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Mr. C. W. Leadbeater wrote the following letter to Mrs. Annie Besant on August 28th, 1906.

Permanent Address :—10, East Parade,
Harrowgate, England,
August 28th, 1906.

MY DEAR ANNIE,

I have your letter of the 2nd, and I thank you profoundly for what you say as to our private friendship. There would be no need that that should be affected even if our opinions differed, but, as I have repeatedly said, I am quite willing to defer to your opinion, and by no means insist on retaining my own. I accepted a certain course as probably the best solution of a difficulty, and people will insist upon writing and talking as though it were a cardinal point in my belief, to which I cling with fanatical enthusiasm. You will remember that I told you at once at Benares that I was quite ready to give up my view to yours ; and if the hostile party in America had really been actuated by Theosophical feeling, that would surely have been all that they could desire. They did *not* wish only that a certain teaching should not be repeated ; they wished to force a certain person out of the Society. They might reasonably have begged me not to continue such teaching ; they might even have said that they themselves would resign rather than remain to some extent responsible for it if I had declined to discontinue it ; but I do not see that they were right in assuming that they alone were the Society, and that one who had not agreed with them, even though willing to accept their view, might

legitimately be hounded out of it by the aid of direct falsehood and the most dishonourable methods. I bear them no ill-will, because ill-will is wrong and foolish, and I recognise that they are merely instruments ; but I cannot think that they behaved well. Nor were they a whit more reasonable in their attack upon you. In the very first letter you clearly said that you did not at all agree with me, but you knew that I meant well. From the Theosophical point of view that attitude was perfect, but you know it made them furiously angry, because there was nothing in it of their spirit of persecution. Letters from America tell me that they are now openly boasting that they have forced you by their firm attitude to take sides against me as they put it ; and that again seems to show them as not entirely Theosophical in their thought. It must be that a kind of possession has descended upon these people, for *as I knew them* they would never have gone astray like this.

I suppose you must not tell me who is the American friend who sent the £ 20—through you, but I hope that you will be so kind as to express to him my hearty thanks for his thoughtfulness. He probably realises that the historical action of his country-women is likely to cost me dear financially.

I have thought much of your suggestion that I might work in Japan. Have you any information as to the nature of the work that I might do there, and as to the way in which I might maintain myself. If I went there I should, I think, be obliged to leave Basil to undertake his University course but no doubt Fritz would accompany me, or possibly Van Manen, and Basil could join me when his work at Oxford is done. I know that other possibilities may open up ; but I should like to collect

information about Japan if I can, so as to have the materials for a decision when the time comes.

The argument that while holding certain views I could not remain a member of the Society seems to me to overlook the fact that while holding those views I *did* remain a member of it for twenty three years, and during that time I did a good deal of work for it—work which I should have been capable of continuing for some time yet had it not been for the hysterical action of these people. Have they done well for our cause and for the world? Madame Blavatsky of course must have known quite fully what I thought, yet she did not take their line. However, it is useless to look back upon the past: they have had their wish, and are rejoicing over their success. Yet I cannot forget that they were all very kind to me before this possession seized them, and so I stand ready to help them in any way that I can.

Since I wrote the previous page a letter has reached me from Mrs. Howard, which I enclose because I think you ought to see it. Please return it to me to preserve with the rest of the documents. It reveals an incomprehensible attitude of mind; those people evidently think the office of Outer Head is elective and that they are the electors. Several have written to me saying that, knowing this attitude on the part of Mrs. Dennis and others, they *cannot* honestly continue to work under her, while they are full of the most earnest loyalty to you and of love and gratitude to the School, and they ask whether under these circumstances they ought to tender their resignations, or whether they can depend upon your relieving them. What advice ought I to give? Hitherto I have urged them to stay at all costs, because I did not believe that you *could* support

Mrs. Dennis, so I have told them that they would be deserting you if they resigned because of the local rebellion. I do not think you can have any idea of the methods of the disaffected. Another letter tells me how a woman went to the rooms at Chicago to buy a copy of "The Building of the Kosmos," but was dissuaded by the manager because the book, being yours, was not reliable! Another asks where my books can now be obtained in the States; and that while Chicago has a large stock of them of which they have rendered no account! The Colonel is to preside at the American Convention; I wonder whether we can depend upon him to contradict some of the more glaring falsehoods which are being so industriously circulated.

Just at this point arrives your letter of the 9th, and the long expected copy of your letter to the E. S., for all of which many thanks. I have written before with regard to your circular and I do hope that you have long ere this, issued my little comment on it for the helping of the poor people whom it has confused. I can only say once more "This thing is not so; the facts are wrong" I see now why you (*out of the body*) regretted so deeply; that we had not been together, because I could have saved you from some at least of the errors. As to which of us lies under glamour only the future can decide; but you know by this time that it has been shown that the epileptic fits were *not* due to my advice, and I also utterly deny the suggestion that I ever advised daily practice. I did tell you at Benares every thing that occurred to me, as I think you know now; and if we had only been together when these other points came up I could have contradicted the falsehoods.

Even now you are receiving information from America which does not agree with what comes to us. Raja is *not* making a party, but Fullerton is accusing him of it to contrary written evidence which has been sent to me. It would in any case be impossible for a vote of the American Convention to "reinstale" me. The agitation is being promoted chiefly, I think, at Chicago and Kansas City, and entirely by Americans. They have expressly assured me that they do *not* wish to displace Fullerton, but refuse to ratify his resolutions. Your name is being used by the Fullerton-Dennis party, *not* by the others. There is no question whatever now as to the advice that I gave, and no possibility of the identification of the Society with it; what these people are objecting to is the way in which their committee acted, and so far I think we both agree with them. If copies of all their circulars have been sent to you, you will by this time have discovered these facts that I have mentioned. It is practically certain after your E. S. letter that the Dennis faction will sweep everything before them at Convention, so I do not see how there can well be any split. It is all very pitiable, and all so unnecessary. I will do whatever I can to calm people, but you see you have rather cut away my influence, have you not? Anyhow I am most thankful that we remain true friends and I hope we may still help one another in very many ways, even though you feel that I have been deceived. Yet if I had been, should I have been so willing to yield my opinion to yours? With very much love as ever

I remain,

Yours most affectionately,

(Sd.) C. W. LEADBEATER.