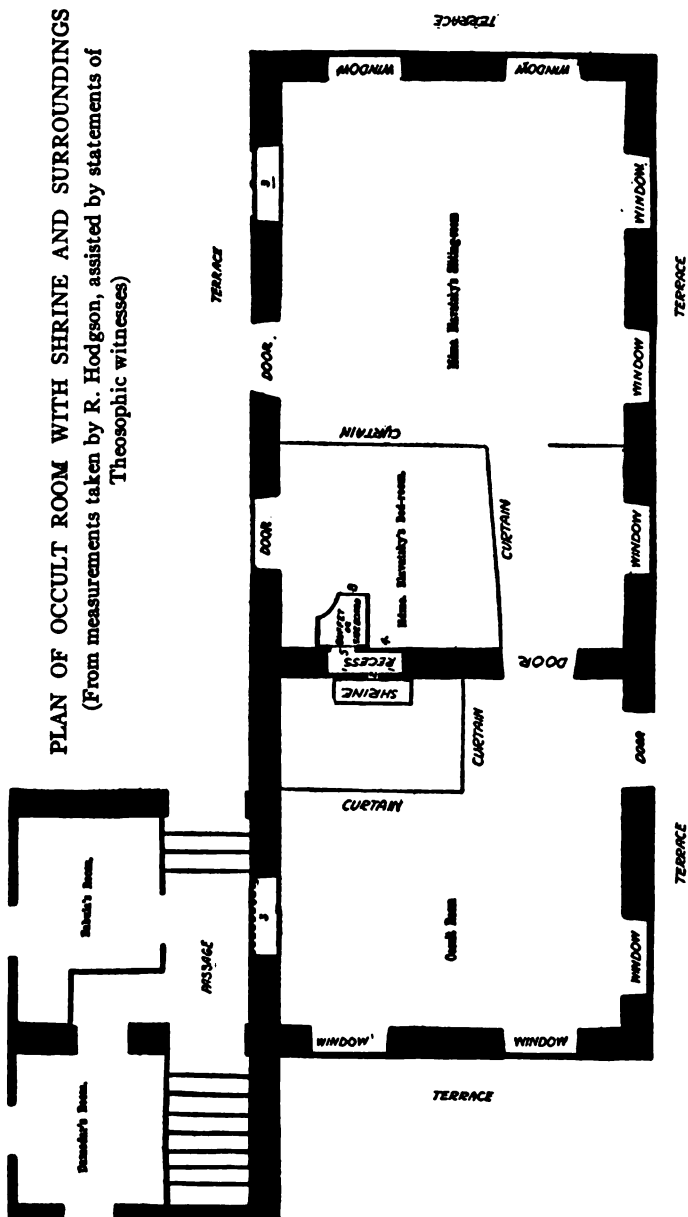
11. In 1884 a great crisis in the history of Theosophy occurred. As Theosophists still assert that the whole was a missionary plot, and that Madame Blavatsky came out of it triumphant, we cannot dismiss it in a paragraph. In order

¹ Cf. the Rādhā Soāmis and the Deva Samāj, pp. 170 and 179, above.

A. JUDGE'S PLAN, ORIGINAL SIZE



B. HODGSON'S PLAN, $\frac{1}{2}$ OF ORIGINAL SIZE



to place our readers in a position to judge for themselves, we shall give, in as brief a form as possible, an orderly outline of the significant events of the crisis and shall also indicate where the detailed evidence produced on both sides may be seen and examined.

a. On the 21st of February, 1884, Madame Blavatsky, Colonel Olcott and a young Calcutta Brāhman, Mohini Mohan Chatterji, sailed from Bombay for Europe. By Madame Blavatsky's explicit instructions, the Coulombs were left in charge of her rooms at the headquarters, Madras. They were to reside in them, and to look after her furniture and dogs. No one was to disturb them. There is the best evidence possible for these statements. The written instructions have been published;¹ and the following is a letter written by Madame Blavatsky, and printed in Dr. Hartmann's pamphlet published in September:²

46 RUE NOTRE DAME DES CHAMPS,
PARIS,

April, 2-84.

She swore to me that she would take care of my rooms, only asking me to let it be known that she alone had the right over all, and would have and keep the key. Having told Dr. Hartmann that he was welcome to my books and my desk in my absence, she made a vow when alone with me, and declared that if I allowed one single person to have access to my rooms, she would answer for nothing; — that the 'shrine' would be desecrated, etc.³

Damodar, a Hindu who had become a Theosophist and was one of Madame Blavatsky's secretaries, had the keys of the Occult Room and the Shrine.⁴ Only these three had free access to the penetralia at headquarters. The affairs of the society were left by Colonel Olcott, the President, in the hands of a Committee of seven.

¹ *Collapse*, 19.

² Below, p. 240.

³ *Report of Observations*, 32.

⁴ *Proceedings*, IX, 225, 373-4.

b. On the 29th of February one member of this Committee, Dr. Hartmann by name, arrived at headquarters; and two or three days later a meeting of the Committee was held. In order that they might sit in quiet, Dr. Hartmann proposed that they should meet in Madame Blavatsky's room upstairs; but, to his amazement, the Coulombs refused to give them admittance. The consequence was a bitter quarrel between the Coulombs, on the one side, and the members of the Committee and the other residents at headquarters, on the other. Madame Coulomb said that she had many secrets which she would tell, if they continued to molest her.¹ She said there were sliding panels in the walls by which phenomena were created, and secret panels in the Shrine, by mean of which the letters from the Master and other things were introduced from Madame Blavatsky's room behind. She also talked of the money which she had lent Madame Blavatsky in Egypt and which had not been repaid.² Hence Dr. Hartmann and others wrote to Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott, complaining of the Coulombs.

So serious did matters become in the meantime, that the Committee decided to impeach them in an informal manner, and expel them from headquarters. But on March 22nd, while they were drawing up the charges against them, Damodar laid before them a letter,³ which he declared had been brought from Koot Hoomi by a chela in his astral body, advising them not to turn out the Coulombs. Naturally, the Committee were rather upset to find such an authority interfering to save the traitors. Yet, in the face of a message direct from the Master, they dared not turn

¹ *Collapse*, 24, 25, 34 ff. She had spoken earlier to many people in the same strain.

² Above, p. 213.

³ Given in full in *Proceedings*, IX, 278.

them out of doors. Consequently, as Dr. Hartman says, an armistice was concluded with them.

After the peace was patched up, the Coulombs, Mr. Lane Fox and Damodar went to Ootacamund for a holiday. Meanwhile, the letters despatched early in March, reached the founders in Paris; and they replied, in letters written on the 1st and 2nd of April, to the Coulombs and to others. These letters reached Madras on the 25th of April. On the 26th, the very day when the mail from Europe reached Ootacamund, a letter¹ purporting to come from the Master, and directed to Dr. Hartmann, was forwarded to the latter by Damodar, from Ootacamund. This letter said that the Coulombs were plotting. Therefore, when they returned from Ootacamund, the Committee decided to expel them. On the 17th of May, M. Coulomb gave up the keys he held, and several of the sliding doors and panels which Madame Coulomb had talked about were discovered.² On the 23rd of May they were finally forced to leave headquarters.

c. We now turn to Europe for a moment. The Theosophical Society had by this time attained so much notoriety that the London Society for Psychical Research appointed, in May, 1884,³ a Committee for the taking of such evidence as to the alleged phenomena as might be offered by members of that body at the time in England, or as could be collected elsewhere. The journey of the founders to Europe thus came at a very fortunate time, and the Research Society took full advantage of it.⁴

d. On the 9th of August Madame Coulomb called on the Editor of *The Madras Christian College Magazine*, and placed in his hands some forty letters, and asked him whether he cared to publish them, as they contained sufficient evidence

¹ Parts of it were published by Dr. Hartmann in his September pamphlet (p. 240, below) and these are reproduced in *Proceedings*, IX, 279.

² *Proceedings*, IX, 223.

³ *Ib.*, IX, 201.

⁴ *Ib.*, IX, 202.

to expose the fraudulent nature of the phenomena which had made so much stir in India. The Editor asked for a few days to look into the matter.¹

A few days later the General Council of the Theosophical Society through their Chairman, Dr. Hartmann, sent out a circular letter of inquiry to a number of Theosophists who had visited headquarters, asking them what they knew about the Shrine.²

Meantime the Editor of the *Christian College Magazine* was examining the documents left in his hands. Most of them were letters from Madame Blavatsky to Madame Coulomb, but there were several other things, a letter from Mrs. Carmichael (the wife of an Indian Civilian) to Madame Blavatsky with a letter to Madame Coulomb written on the back, a receipt for a telegram, etc. The Editor submitted the documents to the most skilled opinion available in Madras, among others to certain bankers, and they pronounced them genuine.³ But the letters authenticated themselves. No one could look through them and believe them to be forgeries. The question of the handwriting was quite a subordinate one. The letters contained scores of references to leading Hindus and Government Officials all over India with details of what happened when Madame Blavatsky was in their houses and when she met them casually. No forger would have dared to invent such details. If they had been forged, a few personal inquiries would have at once exposed them. The style was also Madame Blavatsky's, brilliant, vivacious, full of surprises and sudden changes. The documents were thus manifestly genuine. As they contained numerous instructions to Madame Coulomb for the production of phenomena, the Editor decided to publish a number of extracts from them, so as to expose Madame Blavatsky and her frauds.

¹ *Collapse*, 29.

² *Proceedings*, IX, 223, 325.

³ *Ib.*, IX, 277.

Accordingly, an article appeared in the *Christian College Magazine*, on September 10th,¹ containing extracts from some dozen letters, with sufficient comment to make them comprehensible. The letters were almost all in French. The text and the English translation were given in parallel columns. The Editor quoted only such paragraphs as were necessary to prove the fraud, and omitted numerous passages dealing with the private affairs of individuals, both European and Indian; and most of the letters were not used at all.

The publication of this article caused immense excitement throughout India. Most of the newspapers recognized that it was a genuine exposure, but some doubted whether the Editor had not been hoaxed by forgeries. The leading Theosophists, on the other hand, put the whole matter down as a conspiracy on the part of the missionaries.

e. Mr. W. Q. Judge, who took part in the foundation of the society in 1875,² was in Europe in 1884, and was sent by Olcott from Paris to Madras.³ He arrived there sometime in May or June.

f. Dr. Hartmann now drew up as vigorous a defence of Madame Blavatsky as he could and published it, sometime in September, with the title, *Report of Observations made during a nine-months' stay at the Head-quarters of the Theosophical Society at Adyar (Madras), India*.⁴ A rough and inaccurate plan of the chief rooms at headquarters, probably the work of Judge,⁵ appeared in it. It is reproduced above, plan A, page 234. Hartmann denied that the letters which had been published were genuine, and charged the missionaries with forming a conspiracy against the Theosophical Society. He confesses the existence at

¹ Reproduced in *Collapse*, 1-15.

² See above, p. 218.

³ *MPI.*, 125. The passage is quoted below, p. 248.

⁴ *Proceedings*, IX, 230.

⁵ See pp. 452-3, below.

headquarters of such sliding panels, trapdoors, holes in the wall, etc., as could be used for the production of occult phenomena; but he asserts, that M. Coulomb made all these after Madame Blavatsky's departure, in order to ruin her reputation. The whole conspiracy, however, would be unmasked and the innocence of Madame Blavatsky established in a court of law.

We have noted Judge's arrival above because of the following grave incident in which he was concerned. The chief facts are given in a written statement by Dr. Hartmann from which we quote the following:

Of the existence of a movable back to the Shrine and a filled-up aperture in the wall, none of us knew anything, and although superficial examinations were made, they divulged nothing; because to make a thorough examination, it would have been necessary to take the Shrine down, and we were prevented from doing this by the superstitious awe with which Mr. Damodar K. Mavalankar regarded the Shrine, and who looked upon every European who dared to touch or handle the "sacred" shrine as a desecration.

At about the time when Major-General Morgan sent his invitation to Mr. Patterson to come to headquarters, that examination was made, and it was found that the back of the Shrine could be removed, and on moistening the wall behind the Shrine with a wet cloth, it was found that an aperture had existed, which had been plastered up. . . .

I must confess that it seemed to me that if at that inopportune moment this *new discovery*, to which I then alluded in the papers (see *Madras Mail*), would have been made public, it would have had a bad effect on the public mind . . .

A gentleman who was present, and who shared my opinions, was of the opinion that the Shrine had been too much desecrated to be of any more use, and he burned the Shrine in my presence.¹

What they found was that the back of the Shrine consisted of three movable panels, and that there had been an aper-

¹ *Proceedings*, IX, 225.

ture in the thin brick partition behind;¹ so that there had actually been direct communication between Madame Blavatsky's room and the interior of the Shrine, precisely as Madame Coulomb had said.² The aperture had been plastered up when Madame Blavatsky sailed for Europe. Among those who examined the Shrine and made the discovery were Dr. Hartmann, Mr. Judge and Mr. T. Vijayagharava Charloo (known as Ānanda);³ and it was Judge who burned the Shrine.⁴ The date of the discovery was September 20th.⁵

Dr. Hartmann and Theosophists generally have always maintained that the sliding panels in the back of the Shrine and the hole in the wall behind it, which made it possible to get access to the Shrine surreptitiously from Madame Blavatsky's room, were made by M. Coulomb *after* Madame Blavatsky sailed for Europe in February, 1884. It is passing strange that they destroyed the Shrine, if they were really convinced that M. Coulomb had made these arrangements in order to ruin Madame Blavatsky. Why did they not preserve this most notable piece of evidence of his villainy?

The truth is that it is totally impossible to believe that the sliding panels in the Shrine and the hole in the wall were made by M. Coulomb *after* Madame Blavatsky's departure; for while the Coulombs had charge of her rooms, Damodar had *the keys of the Occult Room and the Shrine*.⁶ How then could M. Coulomb insert sliding panels in the back of the shrine, and dig a hole through the wall without the knowledge of Damodar? The burning of the Shrine shows that Judge and Hartmann had had some glimpse of this truth.

¹ See p. 232, above, and plan B, page 235.

² See p. 237, above.

³ *Proceedings*, IX, 224. On this page a full and clear account is given of the removal of the Shrine.

⁴ *Ib.*, XXIV, 141.

⁵ *Ib.*, IX, 227. See p. 247, below.

⁶ P. 236, above.

Clearly they were conscious that no defence of Madame Blavatsky was possible while the Shrine remained in existence.

g. It is important that Hartmann's bold promise of a lawsuit should be kept in mind. In making it Dr. Hartmann did not stand alone. Judge was especially bold in promising a full exposure in court;¹ and Theosophists in every part of India loudly proclaimed that the missionaries would be prosecuted, and their conspiracy laid bare. So strong was confidence at headquarters that again and again it was prophesied that they would rue the day when first they accepted the lying evidence of two dismissed servants.² The London Lodge published a pamphlet in which it was stated that the matter would go to Court; and Madame Blavatsky also stated in an interview with a representative of *The Pall Mall Gazette* that she was hurrying to India to commence proceedings against the missionaries.³

But, while this was what she said in public, she wrote in a very different strain to M. Solovyoff. We quote part of her letter. The date is early in October, 1884 :

"First of all, you can say to each and all in Paris that since, in spite of all my efforts, in spite of my having sacrificed to the society life and health and my whole future, I am suspected not only by my enemies but even by my own theosophists. I shall cut off the infected limb from the sound body; that is, I shall cut myself off from the society. They have all clutched at the idea with such delight, Olcott and Madame Gebhard and the rest, that I have not even met with any pity. I leave the moral to you. Of course, I shall not depart into the 'wilderness' till Olcott, who starts for India by the first steamer, has arranged matters at Adyar, and exposed and proved the conspiracy — they gave the Coulomb woman 10,000 rupees³ as is now proved, in order to destroy the society; but when all this has settled down, then I shall go off, — where, I do not know yet;

¹ *Collapse*, 51-2.

² *Ib.*, 49.

³ See below, p. 246.

it is all the same, besides, so long as it is somewhere that nobody knows.¹

h. In October a second article appeared in *The Christian College Magazine*,² in which the missionaries, in reply to Dr. Hartmann's pamphlet and to other criticisms which Theosophists had raised against them, published a further instalment of letters, and indicated still more clearly the great strength of their position.

i. So keen was the interest in the Psychical Society on the question of the Theosophical phenomena and of the genuineness of the letters published in *The Christian College Magazine* that the Committee appointed by them to consider the phenomena determined to send one of their number to India to make careful scientific investigations on the spot. Mr. Richard Hodgson, B.A., of St. John's College, Cambridge, was sent out at the expense of Prof. Henry Sidgwick. He arrived in Madras on the 18th of December. On the 20th of December Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott arrived at the headquarters in Madras.

The following is Mr. Hodgson's own statement of his attitude of mind :

Before proceeding it may be well for me to state that the general attitude which I have for years maintained with respect to various classes of alleged phenomena which form the subject of investigation by our Society enabled me, as I believe, to approach the task I had before me with complete impartiality ; while the conclusions which I held and still hold concerning the important positive results achieved by our Society in connection with the phenomena of Telepathy, — of which, moreover, I have had instances in my own experience, both spontaneous and experimental, and both as agent and percipient, — formed a further safeguard of my readiness to deal with the evidence set before me without prejudice as to the principles involved. Indeed, whatever prepossessions I may have held were distinctly in

¹ *MPI.*, 94-95.

² Reproduced in *Collapse*, 15-42.

favour of Occultism and Madame Blavatsky — a fact which, I think I may venture to say, is well known to several leading Theosophists.¹

Mr. Hodgson's actions fully bear out his statement. When he arrived in Madras, the Editor of *The Christian College Magazine* offered him hospitality, but he declined it; and a day or two later the Editor heard that he had gone to reside at the Theosophic headquarters; and there he resided all the time he was in India (nearly three months), except when he went on short visits to places at a distance from Madras. Madame Blavatsky acknowledges frankly that he was friendly to the Theosophist cause when he arrived in India. She writes to M. Solovyoff:

It was he (*i.e.* Hartmann) who turned Hodgson, the representative sent by the London Psychical Society to inquire into the phenomena in India, from a friend, as he was at first, into an enemy.²

Mr. Hodgson acted wisely, I believe, in putting up at headquarters. He thus gave Madame Blavatsky, Colonel Olcott and all their followers the fullest possible opportunity of explaining every suspicious circumstance and giving all the evidence they possessed to prove that the letters which had been published were forgeries; while he himself was able to become acquainted with every corner of the rooms at headquarters, except in so far as the Theosophic leaders had destroyed the evidence.³

The Editor of *The Christian College Magazine* handed the incriminating letters to Mr. Hodgson for examination, on condition that they should be returned, as they were the property of Madame Coulomb, and were to be handed

¹ *Proceedings*, IX, 208.

² *MPI.*, 124. Quoted below, p. 248. Cf. also *Proceedings*, XXIV, 135.

³ See above, pp. 241-2.

back to her as soon as all danger of a prosecution should have passed away.¹

Mr. Hodgson interviewed the people who supplied the materials for building and repairs, traced the vases, saucers, flowers, etc., which appeared in the phenomena, to the shops or other places whence they came, and endeavoured to fit these facts into the accounts given by those who witnessed the phenomena. He tested all the details of the incriminating letters, cross-questioned witnesses, examined the places referred to, and compared the documents with

¹ As Theosophists have persistently declared that the Missionaries bought the letters for a very large price, the truth must be set down here. The Editor of *The Christian College Magazine* writes in April, 1885 (*Collapse*, 54-5):

"We did *not* buy the letters. They are still Madame Coulomb's property and will remain so. Two, at least, of the members of the Committee of Investigation — Dr. Hartmann and Mr. Subba Row — know this, and have known it since Sept. 27th of last year. On that date the Editor of *The Christian College Magazine*, accompanied by Mr. Gribble, the Rev. A. Alexander and the Rev. J. E. Padfield, visited the Headquarters of the Theosophical Society, where they met Messrs. Hartmann, Judge, Subba Row and Damodar. At the close of the interview Dr. Hartmann asked what we had paid Madame Coulomb, and remarked that it was rumoured we had purchased the letters for Rs. 10,000. He was informed that such a rumour was wholly false, that we had *not* purchased the letters, and that Madame Coulomb had only been paid at our ordinary rates for work done. On our return we asked the gentlemen who had accompanied us to write down separately their recollections of the interview. On reference to these documents we find the following remarks of Dr. Hartmann's recorded. We quote from Mr. Alexander's account: —

"Dr. Hartmann replied . . . that this confirmed what he had always thought, that Madame Coulomb was acting not for money but for revenge."

"We may add to this that the letters were put into our hands absolutely and unconditionally, with the single proviso that they should be returned when we were done with them. The first suggestion as to payment for work done came not from Madame Coulomb but from us; and from first to last we have paid her the comparatively paltry sum of Rs. 150."

One of the letters was lent to Mr. W. Emmette Coleman of San Francisco. He promised to return it, but did not do so. It was probably burned, along with his other papers, in the great fire in San Francisco. See p. 263.

acknowledged specimens of Madame Blavatsky's handwriting in matters of spelling, phraseology,¹ style, etc. No other person, whether Theosophist or not, had the opportunity of examining all the witnesses personally, of seeing all the rooms and other places involved in the matters at issue, and of handling all the documents. Any one who, from a sincere desire to get at what actually happened in these matters, will work patiently and carefully through the multitude of details supplied in all the sources, will realize with what extreme honesty and with what infinite pains Hodgson collected and sifted the evidence.

As he proceeded with this persistent scientific search for the facts, it became evident that the Theosophic leaders were not trustworthy witnesses, that they contradicted themselves and each other in multitudes of particulars. Each new piece of cross-questioning on Mr. Hodgson's part produced a new version of some occurrence. Madame Blavatsky,² Colonel Olcott,³ Hartmann⁴ and Damodar⁵ all produced a very bad impression.

Here is what happened when Mr. Hodgson asked his first questions about the shrine in December, 1884 :

Madame Blavatsky professed ignorance on the subject, saying she had been unable to discover what had been done with the Shrine. Mr. Damodar and Mr. Hartmann both denied having any knowledge of it, and it was only after repeated and urgent requests to be told what had happened that I learnt from the halting account given by Mr. Damodar and Dr. Hartmann that the Shrine had been removed from the Occult Room (see Plan⁶) into Mr. Damodar's room at about mid-day of September 20th, that on the following morning, at 9 o'clock, they found the Shrine had been taken away, and they had not seen it since.

¹ See below, pp. 256-7.

² *Proceedings*, XXIV, 133.

³ *Ib.*, IX, 210, 237-239, 309, 311, 335-6.

⁴ *Ib.*, IX, 220-226. ⁵ *Ib.*, IX, 210, 226-237, 312. ⁶ Above, p. 235.

They threw out suggestions implying that the Coulombs or the missionaries might have stolen it.¹

Mr. Hodgson questioned every Theosophist who had sent in written answers to Dr. Hartmann about the Shrine and any other one who could throw any light on its history, and in this way gradually pieced together a certain amount of information about it. All the evidence showed that no one had examined the Shrine carefully before the 20th of September. Every statement made about examinations before that date proved altogether untrustworthy. But he was kept in ignorance of the burning of the Shrine until the 13th of March.²

j. We may next see what Madame Blavatsky herself wrote about Dr. Hartmann. The letter was written from Naples in May, 1885, to M. Solovyoff, after her final return from India, but six months before Mr. Hodgson's report appeared :

If your heart is not attracted to Hartmann, you are quite right. This dreadful man has done me more harm by his defence, and often by his deceit, than the Coulombs by open lying. One moment he was defending me in the papers, the next he was writing such 'equivokes' that even the papers hostile to me could only open their mouths and say: 'There is a friend for you!' One day he defended me in letters to Hume and other theosophists, and then hinted at such infamies that all his correspondents went against me. It was he who turned Hodgson, the representative sent by the London Psychical Society to inquire into the phenomena in India, from a friend as he was at first, into an enemy. He is a cynic, a liar, cunning and vindictive, and his jealousy of the Master, and his envy for any one on whom the Master bestows the least attention, are simply repulsive. He has turned our devoted Judge, when despatched by Olcott from Paris to Adyar, into our enemy. He set against me at one time all the Europeans in Adyar, Lane Fox, Mr. and Mrs. Oakley,

¹ *Proceedings*, IX, 220. See the truth, above, pp. 241-2.

² Below, p. 250.

Brown; the Hindus alone, who hate him and have long since taken his measure, he was unable to stir. Now I have been able to save the society from him, by agreeing to take him with me under the plea that he is a doctor. The society, and Olcott at their head, were so afraid of him that they did not dare expel him.¹

There thus need be no doubt as to Dr. Hartmann's character as a witness.

k. From the time that Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott reached Madras, on the 20th December, 1884 (two days after Hodgson's arrival), the missionaries and the Coulobms watched and waited eagerly, looking for the promised suit-at-law which was to establish the innocence of Madame Blavatsky, prove the Coulombs forgers and expose the missionaries as conspirators. But week after week passed, and nothing happened. The blustering ceased. Hartmann, who had boasted by word of mouth and in print, did nothing. Colonel Olcott and Judge were mute. Madame Blavatsky initiated no proceedings in the Law Courts to clear her character. Finally, in February, there was issued from headquarters a pamphlet, the work of Dr. Hartmann in the main, and bearing the following title, *Report of the Result of an Investigation into the charges against Madame Blavatsky, brought by the Missionaries of the Scottish Free Church at Madras and examined by a Committee appointed for that purpose by the General Council of the Theosophical Society*. Madras, Scottish Press, 1885.² This pamphlet contains the written replies sent in by Theosophists in response to the letter circulated in August,³ but no mention is made of the discoveries made by Dr. Hartmann and Mr. Judge in September,⁴ nor of the effect of Hodgson's examina-

¹ *MPI.*, 124-5.

² *Collapse*, 48; *Proceedings*, XXIV, 134 n.

³ See above, p. 239.

⁴ See above, pp. 241-2.

tion on those who had sent in replies.¹ It is stated in the pamphlet that there is to be no prosecution of the missionaries. What a fiasco! A pamphlet instead of a prosecution!

What was it that choked the bluster of the Theosophists and stilled the last threat of a prosecution? In the inner circles of Theosophy it is acknowledged that Sinnett, Olcott and the others were afraid to have Madame Blavatsky with her unbridled tongue go into the witness-box: as a witness she was impossible. That doubtless weighed also, but the real cause of their terror, without any doubt, was the searching examination made by Hodgson. Until he came and subjected them to his trained scientific mode of inquiry, they doubtless believed they had an irrefragable case. But that ordeal made everybody at headquarters realize that no Theosophic leader could stand cross-examination for a quarter of an hour, and that many of the phenomena could be shewn to be fraudulent by a few carefully directed inquiries. To go to court would be black ruin. The following quotation will make this plain and will also explain the events that followed. Hodgson writes:

It was on the evening of March 13th, at a conference between Dr. Hartmann, Mr. and Mrs. Cooper-Oakley, Mr. Hume and myself, that Dr. Hartmann finally confessed that "nobody was allowed to touch that d— Shrine," and he then related the incident described on p. 224 of my Report,² concerning the discovery of the sliding panel of the Shrine and the subsequent destruction of the Shrine itself. I had learned from Mr. A. D. Ezekiel, in Bombay, that he had discovered independently that there had once been a hole in the wall behind the Shrine, but that it had been carefully blocked up. Dr. Hartmann then admitted that traces of this hole had been discovered previously, but the discovery was kept a secret. On the following morning Mr. Hume drew up some statements to form proposed resolu-

¹ See above, p. 248.

² See above, pp. 241-2.

tions for an informal meeting to be held in the evening by himself, the Oakleys, Hartmann, Ragoonath Row, Subba Row, and P. Sreenvas Row. These were to the effect that most of the phenomena in connection with the Theosophical Society were fraudulent, as appears from such of the Coulombs' statements as have been verified, and the independent investigations by myself, that the Society be reconstituted, that Madame Blavatsky, Olcott, Damodar, Babajee and Bhavani Shankar should resign their connection with it, that the disputed letters are genuine, and that Hartmann's pamphlet as well as the Defence pamphlet should be withdrawn, as being founded on an imperfect knowledge of the circumstances. These resolutions, as I was informed by Mr. Hume, were not carried, the Oakleys and Dr. Hartmann being unwilling to go so far as to condemn the phenomena as fraudulent. It was decided, however, that the pamphlets should be withdrawn.¹

Hartmann confessed that the pamphlet published in February was thoroughly untrustworthy,² and gave Mr. Hodgson a written statement about the Shrine.³ Finally, Madame Blavatsky herself confessed that the Shrine was made with three sliding panels in the back.⁴

The result of Mr. Hodgson's long patient inquiry was that he was driven to these conclusions: that every phenomenon, so far as he had been able to trace it, was fraudulent; that the letters handed over by Madame Coulomb were genuine; and that most of the Koot Hoomi letters were written by Madame Blavatsky herself, though a few were probably written by Damodar.⁵

¹ *Proceedings*, XXIV, 134.

² *Ib.*, XXIV, 145.

³ Reproduced in part, *Proceedings*, IX, 225, and quoted above, p. 241.

⁴ *Proceedings*, IX, 221.

⁵ For example, Damodar, who knew everything, wrote the letter, which pretends to come from Koot Hoomi, referred to above on p. 237, to prevent the Committee from expelling the Coulombs and discovering the shrine and the sliding panels, at least until orders should come from Europe. The letter from M., referred to above on p. 238, was clearly written by Madame Blavatsky in Europe and sent by the mail to Damodar to be delivered to

A few days after the conference just described Hodgson left for home. About the same time Judge slunk away to America without fulfilling his boasts;¹ and Damodar, knowing that his course was run, took a journey to the Himalayas, and was seen no more.²

1. When Madame Coulomb saw that Madame Blavatsky and her friends were afraid to prosecute and give her the opportunity of proving the truth of her statements, she determined to bring the matter before a court of law herself. But, since Madame Blavatsky had not publicly charged Madame Coulomb with forging the letters, it was impossible to prosecute her. Consequently, she instructed Messrs. Barclay and Morgan to proceed against General Morgan of Ootacamund, as he had been foremost in charging her with forgery. But at this juncture Madame Blavatsky's lady doctor went and begged Madame Coulomb's friends to postpone the case: Madame Blavatsky was so ill that it would inevitably kill her. They agreed. Several postponements were asked for and obtained; but finally the patient recovered. It was then decided to proceed with the case. As a preliminary measure, Madame Coulomb's solicitors wrote to General Morgan on March 25th, threatening him with criminal proceedings, should he fail to make an apology before April 2nd. General Morgan replied, in a letter dated March 31st, declining to apologize.

The very next day, the Theosophical Society gave Madame Blavatsky permission to leave India; and she embarked on a French steamer, the *Tibre*, at Madras on the 2nd of April, never to return. In order that no one

Dr. Hartmann. If it was sent by Morya himself, how did he require to use Damodar as his postman? Why did he not send it direct to Hartmann in Madras?

¹ *Proceedings*, XXIV, 141.

² The reason for his flight may be found in *Proceedings*, IX, 226-237.

might know beforehand that she was to sail, her passage and that of Miss Flynn, who went with her, were taken under the name of "Madame Helen and maid." She sailed on a medical certificate of dishealth; for her doctor thought that she ought not to stay through the hot weather. It was kidney-trouble she had suffered from. She had had a very similar attack in Elberfeld seven months earlier,¹ and she had another at Würzburg five months later.² But it is also perfectly clear that it was not this sickness that was the reason for her sudden and secret departure. Had she been ready to clear her character, she could have stayed a little longer without the slightest danger. As soon as it was rumoured that she had escaped, a representative of Messrs. Barclay and Morgan went down by rail to Pondicherry, where the French steamer had to call, went on board, and found the lady well and happy on deck, surrounded by a crowd of admirers. She unquestionably fled from India, in order to escape the ordeal of cross-examination as a witness in the Coulomb-Morgan trial. In a letter to M. Solovyoff, written at Naples on the 29th of the month, she says that she had been called a Russian spy, and adds:

They certainly could not prove anything, but meanwhile, on mere suspicion, it might have been a matter of sending me to jail, arresting me, and doing who knows what to me. I have only now heard all this in detail; they did not tell me, and packed me off straight from my bed on to the French steamer.³

Dr. Hartmann also sailed in the same steamer. Thus, Judge, Damodar, Madame Blavatsky and Dr. Hartmann had all fled from Madras.

Two days after the steamer sailed the following note appeared in the *Madras Mail*:

¹ *MPI.*, 77, 87.

² *Ib.*, 144.

³ *Ib.*, 119.

The Theosophists :— Colonel Olcott writes on behalf of the General Council of the Theosophist Society to say that “as a number of copies of a pamphlet entitled ‘Report of the result of the investigations into the charges brought against Madame Blavatsky,’¹ have been circulated, it is my duty to state that the issue has not been ordered by the General Council, nor authorized by the Committee.”²

Clearly, this action can have resulted only from a conviction on the part of the leaders that the pamphlet was untrustworthy; and that is precisely what Hodgson says they had come to.³ The Theosophists of India thereby absolutely gave up the attempt to defend Madame Blavatsky.

On the 22nd of April a letter from Madame Coulomb appeared in the *Madras Mail* in which she explained that, since Madame Blavatsky had left the country, it was impossible to have the question of the authenticity of the letters satisfactorily settled, and she had in consequence decided to drop the case against General Morgan.

m. How sick the Theosophic leaders were of phenomena is patent from the fact that from this time these most useful miracles were banned. They were unnecessary; and they were dangerous. Every book labours to show that they are no essential element of the Theosophist programme. But has no one realized what the cessation of the phenomena means? Many of them were supposed to be the work of the Masters themselves. Hence, if we accept the Theosophic explanation of the Coulomb affair, we must conclude that those great Adepts, who, in the fulness of their omniscience, had planned them and carried them out, were compelled by a pair of forgers and a few conspiring missionaries to give up the policy they had adopted for the establishment of the truth in India!

¹ See above, p. 249.

² *Proceedings*, XXIV, 135.

³ See above, p. 251.

n. Meantime, the Committee appointed by the Society for Psychical Research to inquire into the phenomena of Theosophy had been dealing with certain parallel cases which had taken place in Europe, and had been led by all the evidence adduced to declare that they had been fraudulently arranged by Madame Blavatsky. This conclusion was based solely on the evidence available in Europe,¹ and is thus altogether independent of the Coulomb letters and the masses of evidence gathered by Hodgson.

o. When his report was laid before the Committee, they carefully weighed all the evidence and unanimously accepted his main conclusions. The report was published in December, 1885.²

No man is in a position to decide any one of the most important questions at issue until he has worked his way patiently through the mass of detailed evidence accumulated in this report. We cannot, in the space at our disposal, give any outline of the masses of evidence set forth in it. We simply note the most outstanding facts, and refer readers to all the relevant documents.

p. With regard to the phenomena, two points must be noticed here. First, the famous brooch case, detailed above,³ was unmasked by journalists long before Hodgson had anything to do with the question. This affords us, then, undeniable evidence, quite apart from Hodgson, the missionaries and the Coulomb letters, that Madame Blavatsky, on one occasion at least, was guilty of a most impudent piece of fraud, and that she had made the most careful arrangements beforehand to deceive her hosts, an Indian Civilian and his wife. Secondly, the evidence which Hodgson offers to prove that other phenomena were fraudulent is of the same nature as that which exposed the brooch-trick, simple matters of fact, requiring no knowledge of telepathy

¹ *Proceedings*, IX, 397-400. ² *Ib.*, IX, 201-396. ³ Pp. 228-31.

or any form of occultism for their appreciation, but understandable by all. Let readers turn to the *Report*.

q. As to the letters handed over by Madame Coulomb, the handwriting proved them to be Madame Blavatsky's; but it was not merely the handwriting that convinced every one who handled them of their genuineness and made it utterly impossible for the Theosophic leaders to prove them forgeries, but the masses of detailed allusions in them to Indian Civilians, prominent Hindus and other people,¹ details the truth of which no one could deny and no forger could have invented, details which proved absolutely true so far as Hodgson was able to probe them in each case. The instructions for the production of phenomena contained in the letters were proved genuine by the sliding panels and other arrangements found in the Shrine and in Madame Blavatsky's rooms and by many circumstances discovered by Hodgson.

r. In the case of the long philosophic letters purporting to come from the Masters, there is abundance of evidence to prove that most of them were written by Madame Blavatsky. The plagiarism from Mr. Kiddle and the stupid fictitious defence set up afterwards,² taken along with what we know of how *Isis Unveiled* was produced,³ would suggest that the same mind produced both; but there is direct and convincing evidence as well. There are multitudes of errors in the English of these letters, errors in spelling, errors in dividing words at the end of a line, and errors in idiom; and almost every one of them can be paralleled in Madame Blavatsky's acknowledged correspondence. This was one of the forms of evidence which convinced Mr. Hodgson as to their authorship. Here are lists of some of the more noticeable of these errors:

¹ See, for example, the letter reproduced in *Collapse*, pp. 32-34, and the first letter on p. 211 of *Proceedings*, IX.

² Pp. 231-2, above.

³ Pp. 223-5, above.

a. Misspells. your's, her's, fulfill, dispell, thieves, leasure, quarreling, marshaling, alloted, in totto, circumstancial, defense.

b. Faulty division of words at the end of a line. incessan-tly, direc-tly, una-cquainted, fun-ctions, discer-ning, rea-ding, rea-dily, po-werless, atmos-phere, des-pite, corres-pondence, En-GLISHman, En-GLISH, misunders-tood.

c. Faulty idioms. I give you an advice; who, ever since he is here, has been influencing him; we mortals never have and will agree on any subject entirely; one who understands tolerably well English; you felt impatient and believed having reasons to complain; to take care of themselves and of their hereafter the best they know how; — the best she knew how; that the world will not believe in our philosophy unless it is convinced of it proceeding from reliable —; there are those, who, rather than to yield to the evidence of fact; in a direct course or along hundred of side-furrows; their active mentality preventing them to receive clear outside impressions; provided you consent to wait and did not abuse of the situation; Immuta-ble laws cannot arise since they are eternal and uncreated, propelled in the Eternity and that God himself — if such a thing existed — could never have the power of stopping them; so more the pity for him.¹

It must also be noticed here that Mr. Sinnett's books are no faithful representation of the Ms. letters. Most of the above errors, and many other awkward words and phrases, have been corrected; ² and the passage plagiarized from Mr. Kiddle ³ is dropped altogether from the text in the later editions, and no note is appended to tell readers of the omission. This way of dealing with the Mss. is the more serious because Mr. Sinnett says on p. 100: ⁴

The reader must be careful to remember, however, as I now most unequivocally affirm, that I shall in no case *alter* one syllable of the passages actually quoted.

¹ *Proceedings*, IX, 306-7.

² *Ib.*, IX, 305.

³ See p. 231, above.

⁴ *I.e.* of the 1st edition, p. 69 of the 3rd and p. 85 of the 8th edition.

Readers will form their own opinion of Theosophic editorial methods.¹ At a later date, Mr. W. Emmette Coleman, whom we have already mentioned,² brought forward a great mass of evidence of a different kind, which completely confirms Mr. Hodgson's conclusion. Here is his general statement :

Esoteric Buddhism, by A. P. Sinnett, was based upon statements in letters received by Mr. Sinnett and Mr. A. O. Hume, through Madame Blavatsky, purporting to be written by the Mahatmas Koot Hoomi and Morya, — principally the former. Mr. Richard Hodgson has kindly lent me a considerable number of the original letters of the Mahatmas leading to the production of *Esoteric Buddhism*. I find in them overwhelming evidence that all of them were written by Madame Blavatsky, which evidence will be presented in full in my book. In these letters are a number of extracts from Buddhist books, alleged to be translations from the originals by the Mahatmic writers themselves. These letters claim for the adepts a knowledge of Sanskrit, Thibetan, Pali, and Chinese. I have traced to its source each quotation from the Buddhist scriptures in the letters, and they were all copied from current English translations, including even the notes and explanations of the English translators. They were principally copied from Beal's *Catena of Buddhist Scriptures from the Chinese*. In other places where the adept (?) is using his own language in explanation of Buddhistic terms and ideas, I find that his presumed original language was copied nearly word for word from Rhys Davids's *Buddhism*, and other books. I have traced every Buddhistic idea in these letters and in *Esoteric Buddhism*, and every Buddhistic term, such as Devachan, Avitchi, etc., to the books whence Helena Petrovna Blavatsky derived them. Although said to be proficient in the knowledge of Thibetan and Sanskrit, the words and terms in these languages in the letters of the adepts were nearly all used in a ludicrously erroneous and absurd manner. The writer of these letters was an ignoramus in Sanskrit and Thibetan; and the mistakes and blunders in them, in these languages, are in exact

¹ See also what M. Solovyoff reports, *MPI.*, 157.

² See above, pp. 223-4.

accordance with the known ignorance of Madame Blavatsky thereanent. *Esoteric Buddhism*, like all of Madame Blavatsky's works, was based upon wholesale plagiarism and ignorance.¹

There is another fact. Most of these letters were written on a peculiar sort of hand-made rice-paper. After Madame Blavatsky's death, Judge fabricated a large number of Mahātma letters, as we shall see; and they too were written on this peculiar paper. Olcott then told his Theosophic friends that he himself had bought a quantity of this paper in Jummoo, Cashmere, in 1883; that Madame Blavatsky always carried a supply of it about with her; and that Judge must have abstracted some of it from her rooms in London.² M. Solovyoff tells us that, in a drawer of Madame Blavatsky's writing-table in Würzburg, he saw a packet of envelopes of this very paper.³ Hence no serious student will doubt how these letters were composed.

s. Mr. Sinnett published a defence of the occult phenomena in 1886. Then Mrs. Besant attempted to answer Hodgson's *Report* in an article in *Time* in March, 1891. It is astounding to discover that for most of the evidence which Mr. Sinnett and Mrs. Besant bring, they rely on the pamphlet, *Report of the Result of an Investigation*, etc.,⁴ which was chiefly compiled by Dr. Hartmann, Madame Blavatsky's "liar, cunning and vindictive,"⁵ and which, within two months of its publication, was publicly repudiated by the leaders of Theosophy in India,⁶ Dr. Hartmann himself having acknowledged it to be untrustworthy.⁷

Mr. Hodgson overwhelmed these articles with a reply in 1893.⁸ Yet Mrs. Besant published *H. P. Blavatsky and the Masters of the Wisdom* in 1907, using the old repudiated

¹ *MPI.*, 363-4. ² *Isis Very Much Unveiled*, 49; below, p. 268.

³ *MPI.*, 152. ⁴ Above, p. 249. ⁵ Above, p. 248. ⁶ Above, p. 254.

⁷ *Proceedings*, XXIV, 145; above, p. 251.

⁸ *Ib.*, XXIV, 129-159.

source, and repeating certain shameful slanders, without even mentioning Hodgson's replies. Nothing has done so much to shake my confidence in Mrs. Besant's honesty as my study of this dreadful document. All later attempts at defence depend almost entirely on its statements. These books and pamphlets are by far the most unreliable literature that it has ever been my sad fate to have to study. A few samples of their quality are given in the Appendix, p. 447.

12. A new myth was created in 1885. According to the teaching of all the wise and good of the ancient world, the goddess Isis lifted her veil only to those who had lived lives of perfect chastity. Now Madame Blavatsky, according to Theosophic legend, was chosen by the Masters from amongst all modern men and women to receive the ancient wisdom in limitless measure from the highest sources. She unveiled Isis. Hence during the autumn of 1885, while she was at Würzburg, Germany, she began to tell her friends, that, despite her marriage to M. Blavatsky, despite many stories told of her after life, and despite her American marriage,¹ she had through all remained a spotless virgin.² Yet this is the woman whose confessions of gross and long-continued immorality live in her own letters to M. Aksakoff and to M. Solovyoff.³ We are thus driven to acknowledge that she was capable of stupendous hypocrisy in addition to everything else. This myth has to be carefully borne in mind in the study of Theosophic literature written after 1885.

13. 1888 proved one of the most remarkable years in Madame Blavatsky's life. From that year dates the Esoteric School of Theosophy, which since then has been the kernel and the strength of the society. In the same year she published her greatest work, *The Secret Doctrine*. Then also

¹ See above, p. 221.

² *MPI.*, 139-141.

³ See above, pp. 211-3.

Mr. G. R. S. Mead, now editor of *The Quest*, became her private secretary. He retained the position until her death in 1891.

The Esoteric School was created in order to initiate young Theosophists into the practice of occultism. The work was carried on in classes, each under the guidance of a secretary. A good deal of the instruction was taken from Ms. material prepared by Madame Blavatsky and afterwards published in the third volume of *The Secret Doctrine*. Each person initiated had to take two vows: to defend and advance the cause of Theosophy as far as lay in his power; and not to reveal anything taught in the Esoteric School. Each pupil received also a photograph¹ of a (pretended) portrait of one of the Masters and was bid gaze on it fixedly during meditation and try to visualize it in the corners of the room. The occultism of the school at this time seems to have been rather different to what it has become under Mrs. Besant and Mr. Leadbeater.

It was in October, 1888, that *The Secret Doctrine* was published. In the Introduction the authoress assures us that the teaching it contains comes from her Masters, who reside beyond the Himalayas. The truth it contains is now "permitted to see the light after long milleniums of the most profound silence and secrecy." The reason why "the outline of a few fundamental truths from the Secret Doctrine of the Archaic Ages" is now revealed is because European scholars during the nineteenth century have been studying the religions of Egypt, India and other lands and have been publishing to the world utterly false and misleading accounts of these great systems.²

The whole book is founded on what she calls "The Book of Dzyan," which consists of nineteen stanzas, and, according to Madame Blavatsky, is a very ancient work. It is

¹ See above, pp. 169, 170, 179.

² Pp. xxi-xxii.

altogether unknown to European scholars; no copy of it lies in any European library; yet, she asserts, that it exists in one of the mysterious libraries of Tibet, in which are concealed all the sacred and philosophical works that have ever been written, in whatever language or characters, since the art of writing began.¹

The Secret Doctrine is in two volumes, the first, on Cosmogogenesis, being founded on the first seven stanzas of the Book of Dzyan, and the second, on Anthropogenesis, being founded on the remaining twelve. In this work readers will find Theosophy as it is actually taught to-day. The doctrine is much more developed and definite than it is in *Isis Unveiled*. Here the formation of the worlds and the evolution of man are treated in detail. As in the *Isis*, the treatment is unscientific in character throughout.

Analysis has shewn that large portions of the book were compiled in the same way as so much of the *Isis* was built up.² Hundreds of passages were borrowed without acknowledgment from modern books. Mr. Coleman writes as follows:

A specimen of the wholesale plagiarisms in this book appears in Vol. II, pp. 599-603. Nearly the whole of four pages was copied from *Oliver's Pythagorean Triangle*, while only a few lines were credited to that work. Considerable other matter in *Secret Doctrine* was copied, uncredited, from Oliver's work. Donnelly's *Atlantis* was largely plagiarised from. Madame Blavatsky not only borrowed from this writer the general idea of the derivation of Eastern civilization, mythology, etc., from Atlantis; but she coolly appropriated from him a number of the alleged detailed evidences of this derivation, without crediting him therewith. Vol. II, pp. 790-793, contains a number of facts, numbered seriatim, said to prove this Atlantean derivation.

These facts were almost wholly copied from Donnelly's book, ch. IV., where they are also numbered seriatim; but there is no

¹ Pp. xxiii-xxiv.

² Above, pp. 223-5.

intimation in Secret Doctrine that its author was indebted to Donnelly's book for this mass of matter. In addition to those credited, there are 130 passages from Wilson's Vishnu Purana copied uncredited; and there are some 70 passages from Winchell's World Life not credited. From Dowson's Hindu Classical Dictionary, 123 passages were plagiarised. From Decharme's Mythologie de la Grèce Antique, about 60 passages were plagiarised; from *Myer's Qabbala*, 34. These are some of the other books plagiarised from: Kenealy's Book of God, Faber's Cabiri, Wake's Great Pyramid, Gould's Mythical Monsters, Joly's Man before Metals, Stallo's Modern Physics, Massey's Natural Genesis, Mackey's Mythological Astronomy, Schmidt's Descent and Darwinism, Quatrefage's Human Species, Laing's Modern Science and Modern Thought, Mather's Cabbala Unveiled, Maspéro's Musée de Boulaq, Ragon's Maçonnerie Occulte, Lefevre's Philosophy, and Buchner's Force and Matter.

The Book of Dzyan was the work of Madame Blavatsky — a compilation, in her own language, from a variety of sources, embracing the general principles of the doctrines and dogmas taught in the Secret Doctrine. I find in this "oldest book in the world" statements copied from nineteenth century books, and in the usual blundering manner of Madame Blavatsky. Letters and other writings of the adepts are found in the Secret Doctrine. In these Mahatmic productions I have traced various plagiarised passages from Wilson's Vishnu Purana and Winchell's World Life, — of like character to those in Madame Blavatsky's acknowledged writings. Detailed proofs of this will be given in my book. I have also traced the source whence she derived the word Dzyan.¹

It is greatly to be regretted that Coleman's promised book never appeared. The evidence he had accumulated would have been interesting in the extreme. His library was destroyed in the fire which followed the great earthquake in San Francisco in 1906; and he died in 1909. The third edition of *The Secret Doctrine*, edited and published in London in 1897, gives references to a considerable proportion of the

¹ *MPI.*, pp. 358-9.

borrowed passages which Coleman speaks of; so that there is no question about them. But Theosophists who have studied the work carefully, while willing to acknowledge the presence of these recognized quotations, believe that the book of Dzyan and certain other passages cannot be traced to modern works. Since Mr. Coleman did not publish his studies, the question is still undecided.

14. Madame Blavatsky¹ died at the age of sixty on the 8th of May, 1891.

It may be well to introduce here a pen-and-ink portrait of her which appeared recently:

She was playing her usual game of "Patience" when I came upon her first of all one evening. She looked up and arrested your attention by the steady gaze of her large, pale blue eyes. Most people regarded them as the redeeming feature of an otherwise excessively plain face. They were set to advantage in a somewhat wide angle on either side of what did duty for a nose but which she playfully described as "no nose at all, but a button." Her mouth was wide with lips that were close-set, thin, and mobile, and when she laughed she opened her mouth and eyes wide with the abandon of a child. I have never seen a woman of mature years laugh with such child-like naturalness as she. Her complexion may be described as coffee-coloured, a yellowish brown, and the face had no square inch that was not scored by a thousand wrinkles. This and the whites of her eyes, which were not white at all but yellow, gave one the impression of "liver" or the tropics, and either would have been a safe guess. The size and shape of her head was very remarkable. No student of phrenology would convict her of material tendencies or attribute to her anything but a highly spiritual and intellectual nature, for the vault of the head from the bore of the ear upwards was exceptionally high, as was also the forward development, and these were sustained by an adequately broad base, while the lateral development was comparatively insignificant. Her iron-grey crinkly hair ran in fascinating little ripples to where it was gathered in the most

¹ See her portrait, Plate IX, facing p. 195.

unconventional of knots on the nape of the neck, as if it were something to be got out of the way merely, and stuck through with a broad comb. The inevitable cigarette called immediate attention to her hands. They were really beautiful hands, but uncanny; so like a child's with their dimples and soft cushions; and every phalange of her lithe, tapering fingers was double-jointed. They seemed to be endowed with a life of their own. They were seldom still for more than a few seconds together. Later on she gave some sort of reason for this. Holding her hands perfectly still over a table, the palms curved so as to form a sort of inverted cup, she remained so for perhaps two minutes or more, when suddenly there was a loud explosion like the crack of a rifle and one expected to see that the table itself had split from end to end.¹

She was a woman of very unusual powers. Her personality was potent and attractive in a very high degree. She had great gifts as a story-teller and conversationalist. She was greatly loved by her friends, and was most affectionate to them in turn. She drew people towards her, and won their confidence, influencing every one who came within her radius so deeply that people found it hard to escape from her control. She had the genius to will and to rule. She was what Theosophists call "a psychic" of a very high order. This word denotes those little-understood sympathies and faculties which make the spiritualistic medium, the telepathist, the thought-reader, the clairvoyant, the hypnotist. Probably some of the lesser phenomena which she exhibited were quite real. She was also a woman of great energy and industry; for, in spite of frequent illness and racking pain, she worked almost incessantly for many years. She had the shaping gift of imagination, which, combined with a natural power of direct and telling expression, enabled her to produce books which have captivated thousands.

In character she was an extraordinary mixture. She was

¹ W. R. Gorn Old in the *Occult Review* of March, 1914.

bountifully generous to her friends and to every one in need. She was devoted to her family and her country. She must have had sterling qualities to inspire friends as she did. Yet Colonel Olcott tells us that she was not loyal to her friends, that she used them all as pawns;¹ and another unimpeachable witness says, "You never knew when you had her." We have already seen how far she was from being truthful; and all who knew her say she was extremely unguarded with her tongue, and also with her pen.² She was liable to outbursts of furious rage, when her great face became livid with passion and almost demonic in expression.³ She would then execrate every one in appalling language, and make the most outrageous statements which were not meant to be taken seriously.⁴ She expected those who loved her to do for her whatever she asked: conscience had no rights as compared with friendship.⁵ Seen against this background of elemental character, the colossal frauds and pretences of her Theosophic career seem a little more credible than they do at first sight.

The truth is, she is best described as a Bohemian. She was always smoking,⁶ was loose in speech and in manner, took her freedom in everything.⁷ She was as far as possible from being a saint.⁸ She hated all conventions, and enjoyed nothing so much as tilting at them and breaking through them. Indeed, from her own point of view, the whole propaganda was but a half-serious, half-comic attack on the solemn sobrieties and stupidities of modern science and

¹ ODL., I, 463.

² MPI., 71. This accounts in some degree for the recklessness with which she wrote masses of compromising material to Madame Coulomb. Most of her letters show this characteristic.

³ Sinnett, *Incidents*, 18, 19; ODL., I, 463; MPI., 152. ⁴ ODL., I, 463.

⁵ MPI., 59.

⁶ ODL., I, 449-453.

⁷ *Ib.*, 440-462.

⁸ Cf. her own words to M. Solovyoff, "I am by no means a saint; I am far from being one, little father." MPI., 19.

the strait-laced ideas of Christianity. Her volcanic temperament and surging senses rebelled against all such things. Yet she was serious also. She saw that there was much more in ancient occultism and magic than the middle nineteenth century could believe, and she was convinced that Hinduism and Buddhism deserved better treatment than they had received. Despite all that she wrote about Christianity, the Orthodox Greek Church still touched her heart.

LITERATURE. — N.B. Books marked with an asterisk to be used with extreme caution. — HISTORY: * *Old Diary Leaves*, by H. S. Olcott, New York, Putnam's Sons, four vols., 1895, 1900, 1904, 1906, 6s. net each. * *Incidents in the Life of Madame Blavatsky*, by A. P. Sinnett, London, Redway, 1886, new edition, T. P. S. 1913. *A Modern Priestess of Isis*, by V. S. Solovyoff, translated by Walter Leaf, London, Longmans, 1895, out of print. TEACHING AND PHENOMENA: * *The Occult World*, by A. P. Sinnett, London, Trübner, 1881. * *Esoteric Buddhism*, by A. P. Sinnett, London, Trübner, 1883. THE MADRAS EXPOSURE: *The Collapse of Koot Hoomi*, Madras, C. L. S. I., 1904, as. 4. *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, IX, pp. 201-400, London, Trübner, 1885, 4s. 6d.; XXIV, 129-159, London, Trübner, 1893, 3s. 6d. Also Solovyoff's *Modern Priestess of Isis*. For THEOSOPHIC DEFENCES, see Appendix. MADAME BLAVATSKY'S WORKS: *Isis Unveiled*, New York, Bouton, London, Quaritch, 1877, 2 vols. (Point Loma Edition, 18 Bartlett's Buildings, London, E. C., 17s.) *The Secret Doctrine*, London, T. P. S., 1888, 2 vols. (A reprint of this edition, Point Loma, 1909, 42s.) Third volume, London, T. P. S., 1897. Third edition revised and annotated, London, T. P. S., 3 vols. 50s.

Mrs. Besant

In 1888 Mr. W. T. Stead, editor of *The Review of Reviews*, handed Mrs. Besant a copy of *The Secret Doctrine* to review; and that book made her a follower of Madame Blavatsky. She passed at one leap from Atheism to Theosophy; and, since the death of the foundress, she has been by far the most potent personality within the society.

From the beginning Olcott had been President and Judge Vice-President, while Madame Blavatsky herself had only held the position of Corresponding Secretary. When she died, Judge cabled from America to the London office, "Do nothing till I come." Within a few days after his arrival in London, he produced two messages which he declared had been sent by the Master Morya, Madame Blavatsky's own special monitor. Mrs. Besant accepted the missives as genuine, and publicly proclaimed in a great meeting in London that there could be no doubt about the existence of the Mahātmās, as communications had been received from them since the death of Madame Blavatsky. These messages continued to arrive. Mr. Judge's wisdom and the high place which he ought to have in the Society was their constant burden. Mrs. Besant was convinced of their genuineness; Olcott was in India; and in consequence Judge rose to great prominence in the movement. As a result of some of these wonderful epistles Olcott was so cowed that he actually resigned his position as President of the Society early in 1892. Shortly afterwards he withdrew his resignation, but at first without effect; for at the Annual Convention of 1892 Judge was elected President for life. This election, however, does not appear to have been ratified. A little later Mrs. Besant went to India. When all the documents were laid before Olcott, it became clear to him that Judge had forged them, and that he had abstracted from Madame Blavatsky's rooms in London the hand-made rice-paper¹ on which they were written and the seal with which most of them were sealed. Mrs. Besant examined all the evidence and recognized Judge's guilt. Olcott then wrote to Judge on the 12th of February, 1894, giving him the option of (a) retiring from all the offices he held in the Theo-

¹ It was the same paper as the Koot Hoomi letters were written on. See above, p. 259.

sophical Society, and leaving Olcott to make a general public explanation or (b) having a Judicial Committee convened and the whole of the proceedings made public. Judge refused to resign. It was therefore decided that all the documents should be placed in Mrs. Besant's hands, that she should preside over a judicial inquiry to be held at the Annual Convention in London in July, 1894, and that all the evidence should be published. This latter pledge was given in order to satisfy Indian Theosophists, who were insistent that the fraud should be exposed.

But, when the Judicial Committee met, Olcott and Judge being present as well as Mrs. Besant, a most extraordinary thing happened. After most serious deliberation, the Committee came to the conclusion that it was contrary to Theosophic principles to decide whether Judge was guilty or not. The trial was impossible! It was also agreed that the evidence which had been gathered should not be published. Clearly, the inner history of this most shameful transaction is that Judge, who knew all that had happened in Madras in 1884 and much else, threatened that, if he were exposed, he would expose everybody, but agreed to continue to work with the Colonel and Mrs. Besant on condition that the affair should be hushed up in such a way that his character should not suffer. All this the leaders endeavoured to carry out.

But many Theosophists felt that such immorality must not be condoned and concealed. One of the officials, Mr. W. R. Gorn Old, therefore urged the leaders at the London headquarters to have the evidence published. He was told that that was impossible: *Mrs. Besant had burned all the documents!* Like Judge in Madras,¹ she had found fire a most convenient means for getting rid of inconvenient evidence. But she did not know that, before the incrimi-

¹ See above, pp. 241-2.

nating documents were handed over to her in India, facsimile copies of all had been taken by Mr. Old. Even when he made this fact known at headquarters, and offered to hand the copies over for publication, the leaders refused to act. Then, Mr. Old, disgusted beyond measure because the officials would not carry out the promise made in India, that all the evidence should be published, and were determined as far as possible to hide the fraud, resigned his position and left the society. He then handed over the facsimiles of the documents to his friend, Mr. Edmund Garrett; and the whole story was published in *The Westminster Gazette*, October 29–November 8, 1894. It was thereafter republished in book form under the title *Isis Very Much Unveiled*. For his action Mr. Old was vehemently attacked by Theosophists as a traitor and a pledge-breaker; but, if Mrs. Besant and Colonel Olcott were justified in promising to publish all the evidence, how did Mr. Old do wrong in doing what they had promised to do? It was they who broke their pledges. He was also charged with having done it from sordid motives. As a matter of fact, through resignation of his offices in the Society, he lost a comfortable income, and he refused the honorarium of £80 offered him by the editor of *The Westminster Gazette* for his services.

It was probably this most unexpected publication of the evidence, blazoning his forgery to all the world, that drove Judge to the next step. He had agreed to work along with Olcott and Mrs. Besant; but, now that the evidence, which they had gathered against him, and which they could not repudiate, had been published, the only course open to him was to deny the facts and pose as a martyr. This he did. He broke away from the main Theosophical Society, carrying with him a majority of American Theosophists. These he formed into the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society, and was elected their President for life. He lived,

however, only eleven months longer. His place was taken by Mrs. Katherine Tingley. The headquarters of this rival organization are at Point Loma, California.

Neither Mrs. Besant nor Colonel Olcott ever attempted to deny any of the statements made in *The Westminster Gazette*. The whole fabric of gross and shameful fraud and concealment stands undeniable.

Since 1893 Mrs. Besant has spent most of her time in India, and has been very successful in building up Theosophy there. Her activity has run in the main along four lines. She has lectured a great deal in every part of India, making the defence and exposition of Hinduism her chief theme. Secondly, she has done a great deal for the education of Hindus. Hindus had established many colleges between 1879 and 1898; but, like Government colleges, they gave no religious instruction. The Central Hindu College, which she founded in Benares in 1898, is modelled on a missionary college, Hinduism taking the place of Christianity. From that centre she strove to spread this type of education throughout the Hindu community, founding schools in many places for both boys and girls. Thirdly, she has proved a most prolific and most effective writer. Tens of thousands of her books have been sold in many other lands as well as India. Lastly, she has given a good deal of time to occultism; but that we shall deal with later.

Mr. C. W. Leadbeater, who had been a curate of the Church of England, became a Theosophist in 1884, and since that time, with the exception of a break of some four years, he has been one of the officials of the society. He has worked in India, Ceylon, America and England. He is a very able writer.

He has also become notorious because of his occult investigations. We have seen that a secret society for the

practice of occultism was formed within the Theosophic Society by Madame Blavatsky in 1888. Since her death Mrs. Besant and Mr. Leadbeater have been the leaders of the Esoteric School. They have re-organized the School, introduced a hierarchy of gurus and systematized the instruction, keeping certain very definite ends in view. They have also conducted a long series of occult investigations themselves, the results of which have been published from time to time. One of their chief methods is to read what they call the Etheric Record of past events,¹ and thereby reconstruct portions of ancient history.

Mr. Leadbeater on one occasion, on consulting the record, came to the startling conclusions, that Jesus and Christ were two distinct persons; that both were men, neither being the Logos, or the Son of God; that Jesus was born in 105 B.C.; that Christ was the great Master; that Jesus, wise and devoted though he was, merely yielded up his body for Christ to use; that the twelve Apostles never lived; and that there is scarcely a scrap of historical matter in the Gospels. The teaching now is that one ego was incarnated at a very early date as Hermes, again as Zoroaster, then as Orpheus, finally as Gautama the Buddha. Another ego was Christ. He used the body of Jesus as his vehicle. Jesus was born in 105 B.C., and was again incarnated as Apollonius of Tyana.

Much of this Mrs. Besant published in her book, *Esoteric Christianity*. It is also embodied in Mr. Leadbeater's own work, *The Christian Creed*, published in 1904. In 1903 Mr. G. R. S. Mead published *Did Jesus Live 100 B.C.?*, an attempt to collect and estimate all the evidence contained in Talmudic and Christian sources, bearing on the time when Jesus lived. He does not come to any decision on the main question.

¹ See below, p. 278.

5. In 1905 certain very serious charges were brought against Mr. Leadbeater. He was then in England, and held the office of Presidential Delegate in the British section of the society. It was said that he had given immoral teaching to boys in America, and had even gone the length of immoral acts. The leaders of the American Section of the society were greatly disturbed over the matter, and wished to have him expelled from the society. Since they did not possess this power themselves, it was decided that they should send a Commissioner to London to lay the matter before Colonel Olcott, the President-founder. Colonel Olcott called a special meeting, consisting of the Executive Committee of the British Section, the Commissioner from America, and a representative from France. The whole matter was carefully discussed and Mr. Leadbeater was examined. He confessed frankly enough to the charge of having given a number of boys the teaching complained of; and, under great pressure, he acknowledged that he might have been guilty also of some of the acts complained of. The printed minutes, legally authenticated, lie before me, as I write; so that there can be no question as to the absolute accuracy of these statements. Finally, Mr. Leadbeater's resignation was accepted, and he dropped out of the society. Mrs. Besant declared that he would not be restored until he repudiated his opinions on these matters.

6. Colonel Olcott died early in 1907, and Mrs. Besant became President of the Theosophic Society.

7. In January, 1909, Mrs. Besant announced in the *Theosophist* that the General Council had decided to allow Mr. Leadbeater to return to the society. Since then he has resided at the headquarters in Madras. He had not repudiated his teaching, nor has he yet done so. About the same time a defence of his teaching, written by an American Theosophist named Van Hoek, was circulated

in the Society. Two of the English leaders, backed by many members, appealed to the General Council to withdraw this document, but they refused. The result was that, under the leadership of Mr. G. R. S. Mead, a body of some 700 British Theosophists, including nearly all the cultured and influential members in the country, and a number in other lands, left the society.

8. Since the moment when Mr. Leadbeater settled at headquarters, occultism has come to the front, and is now the main activity of the society. Nor is that all. Mr. Leadbeater had already published most amazing accounts of what, as he asserted, he had seen in clairvoyance. But these were readings of the records of the past; while prophecy is now held to be one of the chief functions of occultism. We are told that the world is just about to enter on a new era of history. A great World-teacher will very soon enter upon his work. The human being whose body is to be the physical vehicle for the ego of this World-teacher is already in the Theosophical Society, and is to be trained for his task by Mrs. Besant and Mr. Leadbeater. Mrs. Besant will soon be seen to be one of the greatest rulers of the world of gods and men. Even those who stand nearest to her scarcely realize how great she is, and will be. Mrs. Besant, in turn, affirms that Mr. Leadbeater is a most exalted being, on the very threshold of divinity. In consequence, both these leaders and the Madras boy who is to be the vehicle of the coming Teacher are adored and praised by lowly bending groups of Theosophic initiates.

It was only gradually that all this was made public. Clearly, however, most careful preparation had been made for the supreme announcement. The new policy is meant to be a master-stroke to capture at once Christianity, Buddhism and Hinduism for the Theosophical Society. In England the coming one was called Christ, while in India

and Ceylon he was called the Bodhisattva or Maitreya. He is said to be the ego which used the body of Jesus and was then called Christ. A new world-wide organization was created to prepare people for the Epiphany. At first it was called the Order of the Rising Sun, but three months later¹ was changed to the Order of the Star in the East. A most urgent propaganda was launched among the students of the Hindu College, Benares, in all the Theosophic lodges of the world, and among Christian people in England and elsewhere.

One of the most extraordinary accompaniments of this startling movement has been the publication of a book, written by Mrs. Besant and Mr. Leadbeater in collaboration, and called *Man: Whence, How and Whither*. This work is essentially a vast mythology, stretching away back some thirty thousand years. It is the pretended record of the repeated incarnations of the small group of people at present resident at the Theosophic headquarters at Adyar, Madras; and what we are asked to believe is that we have in the history represented in this record the preparation for the great events that will take place, when the great World-teacher makes his appearance. For example, we are told that in 13,500 B.C. "Jesus" was the wife of an emperor of southern India, while in 12,800 B.C. he was the brother of Madame Marie-Louise Kirby, and the father of Mrs. S. Maude Sharpe (General Secretary of the English Section), of Julius Cæsar, and of T. Subba Rao, the Teshu Lama being at that time his daughter.²

9. The new propaganda with its outrageous statements and limitless claims has led to considerable upheavals within Theosophy. The persistent preaching of the new doctrine

¹ April, 1911.

² For some account of the book see *Mrs. Besant and the Present Crisis in the Theosophical Society*, by Eugène Lévy.

to the students of the Hindu College, Benares, and the formation of numerous societies and classes for the study of its literature and other such purposes, enraged the mass of solid Hindus connected with the College. They protested seriously for some time, but got no redress. Finally, they were able to make things so hot for Mrs. Besant's personal followers on the teaching staff, that they resigned in a body and left. Mrs. Besant has thus lost nearly all her influence in the citadel of Hinduism.

There were also many members of the Society in India who resigned, probably as many as 500; but she still retains her hold over the great bulk of the Indian membership. A few seceded in England and in America. On account of a sharp disagreement between Mrs. Besant and Herr Steiner, the German leader, all the lodges in Germany, consisting of 2400 members, and several in Switzerland, were driven out of the movement. Germany has thus been forced to form a fresh organization. The new name is the Anthroposophical Society.

The third result has been a crop of lawsuits in Madras. The chief case arose from the fact that a Madrasi Brāhman, named G. Nārāyaṇa Aiyer, handed over his two sons to Mrs. Besant to be educated. The elder of these boys, J. Krishṇamurti, is called *Alcyone* in Mr. Leadbeater's occult investigations; and he is said to have been chosen as the vehicle of the coming Christ. Mrs. Besant placed the boys under Mr. Leadbeater's care in the matter of their studies. The father objected on the ground that Mr. Leadbeater is an immoral man.¹ Mrs. Besant consented to keep the boys apart from Mr. Leadbeater, but put them again under his care, and finally refused to separate them from him. The father then raised an action against her in the Madras courts, and won his case.² Mrs. Besant ap-

¹ See p. 273, above.

² See *The Alcyone Case*.

pealed, but lost again. She then appealed to the Privy Council in England; and the original case has been upset on a technical point.¹ Mrs. Besant brought lawsuits for defamation of character against two citizens of Madras, but both were dismissed. In the course of the four trials in Madras a great deal of very unfavourable evidence was produced against Leadbeater and Mrs. Besant. The following is an extract from the Judgment in the first case:

Mr. Leadbeater admitted in his evidence that he has held, and even now holds, opinions which I need only describe as certainly immoral and such as to unfit him to be the tutor of the boys, and, taken in conjunction with his professed power to detect the approach of impure thoughts, render him a highly dangerous associate for children.²

In one case the judge declared that Mrs. Besant had defended Leadbeater's immoral teaching. In another the judge said Mrs. Besant had not shewn common honesty in her dealings with the father of the boys.

10. The Theosophic cause has suffered so seriously in India through the new propaganda and these lawsuits that Mrs. Besant has been making frantic efforts during the last nine months to achieve a new position by means of new activities. The first of these is a Theosophic movement in favour of social reform. This is a very noticeable change; for, until now, the Society has been reactionary on all social questions with the exception of early marriage, and Mrs. Besant has published long, elaborate defences of many superstitious observances in Hinduism connected with caste and the family. Hindus are being enrolled for the purpose of advancing social reform; and each stalwart appends his name to seven pledges.³

¹ *The Times, Weekly Edition*, May 8, 1914.

² *The Alcyon Case*, p. 260.

³ *ISR.*, XXIV, 43.

Another proposal has been to form a *Young Men's Indian Association*, confessedly in imitation of the Young Men's Christian Association, and for the purpose of saving young men from Christian influence. The original idea was to make it a Hindu organization of a Theosophic type, but several of the Madras leaders refused to have anything to do with an organization that touched religion; and, in consequence, the proposal is now a purely secular one. There have been great difficulties in getting the project launched. When I was last in Madras,¹ all that had been done was to arrange for the opening of a small hostel, containing a reading room, but without a Superintendent.

11. We give next a very brief outline of the teaching given by Theosophists. Our sketch is drawn from Mr. C. W. Leadbeater's *Textbook of Theosophy*, and consists largely of quotations from it. We begin with a couple of sentences, descriptive of 'the Etheric Record,' which, we fancy, are necessary as a sort of preface to the whole:

Theosophy has much to tell us of the past history of man — of how in the course of evolution he has come to be what he now is. This also is a matter of observation, because of the fact that there exists an indelible record of all that has taken place — a sort of memory of Nature — by examining which the scenes of earlier evolution may be made to pass before the eyes of the investigator as though they were happening at this moment.

We can now plunge into the major principles of the system:

Of the Absolute, the Infinite, the All-embracing, we can at our present stage know nothing, except that It is; we can say nothing that is not a limitation, and therefore inaccurate.

In It are innumerable universes; in each universe countless solar systems. Each solar system is the expression of a mighty Being, whom we call the LOGOS, the Word of God, the Solar Deity. He is to it all that men mean by God.

¹ In March, 1914.

Out of Himself He has called this mighty system into being. We who are in it are evolving fragments of His life, Sparks of His divine Fire; from Him we all have come; into Him we shall all return.

Next below this Solar Deity, yet also in some mysterious manner part of Him, come His seven Ministers, sometimes called the Planetary Spirits.

Under Them in turn come vast hosts or orders of spiritual Beings, whom we call Angels or Devas.

Here in our world there is a great Official who represents the Solar Deity, and is in absolute control of all the evolution that takes place upon this planet. We may imagine Him as the true KING of this world, and under Him are ministers in charge of different departments. One of these departments is concerned with the evolution of the different races of humanity, so that for each great race there is a Head who founds it, differentiates it from all others, and watches over its development. Another department is that of religion and education, and it is from this that all the greatest teachers of history have come — that all religions have been sent forth. The great Official at the head of this department either comes Himself or sends one of His pupils to found a new religion when He decides that one is needed.

Therefore all religions, at the time of their first presentation to the world, have contained a definite statement of the Truth, and in its fundamentals this Truth has been always the same.

It is foolish for men to wrangle over the question of the superiority of one teacher or one form of teaching to another, for the teacher is always one sent by the Great Brotherhood of Adepts, and in all its important points, in its ethical and moral principles, the teaching has always been the same.

In the earlier stages of the development of humanity, the great Officials of the Hierarchy are provided from outside, from other and more highly evolved parts of the system, but as soon as men can be trained to the necessary level of power and wisdom, these offices are held by them. In order to be fit to hold such

an office a man must raise himself to a very high level, and must become what is called an Adept.

A large number of men have attained the Adept level . . . but always some of them remain within touch of our earth as members of this Hierarchy which has in charge the administration of the affairs of our world and of the spiritual evolution of our humanity.

This august body is often called the Great White Brotherhood.

A few of these great Adepts, who are thus working for the good of the world, are willing to take as apprentices those who have resolved to devote themselves utterly to the service of mankind; such Adepts are called Masters.

One of these apprentices was Helena Petrovna Blavatsky.

To attain the honour of being accepted as an apprentice of one of the Masters of the Wisdom is the object set before himself by every earnest Theosophical student. But it means a determined effort. There have always been men who were willing to make the necessary effort, and therefore there have always been men who knew. The knowledge is so transcendent that when a man grasps it fully he becomes more than man, and he passes beyond our ken.

Mr. Leadbeater next gives a chapter describing certain intricate chemical processes whereby a solar system is said to be formed from "the æther of space." Our own globe is a fair sample of all the planets; and it is said to be really seven interpenetrating worlds; the physical earth and six others which are beyond the ken of our ordinary senses but are visible to the eye of the clairvoyant or occultist, when far enough advanced. These six suprasensual worlds do not stand apart from the physical earth, but interpenetrate it at every point, occupying the same space which it occupies but also stretching far beyond it. The seven worlds are named in descending order, Divine, Monadic, Spiritual, Intuitional, Mental, Emotional (or Astral), Physical.

Each of these worlds has its inhabitants. The evolution of life is described in another chapter.

Man, according to Theosophy, is in essence a Spark of the divine Fire, belonging to the Monadic world mentioned above, and is called a Monad. For the purposes of human evolution the Monad manifests itself in lower worlds. It manifests itself in three aspects in the Spiritual, Intuitional and higher Mental worlds. This is the Theosophic soul, a Monad, a trinity, a self. This Monad is immortal, is born and dies many times, but is in no way affected by birth or death. Before birth he draws round him veils from the lower mental and astral worlds, and only then obtains his physical body. During life man in his bodies makes progress, slow or rapid: and according to his behaviour is his experience. As to death and the hereafter we read:

Death is the laying aside of the physical body: but it makes no more difference to the ego than does the laying aside of an overcoat to the physical man. Having put off his physical body, the ego continues to live in his astral body until the force has become exhausted which has been generated by such emotions and passions as he has allowed himself to feel during earth-life. When that has happened, the second death takes place; the astral body also falls away from him, and he finds himself living in the mental body and in the lower mental world. In that condition he remains until the thought-forces generated during his physical and astral lives have worn themselves out; then he drops the third vehicle in its turn and remains once more an ego in his own world, inhabiting his causal body.

Man makes for himself his own purgatory and heaven, and these are not places, but states of consciousness. Hell does not exist; it is only a figment of the theological imagination; but a man who lives foolishly may make for himself a very unpleasant and long-enduring purgatory. Neither purgatory nor heaven can ever be eternal, for a finite cause cannot produce an infinite result.

After life for a shorter or longer time in the higher worlds the man is reborn, in order to make more progress. According to Theosophy, a man can never be born an animal. Nor is any final failure possible :

This is a school in which no pupil ever fails; every one must go on to the end.

There is one further point which it is necessary to express here. As all religions are held to be in reality the same, Theosophy is said to place us at the standpoint where this unity becomes visible; and its function, we are told, is to strengthen every religion and to antagonize none.

12. But hitherto we have said nothing about that which is the core of the whole, namely occultism. We have seen that Madame Blavatsky started a secret society within the Society for the practical study of occultism in 1888.¹ Since then this Esoteric School has contained all the most convinced Theosophists. It seems clear, that under Mrs. Besant and Mr. Leadbeater, the organization has been greatly developed and the work of the school transformed. At present there is within the school an inner group called the Esoteric Section, and within that again a smaller group who have given special pledges to Mrs. Besant.² The chief investigations are carried on at headquarters in Madras by Mr. Leadbeater and Mrs. Besant: but the members of the school are found all over the world; and in most of the lodges classes are held in which young members receive their earliest lessons.

As members are bound by a pledge not to divulge what goes on in the school, it is extremely difficult for an outsider to realize what the aims, the methods and the results of Theosophic Occultism are. Even those who have broken

¹ P. 261, above.

² See her portrait, Plate IX, facing p. 195.

absolutely with Theosophy feel they are still bound by the old pledges and will not speak out. Several things, however, may be said :

A. There is a regular hierarchy of gurus (*i.e.* teachers). They teach forms of meditation which are meant to still the mind and to make it receptive, receptive not only to teaching but to impressions on the sub-conscious plane. There are secret manuals which are put into the hands of junior members, and they are taught to practise this meditative discipline privately. The gurus use telepathic impressions and hypnotic suggestions to bring the minds of their disciples under their control. Everything that is taught must be accepted on the authority of the teacher : nothing can be tested. When these processes have been continued for some time, the mind becomes almost paralyzed, and is ready to receive and believe anything that comes through the teacher, and to disbelieve everything adverse.

The pupil as he advances meets the leaders in the esoteric section of his lodge.

B. The word which Leadbeater uses to describe his methods of research is Clairvoyance ; but from many hints in the literature, and from words which have dropped from Theosophists in conversation I am convinced that hypnotic methods are much used.

C. We are frankly told that clairvoyant powers have no connection with intelligence, spirituality or purity of character :

A constantly growing minority, however, of fairly intelligent people believe clairvoyance to be a fact, and regard it as a perfectly natural power, which will become universal in the course of evolution. They do not regard it as a miraculous gift, nor as an outgrowth from high spirituality, lofty intelligence, or purity of character. . . . They know that it is a power latent in all men, and that it can be developed by anyone who is able and

willing to pay the price demanded for its forcing, ahead of the general evolution.¹

D. Results. In the process of working through masses of Theosophic literature and interviewing scores of individuals who have been connected with Theosophy I have become convinced that the following results arise from occultism :

i. On pupils the result is their complete subjugation to their gurus² and through their gurus to the leaders of the Theosophical Society. Scarcely anything is read except Theosophic literature ; and the mind becomes incapable of believing that the guru or the leader can be wrong. We may realize how eager the leaders are to obtain this result from the fact that the members of the innermost group of all have each taken a personal pledge to Mrs. Besant, a pledge of "absolute obedience without cavil or delay." Apart from this result on the mind, it would be hard to understand how, in spite of the frequent exposures of the leaders, the mass of Theosophists continue their adhesion without a break.

ii. It is well known that the continued practice of spiritualism drives all mediums to fraud. However honest they may be, however real the bulk of the phenomena appearing through them may be, a moment comes when reality fails them, and the temptation to pretend and to deceive is overwhelming. The same danger haunts the Theosophic leaders. The pursuit of occultism necessarily involves them in a constant straining after results and the consequent acceptance of illusions. They live in a world half-true, half-false.

¹ *Man: Whence, How, and Whither*, quoted in Lévy, 110.

² Madame Blavatsky used the word "psychologize" for this process. In a letter written from America to a Hindu in Bombay, she called Olcott "a psychologized baby" (*Proceedings*, IX, 311); and writing of Bavaji to M. Solovyoff in 1886, she says, "He is an obedient and clever boy ! He is an obedient weapon in my hands ! 'Je l'ai psychologisé.'" (*MPI.*, 184.)

Necessarily, the mind ceases to distinguish sharply between truth and falsehood. A clear case from Mrs. Besant's own life may be cited here. One evening in a lecture in London she declared, to the amazement of the whole audience, that Madame Blavatsky had been again incarnated. After the lecture her own friends asked her how she had come to say such a thing. She replied, "O, I just felt like it." She had not a particle of evidence. Probably she did not realize that she was romancing and misleading her audience. Another instance is her pamphlet in defence of Madame Blavatsky.¹ Similarly, the Theosophists felt sure they had an irrefragable case until Hodgson cross-examined them: they had not realized in the slightest their own extreme inaccuracy. Necessarily, the blurring of the distinction between truth and falsehood weakens the conscience in other directions also. This sheds a little more light on the Theosophic mind. Madame Blavatsky's frauds, Olcott's inaccuracy and lies,² Judge's shrine-burning³ and forgeries,⁴ Sinnett's editorial achievements,⁵ Leadbeater's immoralities,⁶ and Mrs. Besant's behaviour in the Judge case,⁷ all are made a little more intelligible. There was loose morality in some of these cases to begin with; but occultism and its attendant phenomena did the rest.

13. The enslaving of the minds of the members, however, will not stand as a full explanation of the survival of the system. If in spite of exposures which would destroy almost any society, members still remain true to Theosophy, it is clear that it must meet certain needs of our day which otherwise do not find satisfaction. It will therefore be worth while to attempt to discover what its chief attractions are.

¹ Appendix, p. 447. ² *Proceedings*, IX, 237-239. ³ Pp. 241-2, above.

⁴ See above, pp. 268-9.

⁵ Pp. 232, 257, above, and *MPI.*, 157.

⁶ P. 273, above.

⁷ Pp. 268-70, above.

A. One of the most outstanding features of the nineteenth century was the rise of accurate knowledge of the religions of the world. The religions of antiquity, especially of Egypt, Babylonia, Assyria, Persia, India and China, have been explored by a great company of scholarly Orientalists. The faiths of the ruder peoples have been described by an army of missionaries, travellers, traders and anthropologists. The whole has been built up into a new and most imposing science, the science of religions. Further, during the last half-century our knowledge of the human mind, and especially of its more abnormal activities, has grown very rapidly. In consequence, psychological interests and methods of study hold a great place in modern thought.

The thinking men of our time are vividly conscious of these masses of fresh knowledge. Even if they do not care to study psychology and the religions in detail, they want to know what practical attitude a reasonable man ought to take towards the religions, and also towards telepathy, hypnotism, clairvoyance and such like. The Church of Christ thus far has failed to give clear expression to her mind on these matters. Yet, it is high time she should do so, for guidance is wanted; and if the Church is not able to suggest a reasonable attitude, thinking men will follow the guidance of other schools of thought.

Now the Theosophical Society is first of all sympathetic to all religions. It has assumed a generous attitude, the attitude of appreciation and friendliness. Nor is that all. The society has its text-books and classes, its teachers and lecturers, and invites men and women to come and study, to come and enjoy the rich feast which Oriental religions offer to the student. The Christian doctrine of the brotherhood of men is also taught: Theosophists are bid receive men of all religions as brothers. The bulk of the work they have done

in the exposition of religions is unscientific and seriously misleading. They have usually filled men's heads with froth instead of knowledge. Yet the fact remains that they have attempted to do in a wrong way the work the Church of Christ ought to have done in the right way. This is unquestionably the first attraction which Theosophy presents to the outsider; and it is the attraction which has drawn to it the great majority of the more intellectual men who at one time or another have belonged to it.

B. The second attraction is the promise of occult knowledge and secret power. A very small number of really notable men, *e.g.* Sir William Crookes and M. V. S. Solovyoff, the Russian man of letters, were attracted to Madame Blavatsky by this side of her work, although they soon discovered the hollowness of her pretences.¹ But it is this aspect of the system also which draws the mass of the devoted Theosophists of the West. The sheer fascination of secrecy lays hold of them, the hope of exclusive knowledge, the promise of a path to occult development. Then, once these people enter the Esoteric School, the system holds them like a vice. One friend who has escaped from the toils describes most vividly the fierce mental and spiritual struggle which it cost to regain freedom.

C. In India and Ceylon it is perfectly clear that the great mass of members have been drawn by neither of these two attractions but simply and solely by the Theosophic defence of Hinduism and Buddhism. Thousands of Orientals, whose minds had been filled with shivering doubts about their religion by the Western education they had received, have fled to Theosophy for refuge with great joy and relief. The defence goes a very long way. The depths to which Mrs. Besant habitually descends in defending Hinduism will hardly be believed. There is scarcely an ex-

¹ *MPI.*, 7.

ploded doctrine, scarcely a superstitious observance, which she has not defended with the silliest and most shameful arguments. No one who has not scanned the files of *The Central Hindu College Magazine* or the reports of Mrs. Besant's lectures in India has any idea of the indescribable rubbish which Theosophy has presented to its Hindu members. But there is another side to all this. It is a simple matter of fact that for several decades Hindu and Buddhist thought and civilization were most unjustly depreciated and unmercifully condemned by missionaries, by Europeans in general and even by some Hindus. Only a few Orientalists escape this censure. There was thus really good reason for a crusade in defence of these systems.

14. To estimate the value of the work done by Theosophy is rather a difficult task. It has certainly popularized, in Europe and America, a number of the best Oriental books, such as the Upanishads and the *Gītā*, and has taught Theosophists to sympathize with Orientals and to think of them as brothers; while in India it has helped to restore to the Hindu and the Buddhist that self-respect which tended to evaporate amid the almost universal depreciation of Oriental thought, life and art.

But there is a vast amount to be placed on the other side of the account. Theosophy under Madame Blavatsky condemned and ridiculed Orientalists, and yet took from them, almost without acknowledgment, practically all the trustworthy knowledge of the East it possessed. Further in spite of all its pretences and all its noise, Theosophy has made no contribution whatever to our knowledge of Oriental religions. It has not discovered a single fresh historical fact, nor brought a fresh text to the notice of scholars, nor produced a notable translation or commentary. Thousands of copies of Mrs. Besant's translation of the *Gītā* have been sold; but no scholar would dream of

referring to it for the translation of a difficult line. Apart from the writings of Mr. G. R. S. Mead and one or two others, we must pronounce the whole vast literature of the Theosophical Societies worthless from the point of view of scientific knowledge. Where is there a single scholar, historian or philosopher to be found amongst its members? One and all are repelled by the charlatanism of the literature. There is, last of all, the gross disservice it renders by filling the heads of its ordinary members with the cosmological and historical rubbish which is dumped in such heaps by the high-priests of occultism at headquarters, and with the impudently worthless trash published in defence of superstitions which thoughtful Hindus would do anything to get rid of.

15. Mrs. Besant constantly proclaims both in India and in England that a man can become a Theosophist and yet remain a true Christian; nay, she goes further and says that Theosophy will make a man a better Christian. Is this contention justifiable? The facts contained in the following paragraphs will enable readers to judge:

(1) Instead of the Heavenly Father of Jesus Christ, with whom every man may come into closest personal relationships in worship, prayer and communion, Theosophy offers us, as the Supreme, *an unknowable IT*.¹

(2) Theosophy detaches religion from God. The ancient wisdom which it teaches is not a revelation from the Unknowable, but proceeds from the human Masters who are in charge of the department of religion in our world.²

(3) Necessarily there is no prayer in Theosophy, since the Supreme is unknowable.

(4) There is no worship of God in Theosophy. It is the Masters, and such people as Alcyone, Mrs. Besant and Mr. Leadbeater who receive adoration.

¹ Above, p. 278.

² Above, p. 279.

(5) The Gospels are condemned as utterly unhistorical.¹

(6) Jesus and Christ are declared to be distinct persons.²

(7) Neither Jesus nor Christ is the Son of God: they are said to be mere men.³

(8) The whole story of Jesus as given in the Gospels, and also by Tacitus, is made unhistorical; for He was not born under Augustus, in the days of Herod the King, but a century earlier, in B.C. 105.⁴ He is said to be one of the Masters on earth now and to spend most of his time in the Lebanon.

(9) It was another quite obscure fanatical preacher who was condemned to death and executed in Jerusalem about 30 A.D.⁵

(10) According to Theosophic teaching, Jesus was not crucified for the sins of men. No such death could be an atonement for the sins of others. It could only be punishment for His own sins in a former life; for the sway of the doctrine of Karma knows no exception.

(11) The Second Coming of Christ which Mrs. Besant refers to is not the Second Coming of the crucified Jesus, the Son of God, but the return of a man named Christ, who, according to Mrs. Besant's story, for a time used as His vehicle the body of a man named Jesus, who was born 105 B.C.

(12) Christianity teaches that, "It is appointed unto men once to die; and after death cometh judgment"; while Theosophy teaches that every human being is born and dies many times.

This catalogue might be made much longer; but we believe it is quite long enough. We ask our readers to consider seriously whether Mrs. Besant acts rightly, when she stands up before a great audience of Christian people in England, who know nothing of these Theosophic doctrines which she has in her mind, and tells them that to become Theosophists will not make them disloyal Christians.

¹ Leadbeater, *The Christian Creed*, 15. ² *Ib.*, 13, 29. ³ *Ib.*, 15, 27, 29.

⁴ Above, p. 272.

⁵ Leadbeater, *The Inner Life*, I, 183.

Every Christian teacher and minister ought to inform himself of the true nature of this poisonous anti-Christian system; for attempts are being made in many places to introduce it into the Church.

For the relation between Theosophy and the Rādhā Soāmi system, see above, p. 172, and for its influence on the Parsees, p. 344, below.

LITERATURE. — JUDGE: *Isis Very Much Unveiled*, by Edmund Garrett, London, Westminster Gazette Office, 1894, 1s. THE LEADBEATER CASE: See *The Alcyone Case* (below). TEACHING: *Esoteric Christianity*, by Annie Besant, London, T. P. S., 1901, 5s. net. *Did Jesus Live 100 B.C.?* by G. R. S. Mead, London, T. P. S., 1903, 9s. net. *The Christian Creed*, by C. W. Leadbeater, London, T. P. S., 1904, 3s. 6d. net. *A Textbook of Theosophy*, by C. W. Leadbeater, Madras, Theosophist Office, 1912, 1s. 6d. net. *Man; Whence, How, and Whither*, by Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater, Madras, T. P. H., 1913. ALCYONE: *Mrs. Besant and the Alcyone Case*, by Veritas, Madras, Goodwin and Co., 1913, 3s. (A detailed account of the first trial in Madras.) *Mrs. Besant and the Present Crisis in the Theosophical Society*, by Eugène Lévy, London, Heywood Smith, 1913, 1s. net.

4. SECTARIAN MOVEMENTS IN HINDUISM

The rise of the modern spirit and the example set by the great movements we have already discussed had the effect of stirring each of the chief Hindu sects to self-defence and to various efforts for the strengthening of the community.

A. *The Mādhyas*

It was the Mādhyas of South India who first bestirred themselves to mutual help and organization. They are a Vishṇuite sect, and are followers of Madhva, a philosophic thinker, who formed his system and created his sect, in the Canarese country in Western India, in the thirteenth century. The sect is strongest in the part of the country where

APPENDIX

1. *H. P. Blavatsky and the Masters of the Wisdom*, by Annie Besant. Theosophical Publishing Society, London. 1907.

2. *Episodes from an Unwritten History*, by Claude Bragdon. Rochester, the Manas Press. 1910.

3. *Incidents in the History of the Theosophical Society*, by Joseph H. Fussell. Point Loma, California, the Aryan Theosophical Press.

4. *A Historical Retrospect of the Theosophical Society*, by H. S. Olcott. Madras, published by the Society. 1896.

The first purpose of this Appendix is to give readers some idea of the extreme unreliability of the historical literature of Theosophy, and the second is to show the publishers of these books that they are thoroughly inaccurate and misleading, and on that ground to appeal to them, to withdraw them from circulation.

1. *H. P. Blavatsky and the Masters of the Wisdom*.

a. "In August, 1851, we find her in London, and there, on a moonlight night, as her diary tells us, beside the Serpentine, 'I met the Master of my dreams.' He then told her that he had chosen her to work in a society, and some time afterwards, with her father's permission, she went into training for her future mission, passing through seven and ten years of probation, trial and hard work." P. 7.

"On November 17th, 1875, she founded, in pursuance of the order she had received, the Theosophical Society." P. 10.

Here we have the Theosophic myth at work. For the whole of the stupendous story of her intercourse with these "Masters" Madame Blavatsky never produced any trustworthy evidence. There is only her own bare assertion. She has never given any definite geographical information to enable scholars to find the Lodge of the Brotherhood in Tibet or the vast libraries which

she asserts exist there. Since those days Sarat Chandra Das, a Calcutta Hindu, has travelled in Tibet, visited libraries and talked with many monks. The British expedition sent by Lord Curzon actually went to Lhassa; so that Tibet is now well known. Two of the most honoured Hindu scholars in Calcutta, Paṇḍit Hara Prasād Sāstrī and Paṇḍit Satischandra Vidyābhūṣaṇa have wandered all over the hills within British territory, visiting monasteries and libraries. They have brought many Mss., both Sanskrit and Tibetan, to Calcutta. How is it that there is not a scrap of corroboration of Madame Blavatsky's wonderful story? No one knows anything about the existence of the Masters, their Lodge or the Libraries.

On the other hand, as we have shewn above, in Madame Blavatsky's own letters there is overwhelming evidence to prove the whole false.

In the passages before us we are asked, on the evidence of an entry in Madame Blavatsky's "diary," to believe that she was guided by the Masters from 1851 to 1875. Now, what are the facts? *The "diary" is no diary at all, but a book of drawings.* If it were a real diary; if it provided us with information which enabled us to understand Madame Blavatsky's early life; and if the passage referred to were an integral part of the narrative, and demonstrably written in 1851; then it would be solid evidence. *But the passage quoted is the only entry in the whole book.* No one can tell when it was written. What then is its value as evidence? — Simply nil. It may have been written by Madame Blavatsky at any time during the last twelve years of her life. But how are we to characterize Mrs. Besant's audacity in calling the book in question a diary?

b. "Before dealing with the communications received during a short time in the famous 'Shrine' at Adyar, it is necessary to describe the rooms which afterwards became famous. Madame Blavatsky occupied two out of three rooms of the upper story, opening on to a large hall. There was a sitting-room, which opened into a bedroom, and this again into a third room; the wall between the bedroom and this third room was made of two

partitions with twelve inches between them, lightly built, there being no support below, and with a door in the middle, the door being thus sunk in a recess. This third room was set apart for occult purposes, and was called the Occult Room. On the partition wall, loosely hanging, was a cupboard, originally over the door, in which were placed two pictures of the Masters, a silver bowl, and other articles; the cupboard had a solid back and shelves, and was merely hung on the wall, so that it could be removed easily. This cupboard was called 'The Shrine.' The wall was smoothly plastered over, and various people — after it had been tampered with by the Coulombs — bore witness to the fact that at least up to February 17th, 1884, — H. P. B. left Adyar on February 7th — it was intact. General Morgan states that he first saw the Occult Room in August, 1883, when he visited Adyar in Madame Blavatsky's absence, and, probably in consequence of a remarkable phenomenon that happened on his visit, he examined the Shrine and its surroundings with great care; he affirms that, up to January, 1884, when he left the headquarters, 'any trickery was impossible.'” Pp. 20-21.

The authoress goes on to quote a number of similar statements made by Mrs. Morgan, Col. Olcott and several other Theosophists with regard to the Shrine; and she repeats her main affirmation about it again:

“Mr. Hodgson did not see the cupboard, and Dr. Hartmann, who did see it, and examine it, says it had ‘a solid unmovable back,’ and this is confirmed by others.” P. 44.

Now what are the facts with regard to these large masses of evidence? They have been already given, but may be summarized as follows:

(1) Every scrap of this evidence is quoted from the pamphlet, *Report of the Result of an Investigation into the Charges against Madame Blavatsky*, which contains the statements of Theosophists written (in response to the circular of August, 1884) before Mr. Hodgson arrived in India, but not published until February, 1885. P. 249, above.

(2) It was compiled in the main by Dr. Hartmann, Madame Blavatsky's "liar, cunning and vindictive." P. 248, above.

(3) In September, 1884, five months before the pamphlet was published, the Shrine was examined by Judge, Dr. Hartmann and other Theosophists, and the sliding panels were found. Pp. 241-2, above.

(4) Three of these Theosophists removed the Shrine, and Judge burned it. Pp. 241-2, above. This is the amazing fact which is necessary to explain Mrs. Besant's statement that "Mr. Hodgson did not see the cupboard," and which she most carefully suppresses. Neither the discovery of the panels nor the burning of the Shrine is mentioned in the pamphlet, *Report of the Result*, etc., though it was published five months later.

(5) When Hodgson asked Dr. Hartmann and Damodar about the Shrine, they said they did not know what had happened to it, and suggested that it had been stolen by the missionaries or the Coulombs. Pp. 247-8, above.

(6) Most of the people whose testimony Mrs. Besant quotes were questioned by Mr. Hodgson personally, and acknowledged that *they had never examined the back of the Shrine*, thus repudiating all the evidence which Mrs. Besant quotes. Each of the following singly confessed this to Mr. Hodgson, thus proving that their statements printed in the pamphlet were at the least very careless declarations: Mrs. Morgan, Mr. Subba Row, Mr. Damodar, Mr. P. Sreenevasa Rao, Mr. T. Vijiaraghava Charloo (Ananda), Babajee, Mr. P. Rathnavelu, Mr. T. C. Rajamiengar. The details of their confessions are given by Mr. Hodgson (*Proceedings*, IX, 220-226; 325-341). He adds with reference to Mr. St. George Lane-Fox, "Mr. Lane-Fox desired my special attention to the fact that an excessive superstition was attached to the Shrine by the natives. The feeling with which they regarded it would absolutely interfere with any careful investigation of either the shrine or its surroundings" (*Ib.*, 327). Dr. Hartmann himself agreed with this statement (*Ib.*, 226). Thus Mr. Hodgson could find no evidence that any one examined the Shrine before September, 1884.

(7) On March 13, 1885, about a month after the publica-

tion of the pamphlet, Dr. Hartmann confessed, in the presence of Mr. and Mrs. Cooper-Oakley, Mr. A. O. Hume, and Mr. Hodgson, that "nobody was allowed to touch that d— shrine"; and he then told the story of the discovery of the panels and the burning of the Shrine. These facts were effectually concealed from Hodgson until that date. Pp. 250-1, above.

(8) Mme. Blavatsky confessed to Mr. Hodgson that the Shrine was made with three sliding panels in the back. P. 251, above.

(9) Dr. Hartmann confessed that his pamphlet was untrustworthy, and gave Mr. Hodgson a written statement about the Shrine, which is quoted above. Pp. 251 and 241, above.

(10) In April, 1885, the pamphlet was publicly repudiated in *The Madras Mail* by the Theosophic leaders. Pp. 253-4, above.

How then shall we characterize Mrs. Besant's statement of the evidence as to the Shrine?

c. Mrs. Besant quotes *in extenso* a letter written by Mr. A. O. Hume to the *Calcutta Statesman*, in September, 1884, with reference to the letters handed over by Madame Coulomb. We need quote only the last sentence, which is as follows:

"Parts of the letters may be genuine enough; one passage cited has a meaning quite different from that in which I see that the *Times of India* accepts it, but believe me, Madame Blavatsky is far too shrewd a woman to have ever *written* to any one, anything that could *convict* her of *fraud*." P. 37.

Now it is quite true that Mr. Hume sent this letter to the *Statesman*; but Mrs. Besant omits altogether to tell her readers that, within a few months, his mind changed completely. This fact was published by Mr. Hodgson twenty-two years before Mrs. Besant wrote her booklet:

"When the Blavatsky-Coulomb letters were first published, Mr. Hume expressed his opinion publicly that Madame Blavatsky was too clever to have thus committed herself; latterly, however, and partly in consequence of the evidence I was able to lay before him, he came to the conviction that the letters in question were actually written by Madame Blavatsky." *Proceedings*, IX, 274.

Mrs. Besant declares she studied Mr. Hodgson's Report carefully: does not her action in this case, then, come as near wilful misrepresentation as possible?

d. "Mr. Hodgson, the gentleman sent by the S. P. R., was present at this memorable Convention Meeting of December, 1884, the Colonel, in the innocence of his heart, extending to him a warm welcome. Mr. Hodgson's appearance of friendship was, however, a mere pretence to cover his real aim; he simulated honest inquiry only the more surely to destroy." P. 40.

Dr. Hartmann and Mr. Judge charged the Coulombs with forgery and the missionaries with hatching a conspiracy. Mrs. Besant now charges Mr. Hodgson with shameful treachery; and if we accept this charge, we must believe that the Society for Psychical Research were from beginning to end duped by this dishonest scheme. But, apart from these considerations and from Mr. Hodgson's own statement and behaviour, how are we to characterize Mrs. Besant's conduct in publishing this foul slander twelve years after the publication of *A Modern Priestess of Isis*, in which Madame Blavatsky herself says that Hodgson was at first a friend? (P. 248, above.)

e. "Mr. Hodgson, in his Report, publishes a 'plan of the Occult Room with shrine and surroundings (from measurements taken by R. Hodgson, assisted by the statements of Theosophic witnesses).' On page 220 Mr. Hodgson says that 'the accompanying rough sketch, made from measurements of my own, shows the positions.' The reader will now see why I laid stress on the fact that Mr. Judge had, in the summer of 1884, bricked up the hole, plastered the wall, and then re-papered it; this having been done in the summer of 1884, how could Mr. Hodgson have made a rough sketch of the positions from his own measurements in the spring of 1885? It may be asked: 'How then did Mr. Hodgson obtain his plan?' The answer is simple; Mr. Judge gives it. He said: 'I made a plan of how it had been left by Coulomb, and that plan it is that Hodgson pirated in his

report, and desires people to think his, and to be that which he made on the spot, while looking at that which he thus pretends to have drawn.' All that Mr. Hodgson could have seen was a blank wall. I reprint here the comment I made in *Time* on this remarkable proceeding: 'I venture to suggest that the pirating of another person's plan, with "measurements" of things that no longer existed when Mr. Hodgson visited Adyar, is not consistent with good faith. Yet the whole terrible charge against Madame Blavatsky rests on this man's testimony. The Society of Psychical Research, which has taken the responsibility of the report, has no knowledge of the facts, other than that afforded by Mr. Hodgson. Everything turns on his veracity. And he issues another man's plan as his own, and makes imaginary measurements of vanished objects.' " P. 43.

This attack is practically the same as that published by Mrs. Besant in *Time* in 1892. Mr. Hodgson replied in detail to the attack in *Proceedings*, XXIV, 136-141, issued in June, 1893. He not only shewed that all the minor charges were unjustifiable, but published a copy of the only plan of the Shrine made by a Theosophist which he ever saw. It had appeared in the *Report of Observations*, etc., a pamphlet published by Dr. Hartmann in September, 1884. (See above, p. 240.) This must be the plan Mrs. Besant refers to, as the pamphlet was prepared and issued during the time when Mr. Judge was in Madras. This plan is reproduced above (plan A, page 234), with Mr. Hodgson's plan (plan B) beside it, that readers may see with their own eyes how utterly absurd it is to say that the latter was copied from the former.

Yet here we have Mrs. Besant repeating the old attack in 1907, without the slightest reference to Mr. Hodgson's complete disproof of the slander, and without a single scrap of evidence, except the statement of Judge, to substantiate the charge.

Further, Judge, on whose testimony Mrs. Besant relies, is the man who had to do with the removal and burning of the Shrine, and he is the man whose frauds and forgeries Mrs. Besant and Colonel Olcott discovered in 1894. (See above, pp. 241-2, 268-71.) What sort of a witness is he?

Now, if the plan republished by Mr. Hodgson is *not* Mr.

Judge's plan, Mrs. Besant is in honour bound to publish Mr. Judge's one, that the world may see that Mr. Hodgson plagiarized it. But if the reproduced plan is Mr. Judge's plan, then will not Mrs. Besant withdraw from publication this cruel and baseless slander on the dead?

f. "Mr. Hodgson's third charge is that certain letters alleged to be from the Mahātmā Koot Hoomi were written by Madame Blavatsky, or in some cases by Damodar." P. 48.

"The before-mentioned experts varied together as to the authorship of the letters submitted to them; first they said they were not done by Madame Blavatsky; then, this not satisfying Mr. Hodgson, they said they were. As against this valuable opinion of theirs may be put that of Herr Ernst Schutze, the Court expert in caligraphy at Berlin, who gave evidence on oath that the letter of Master K. H. 'has not the remotest resemblance with the letter of Madame Blavatsky,' and who wrote: 'I must assure you most positively that if you have believed that both letters came from one and the same hand, you have laboured under a most complete mistake.'" P. 48.

This statement looks very convincing at first sight; but let us set the facts around it and see what becomes of it.

When Mr. Hodgson got a number of these letters submitted to him, he found that the penmanship varied in them a good deal. He then placed them as far as possible in chronological order, when it became plain that the early letters retained many of the characteristics of Madame Blavatsky's handwriting, while in the later examples a number of these characteristics were eliminated. Studied as a series, they at once suggest that all are by the same hand and that there had been a progressive differentiation of the handwriting.

It was merely several small slips of writing belonging to this lengthy correspondence, conducted in a disguised hand, which were submitted to the English experts, and which they declared had not been written by Madame Blavatsky. When the long chronological series was submitted to them, they recognized

the progressive differentiation and came to the conclusion that all were written by Madame Blavatsky.

Now to come to the German expert. Mr. Sinnett tells us (*Incidents in the Life of Madame Blavatsky*, 323-4) that the documents submitted to him were a Koot Hoomi letter of September, 1884, and a letter written by Madame Blavatsky in October, 1885. Now it had been suggested many months before this latter date that Madame Blavatsky had written the letters in question. Clearly, if the expert was to make his examination under scientific conditions, a letter written by Madame Blavatsky *before* the question arose should have been given him for comparison. How could he judge a question of handwriting, if the accused was given an opportunity of resorting to disguise? Further, Mr. Hodgson gives a number of facts which clearly suggest that Madame Blavatsky attempted the same trick with him. *Proceedings*, IX, 281, 290-1; XXIV, 148-9. Thus the German expert's verdict is worthless, simply because the evidence was not submitted to him.

The English experts, on the other hand, had before them specimens of Madame Blavatsky's writing dating from *before* the Coulomb exposure, and also a considerable number of K. H. letters of various dates. They thus worked under scientific conditions, while the German expert did not.

Again we remark that all these facts are detailed by Mr. Hodgson (*Proceedings*, IX, 282 ff.; XXIV, 147-149); yet Mrs. Besant ignores them entirely, and indeed suggests by her language that there are no such material facts.

No one would say that the mere opinion of experts on the handwriting would be sufficient to settle the question of the authorship of these letters. As we have shown above (pp. 256-9), several other lines of proof combine to indicate that they were written by Madame Blavatsky and her immediate disciples.

We have submitted only a few fragments of Mrs. Besant's booklet to examination. Limits of space alone prevent us from carrying the process farther. The bulk of the rest of the material is quite as rotten as the portions we have reviewed.

2. *Episodes from an Unwritten History.*

This work is in the main dependent on No. 1, and we need not deal with the corresponding passages here. But to give some idea of the utter unreality of the story we shall quote two passages:

a. "The work designated to Judge by the Founders was magnificently performed, and notwithstanding his secession from the parent society in 1895, taking with him most, though not all, of his colleagues, his name rightly ranks first, after those of the two Founders, among the great workers and leaders in the Theosophical cause." P. 25.

What must be the condition of the Theosophic conscience which writes such a panegyric of Judge? See above, pp. 241-2, 268-71.

b. Writing of Madame Coulomb, this author says:

"Prince Harisinghji of Kathiawar, to whom she had applied on more than one occasion for two thousand rupees, tired of her importunities, complained at last to Madame Blavatsky, who promptly put an end to an intolerable situation by dismissing from her service Madame Coulomb." P. 42.

This last statement is absolutely false. See the evidence produced above (p. 236), shewing that the Coulombs were left in full charge of Madame Blavatsky's rooms.

3. *Incidents in the History of the Theosophical Movement.*

In the discussion of the Madras exposure this pamphlet is dependent on Mrs. Besant, and repeats the gross and baseless slander about the plan of the shrine-room (pp. 452-4, above). We need not deal with it again. But there are other slanders:

a. "It was afterwards learned and published in the *Madras Daily Mail* that the missionaries of the Madras Christian College had offered to pay Mme. Coulomb a thousand rupees to procure certain letters of Madame Blavatsky." P. 7.

This is utterly false. See the facts on p. 246 n., above.

b. "Both M. and Mme. Coulomb later, when their actions were exposed, confessed to this plot." P. 7.

Could a grosser slander be conceived? Madame Coulomb, so far from confessing to a plot, instituted a lawsuit in defence of her character (p. 252, above), and when it became impossible to proceed with it, published a long letter in *The Madras Mail*, stating her position once more with the utmost emphasis (p. 254, above).

4. *A Historical Retrospect of the Theosophical Society.*

a. Writing about Judge, Olcott says:

"In the autumn of 1893, charges had been made against this officer's character, a widespread and intense excitement had resulted, and a majority of the Sections were urging me to remove him from office. A Judicial Committee was convened at London in 1894 to try the charges, but adjourned without doing so because of certain technical points which were put forward and held to be good. The discontent was not allayed by this action but greatly increased, feeling ran high, an overwhelming majority of the American Branches stood by him, and an angry discussion was carried on within and outside our own press. This was the state of affairs when the Ninth Annual Convention of the American Section met at Boston, Mass., on the day specified. The Delegates almost in a mass made Mr. Judge's cause their own, and voted to secede from the parent Society and organize as an independent society." P. 17.

What sort of a historical account is this of the amazing events we have outlined above (pp. 268-71)? Olcott here simply keeps up the policy of concealment agreed upon in the Judicial Committee.

We appeal to all who read these pages, Theosophists, reviewers and the general public: Is it not high time that the Theosophical Publishing Society, London, the Manas Press, Rochester, U. S. A., the Aryan Theosophical Press, Point Loma, California, and the Theosophical Society, Madras, should withdraw these most unhistorical publications from circulation?

