

THE NEUTRALITY  
OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

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[7.]

AN ENQUIRY

INTO CERTAIN CHARGES AGAINST THE VICE-PRESIDENT,

HELD IN LONDON, JULY, 1894.

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WITH AN APPENDIX.

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PUBLISHED BY THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY,  
FOR THE INFORMATION OF MEMBERS.

JULY, 1894.



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# MINUTES

—OF A—

## JUDICIAL COMMITTEE

—OF THE—

### THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY,

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

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

Mrs. Besant and Mr. Judge were also present.

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

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

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

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

#### ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT-FOUNDER.

GENTLEMEN AND BROTHERS,

We have met together to-day as a Judicial Committee, under the provisions of Section 3 of Article VI of the Revised Rules, to consider

and dispose of certain charges of misconduct, preferred by Mrs. Besant against the Vice-President of the Society, and dated March 24th, 1894.

Section 2 of Article VI says that "the President may be deprived of office at any time, for *cause shown*, by a three-fourths vote of the Judicial Committee hereinafter provided for [in Section 3], before which he shall be given full opportunity to disprove any charges brought against him"; Section 3 provides that the Judicial Committee shall be composed of (a) members of the General Council *ex officio*, (b) two additional members nominated by each Section of the Society, and (c) two members chosen by the accused. Under the present organization of the Society, this Committee will, therefore, comprise the President-Founder, the General Secretaries of the Indian and European Sections, two additional delegates each from the Indian, European and American Sections, and two nominees of Mr. Judge; eleven in all—the accused, of course, being debarred from sitting as a judge, either as General Secretary of the American Section or as Vice-President.

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

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

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

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

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

That he has never been elected to the office.

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

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

The legitimate inference from which would be:

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

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

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

These points will presently be considered *seriatim*.

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

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

I now return to Mr. Judge's protests.

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

From the above facts it is evident that W. Q. Judge is, and since December, 1888, has continuously been, *de jure* as well as *de facto*, Vice-President of the Theosophical Society. The facts having been laid

before the General Council in its session of the 7th inst., my ruling has been ratified; and is now also concurred in by Mr. Judge. He is, therefore, triable by this tribunal for "cause shown."

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

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

That he was untruthful in various other instances enumerated.

Are these solely acts done in his private capacity; or may they or either of them be laid against him as wrong-doing by the Vice-President? This is a grave question, both in its present bearings and as establishing a precedent for future contingencies. We must not make a mistake in coming to a decision.

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

3. Does our proposed enquiry into the alleged circulation of fictitious writings of those known to us as "Mahâtmâs" carry with it a breach of the religious neutrality guaranteed us in the T. S. Constitution, and would a decision of the charge, in either way, hurt the feelings of members? The affirmative view has been taken and warmly advocated by the Convention of the American Section, by individual branches and groups of "Theosophical Workers," by the General Secretaries of the European and Indian Sections, in a recently issued joint circular, by many private members of the Society, and by the accused. As I conceived it, the present issue is not at all whether Mahâtmâs exist or the contrary, or whether they have or have not recognizable handwritings, and have or have not authorized Mr. Judge to put forth documents in their name. I believed, when issuing the call, that the question might be discussed without entering into investigations that would compromise our corporate neutrality. The charges as formulated

and laid before me by Mrs. Besant could, in my opinion, have been tried without doing this. And I must refer to my official record to prove that I would have been the last to help in violating a Constitution of which I am, it may be said, the father, and which I have continually defended at all times and in all circumstances. On now meeting Mr. Judge in London, however, and being made acquainted with his intended line of defence, I find that by beginning the enquiry we should be placed in this dilemma, viz., we should either have to deny him the common justice of listening to his statements and examining his proofs (which would be monstrous in even a common court of law, much more in a Brotherhood like ours, based on lines of ideal justice), or be plunged into the very abyss we wish to escape from. Mr. Judge's defence is that he is not guilty of the acts charged; that Mahâtmâs exist, are related to our Society, and in personal connection with himself; and he avers his readiness to bring many witnesses and documentary proofs to support his statements. You will at once see whether this would lead us. The moment we entered into these questions we should violate the most vital spirit of our federal compact, its neutrality in matters of belief. Nobody, for example, knows better than myself the fact of the existence of the Masters, yet I would resign my office unhesitatingly if the Constitution were amended so as to erect such a belief into a dogma: every one in our membership is as free to disbelieve and deny their existence as I am to believe and affirm it. For the above reason, then, I declare as my opinion that this enquiry must go no farther; we may not break our own laws for any consideration whatsoever. It is furthermore my opinion that such an enquiry, begun by whatsoever official body within our membership, cannot proceed if a similar line of defence be declared. If, perchance, a guilty person should at any time go scot-free in consequence of this ruling, we cannot help it; the Constitution is our palladium, and we must make it the symbol of justice or expect our Society to disintegrate.

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

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

It having been made evident to me that Mr. Judge cannot be tried

on the present accusations without breaking through the lines of our Constitution, I have no right to keep him further suspended, and so I hereby cancel my notice of suspension, dated February 7th, 1894, and restore him to the rank of Vice-President.

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

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

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

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

### MINUTES OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING,

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

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

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

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



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

“Another point then raised by Mr. Judge was then taken into consideration, to wit: That even if Vice-President, he, Mr. Judge, was not amenable to an enquiry by the Judicial Committee into certain alleged offences with respect to the misuse of the Mahâtônâs' names and handwriting, since if guilty the offence would be one by him as a private individual, and not in his official capacity; he contended that, under our Constitution, the President and Vice-President could only be tried as such by such Committee for official misconduct—that is misfeasances and malfeasances. An opinion of council in New York which he had taken from Mr. M. H. Phelps, F.T.S., was then read by him in support of this contention. The matter was then debated. Bertram Keightley moved and G. R. S. Mead seconded:

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

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

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

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

“The President called attention to the resolution of the American Convention of 1894, declaring that his action in suspending the Vice-President, pending the settlement of the charges against him was ‘without the slightest warrant in the Constitution and altogether transcends the discretionary power given the President by the Constitution, and is therefore null and void.’ Upon deliberation and consideration of Sections 3 and 4, Article VI, of the General Rules, the Council decided (Mr. Judge not voting) that the President's action was

warranted under the then existing circumstances, and that the said resolutions of protest are without force.

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

“The Council then adjourned at call of President.”

The following Resolutions were then adopted by the Judicial Committee:

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

The charges were laid before the Committee accordingly.

After deliberation, it was:

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

On the question whether the charges did or did not involve a declaration of the existence and powers of the Mahâtâmâs, the Committee deliberated, and it was:

*Resolved:* that this Committee is also of opinion that a statement by them as to the truth or otherwise of at least one of the charges as formulated against Mr. Judge would involve a declaration on their part as to the existence or non-existence of the Mahâtâmâs, and it would be a violation of the spirit of neutrality and the unsectarian nature and Constitution of the Society.

Four members abstained from voting on this resolution.

It was also further:

*Resolved:* that the President's address be adopted.

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

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

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

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

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

*President of the Council.*

## APPENDIX.

### STATEMENT BY ANNIE BESANT.

READ FOR THE INFORMATION OF MEMBERS AT THE THIRD SESSION OF THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION OF THE T. S., JULY 12TH, 1894.

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

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

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

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

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

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

But where the honour of the Society was concerned, in the person of its now second official and (as he then was thought to be) its President-Elect, it was right to do what I could to put an end to the growing friction and suspicion, both for the sake of the Society and for that of Mr. Judge; and I agreed to intervene, privately, believing that many of the charges were false, dictated and circulated malevolently, that others were much exaggerated and were largely susceptible of explanation, and that what might remain of valid complaint might be put an end to without public controversy. Under the promise that nothing should be done further in the matter until my intervention had failed, I wrote to Mr. Judge. The promise of silence was broken by persons who knew some of the things complained of, and before any answer could be received by me from Mr. Judge, distorted versions of what had occurred were circulated far and wide. This placed Mr. Judge in

a most unfair position, and he found my name used against him in connection with charges which he knew to be grossly exaggerated where not entirely untrue.

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

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

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

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

And now I must reduce these charges to their proper proportions, as they have been enormously exaggerated, and it is due to Mr. Judge that I should say publicly what from the beginning I have said pri-

vately. The President stated them very accurately in his address to the Judicial Committee: the vital charge is that Mr. Judge has issued letters and messages in the script recognizable as that adopted by a Master with whom H. P. B. was closely connected, and that these letters and messages were neither written nor precipitated directly by the Master in whose writing they appear; as leading up to this there are subsidiary charges of deception, but these would certainly never have been made the basis of any action save for their connection with the main point.

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

I regard Mr. Judge as an Occultist, possessed of considerable knowledge and animated by a deep and unswerving devotion to the Theosophical Society. I believe that he has often received direct messages from the Masters and from Their chelas, guiding and helping him in his work. I believe that he has sometimes received messages for other people in one or other of the ways that I will mention in a moment, but not by direct writing by the Master nor by His direct precipitation; and that Mr. Judge has then believed himself to be justified in writing down in the script adopted by H. P. B. for communications from the Master, the message psychically received, and in giving it to the person for whom it was intended, leaving that person to wrongly assume that it was a direct precipitation or writing by the Master Himself—that is, that it was done *through* Mr. Judge, but done *by* the Master.

Now personally I hold that this method is illegitimate and that no one should simulate a recognized writing which is regarded as authoritative when it is authentic. And by authentic I mean directly written or precipitated by the Master Himself. If a message is consciously written it should be so stated: if automatically written, it should be so stated. At least so it seems to me. It is important that the very small part generally played by the Masters in these phenomena should be understood, so that people may not receive messages as authoritative merely on the ground of their being in a particular script. Except in the very rarest instances, the Masters do not personally write letters or directly precipitate communications. Messages may be sent by Them to those with whom They can communicate by external voice, or astral vision, or psychic word, or mental impression or in other ways. If a person gets a message which he believes to be from the Master, for communication to anyone else, he is bound in honour not to add to that message any extraneous circumstances which will add weight to it in the recipient's eyes. I believe that Mr. Judge wrote with his own hand, consciously or automatically I do not know, in the script adopted as that of the Master, messages which he received from the Master or from chelas; and I know that, in my own case, I believed that the messages he gave me in the well-known script were messages directly precipitated or directly written by the Master. When I publicly said

that I had received after H. P. Blavatsky's death letters in the writing H. P. Blavatsky had been accused of forging, I referred to letters given to me by Mr. Judge, and as they were in the well-known script I never dreamt of challenging their source. I know now that they were not written or precipitated by the Master, and that they were done by Mr. Judge, but I also believe that the gist of these messages was psychically received, and that Mr. Judge's error lay in giving them to me in a script written by himself and not saying that he had done so. I feel bound to refer to these letters thus explicitly, because having been myself mistaken, I in turn misled the public.

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

If you, representatives of the T. S., consider that the publication of this statement followed by that which Mr. Judge will make, would put an end to this distressing business, and by making a clear understanding, get rid at least of the mass of seething suspicions in which we have been living, and if you can accept it, I propose that this should take the place of the Committee of Honour, putting you, our brothers, in the place of the Committee. I have made the frankest explanation I can; I know how enwrapped in difficulty are these phenomena which are connected with forces obscure in their working to most; therefore, how few are able to judge of them accurately, while those through whom they play are not always able to control them. And I trust that these explanations may put an end to some at least of the troubles of the last two years, and leave us to go on with our work for the world, each in his own way. For any pain that I have given my brother, in trying to do a most repellent task, I ask his pardon, as also for any mistakes that I may have made.

ANNIE BESANT.

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

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

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### STATEMENT BY MR. JUDGE.

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

I now state as follows:

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

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

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

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

5. Whatever messages from the Mahâtâmâs have been delivered by me as such—and they are extremely few—I now declare were and are genuine messages from the Mahâtâmâs so far as my knowledge extends; they were obtained through me, but as to how they were obtained or produced I cannot state. But I can now again say, as I have said publicly before, and as was said by H. P. Blavatsky so often that I have always thought it common knowledge among studious Theo-

sophists, that precipitation of words or messages is of no consequence and constitutes no proof of connection with Mahâtmâs; it is only phenomenal and not of the slightest value.

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

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

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

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE.

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

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

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