

# The Theosophic Voice

An Independent, Unofficial Journal, Published in the Interests of the  
American Section of the Theosophical Society  
FOR THEOSOPHY AND FOR AMERICA!

For Theosophy: "Its creed is loyalty to truth and its ritual to honor every truth by use."—H. P. B.

For America: "With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right!"—Abraham Lincoln.

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## A PROTEST AND AN APPEAL.

"I have no more doubt that free thought will win in the long run than that I sit here writing to you, or that this free thought will organize itself into a coherent system, embracing human life and the world as one harmonious whole. But this organization will be the work of generations of men and those who further it most will be those who teach men to rest in no lie and to rest in no verbal delusion."—Letter from Huxley to Charles Kingsley.

October 1st, 1908.

To the General Council Theosophical Society.

Brethren: The undersigned, members in good standing of the American Section T. S., feel it necessary to make protest and appeal to the highest authority in the Society against the action of the Convention of the American Section held in Chicago, on September 13th, 1908. As a significant part of that action, though not as calling for any remedial measures on your part, which we know to be impracticable, we point out that the proceedings of the Convention were carried on with defiance to the rights of the minority and with ostentations purpose to effectuate the arbitrary will of a partisan majority. Free discussion was not allowed, debate was estopped, speakers on the floor were interrupted by calls for the previous question or by motions to table, and protests against this unfairness were ruthlessly disregarded, though the Convention was of a Theosophical Section and supposed to conform to its basic principle of Brotherhood.

The specific acts, however, which we lay before you as the highest administrative authority in the Theosophical Society and as to which we ask your definite repudiation, have to do with a question of direct morality and the position the Society shall take upon it before the world. These acts constitute a definite endorsement of the teachings of Mr. C. W. Leadbeater for the which his resignation of membership was offered to and accepted by our President-Founder, Colonel Olcott, in May, 1906, and are as follows:

(1) The tabling of a resolution verbally identical with one adopted *nem. con.* by the Convention of the British Section and in these words: "This Convention looks on the teaching given by Mr. C. W. Leadbeater to certain boys as wholly evil, and hereby expresses its judgment on this matter."

(2) The election as General Secretary of Dr. Weller Van Hook over Mr. Frank F. Knothe by a vote of 198 to 57. Mr. Knothe represented the opposition to Mr. Leadbeater's teaching as expressed in the above Resolution, which he himself offered. Dr. Van Hook represented an unqualified endorsement of that teaching, as expressed in recent articles published by him and which claims to have been "dictated verbatim by a Master." The following quotations therefrom make clear his stand:

"Hence the 'crime' or 'wrong' of teaching the boys the practice alluded to was no crime or wrong at all, but only the advice of a Wise Teacher, etc." "The introduction of this question into the thought of the Theosophical World is but the precursor of its introduction into the thought of the outer world," "No mistake was made by Mr. Leadbeater in the nature of the advice he gave his boys. No mistake was made in the way he gave it."

With a full knowledge by the Convention of this unqualified approval\* by Dr. Van Hook of the teaching to boys of self-abuse, he was re-elected General Secretary of the American Section making him also thereby, *ex officio*, a member of the General Council of the Society.

(3) The adoption by the Convention of a Resolution asking the General Council to restore Mr. Leadbeater to membership in the Theosophical Society. No conditions are stated, no recantation of his teaching is exacted. The Resolution is in these words: "Resolved that the proper officer or officers of the T. S. be and the same are hereby requested by the American Section T. S. in meeting duly assembled, to invite as soon as possible Mr. Charles W. Leadbeater to accept again membership in the Theosophical Society."

(4) The rejection, by tabling, of a substitute resolution for that just referred to, and which was in these words: "That, if Mr. Leadbeater be reinstated as a member of the T. S. it be only on the condition laid down by Mrs. Besant as follows: 'If publicly repudiates teaching, two years after repudiation, on large majority representative of whole Society would reinstate, otherwise not.'"

We submit that the four acts enumerated, commit the American Section to the approval of the doctrine that the teaching of self-abuse to boys is right; that the future will probably accept it as the solution of the sex problem; to the position that its original advocate within the Society should be invited to resume membership in it without repudiation by him of such teaching, and that a member and official who publicly endorses it, is worthy of high official position in the Society.

Against all this we earnestly and vigorously protest, pointing out that, if these definite acts of the American Section are allowed to go without equally definite official repudiation by your body, the Theosophical Society will logically stand before the world committed to the acceptance and endorsement of the teaching of self-abuse to boys by its public lecturers and its members as right, and will cause it to be identified in the public mind with the advocacy of a form of sex perversion that is universally reprobated by all civilized peoples and the teaching of which is in almost all countries legally a crime and it is scarcely necessary to further point out that a clear distinction exists between liberty of thought and of expression on the one hand, and the teaching of that which is a crime both against nature and in the eyes of the law on the other.

We therefore ask that your repudiation of the acts of the American Section and of the teaching and its advocacy herein protested against, be so definite, so unqualified and so emphatic, and that the position of the Society upon this whole question be officially made so clear and unmistakable that never again can there be any doubt as to where it stands, nor any countenance ever again be given within it to a pernicious teaching abhorrent to the moral sense of man.

We also appeal to the President of the T. S. to fulfil her pledge made in August, 1906:

"Any proposal to reinstate Mr. Leadbeater in the membership of the Theosophical Society would be ruinous to the Society. It would be indignantly repudiated here and in Europe, and I am sure in Australia and New Zealand, if the facts were known. If such a proposal were carried in America—I do not believe it possible—I should move on the Theoso-

\*This statement refers to the unqualified approval given by Dr. Van Hook to what is now known as "the Leadbeater system."—Editor.

phical Society Council, the supreme authority, that the application of membership should be rejected."

In April, 1907, replying to a telegram from the Council of the Blavatsky Lodge, asking whether she, as President, would permit Mr. Leadbeater's readmission, Mrs. Besant telegraphed: "If publicly repudiates teaching two years after repudiation on large majority representative of whole Society, would reinstate, otherwise not."

Mr. Leadbeater has not repudiated his teaching, and therefore has not conformed to that condition. Your signatories add this fact to their protest against the action of the American Convention. In conclusion we affirm that in making this protest and appeal, we are not moved there-to by any animus against Mr. Leadbeater, but solely by our interest in and desire for the welfare of the Society and the movement it represents. Nor is this protest directed against his personality. It is against his teaching herein referred to, and against the acts of a Sectional Convention which taken together, if permitted to go unprotected, unrepudiated and unchecked will, in the best judgment and belief of your signatories, discredit Theosophy in the eyes of the world, will repel those who would otherwise seek and be attracted to its teachings, will result in disaster to the T. S. and ultimately bring the Society under the ban of the law. Believing this we appeal to you to take action accordingly.

Respectfully submitted by the Committee representing the minority delegates to the American Section Convention of 1908.

#### WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

Mr. Frank F. Knothe, Ridgewood, N. J., Chairman.

Mr. A. B. Grossman, Chicago, Ill., Secretary.

Mr. C. F. Johnson, St. Louis, Mo.

Mr. A. H. Breslove, Toronto, Canada.

Judge W. K. James, St. Joseph, Mo.

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Mr. Davitt D. Chidester, Philadelphia.

Mr. Hugh F. Munro, Philadelphia.

Mr. Alexander Fullerton, New York.

Mrs. Grace Shaw Duff, New York.

Dr. Eleanor M. Hiestand-Moore, Chicago.

Mrs. Kate C. Havens, Chicago.

Mr. A. E. Brown, Chicago.

Mr. E. H. Bradbury, Kansas City.

Mrs. Florence Allen Taylor, Boston.

Mr. John H. Knapp, Boston.

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Copies of the foregoing Protest and Appeal were sent to all members of the General Council as well as to the President of the T. S.

#### THE WAYS AND MEANS CONFERENCE.

At a Conference of the minority delegates to the recent Convention in Chicago, it was decided to organize within the Society those members who oppose the "Leadbeater teachings" to which the majority of the American Section has now committed itself by refusing to pass any condemnatory resolution, by the re-election of Dr. Van Hook as General Secretary and by asking for Mr. Leadbeater's reinstatement.

A committee of five members to be known as the "Ways and Means Committee" was appointed and vested with authority to bring about organization and formulate plans for a campaign against prevailing conditions in the T. S.

An "Advisory Committee" of ten members was appointed to aid the committee of five, to the end that all efforts may be wisely directed.

Steps are about to be taken to organize the individual F. T. S. who are in sympathy with this position. This larger organization will be known as the "Ways and Means Conference," and will in no sense go counter to official authority in the Section or Society, since its purpose is to pro-

tect the Theosophical Society from the evil influences that are now assailing it and to keep the noble truths of Theosophy from being degraded.

Information concerning this movement may be had by addressing Mr. A. B. Grossman, Secretary of the Ways and Means Committee, 4935 Vincennes Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

#### MRS. BESANT'S REPLY TO THE BRITISH SECTION.

The "Letter to Members of the Theosophical Society" issued by Mrs. Besant in England in November was not circulated in America until early in December. Although this letter is ostensibly a reply to the appeal made by the British Convention, it appeared first in India, then in Holland and France and latterly in England. In India there was instituted immediately upon the issuance of this letter, an attempt to have the question of Mr. Leadbeater's reinstatement voted upon without delay, but this project is meeting with rather unexpected opposition. We print in full the text of the communication. The pamphlet bears the title: "A Letter to the Members of the Theosophical Society from Annie Besant, President of the Theosophical Society.

#### TO THE MEMBERS OF THE T. S.

An appeal has been made to the General Council and to myself, by the British Section in Convention assembled, to take action to put an end to the painful condition of affairs which has arisen in consequence of certain "pernicious teaching" ascribed to Mr. C. W. Leadbeater. The General Council does not meet until December next, and will then take such action as it may deem right. The appeal to myself I answer, after such delay as has been imposed on me by the fact that I was in the Antipodes, on the Society's business, when the appeal was made, and could not complete my reply until I had verified certain data by reference to documents not then within my reach.

My wish is to lift the present controversy out of the turmoil of passion in which all sense of proportion has been lost, and to submit the whole case to the judgment of the Theosophical Society, free from the exaggerations and misunderstandings which have surrounded it. I recognize fully that those who denounce Mr. Leadbeater are inspired, for the most part, by an intense desire to protect the purity of public morals and the good name of the Society, and are therefore worthy of respect. I ask them to believe that others may have an equal love of purity and of the Society's good name, while not accepting their view of Mr. Leadbeater's advice, and while considering that they have been misled by exaggerated and distorted statements, as I was myself. I even ask them whether they seriously think that I, after nearly twenty years of unstinted labor for the Society, and of a life more ascetic than lax, am likely to be indifferent either to purity or to the Society's good name? I ask them to give credit to others for good intent, as they claim good intent for themselves.

From the occult standpoint, the duality of sex represents the fundamental duality of the universe, and in the individual human being the duality once existed, as it still exists in the universe and in some forms of vegetable and animal life. The separation of humanity into two sexes, in each of which one sex predominates and the other is rudimentary, is but a temporary device for the better development of complementary qualities, difficult of simultaneous evolution in the same person. The separation being thus necessary, but the presence of both sex elements being essential to reproduction, the sex instinct, drawing the separated halves together, became a necessary factor in the preservation of the race. To subserve this purpose is its natural function, and any other use of it is unnatural and harmful. In the animal kingdom it has never gone astray from its due utility. In the human, owing to the activity of mind, with vividness of memory and of anticipation, it has become abnormally developed, and its true function has become subsidiary. It should serve to draw one man and one woman together, for the creation of pure bodies fit for incoming souls, and thus aid in cementing an

enduring union of two lives complementary to each other, a union also needed for the nurture and protection of the young ones within a settled home during their years of helplessness. But by unbridled indulgence, both within and without marriage, it has developed into an overmastering passion, which seeks merely for gratification; its one rightful use, its only natural and legitimate function, is forgotten; the great creative power is prostituted to be an agent of pleasure, and this has brought an inevitable nemesis. Society is honeycombed with diseases which, directly and indirectly, spring from the general abuse of the creative function; by an extraordinary reversal of facts, continence is regarded as unnatural instead of natural, and the demand of the sex instinct for constant gratification is looked on as normal instead of as an abnormality evolved by habitual excess. Doctors know the suffering and the misery wrought under marriage sanction by unbridled incontinence; faced by the sex passion in unmarried lads, they bid them resort to the women of the streets, and thus increase the evil heredity; statesmen vainly try by Contagious Diseases Acts to minimise the ruin both of men and women; solitary vice is becoming more widespread, and is the deadly peril which teachers in schools are forced continually to face, against which they ineffectually strive.

Such is the condition of humanity at the present time, and for this condition—at the root of most of the misery and crime in civilized life—Occultism has but one remedy: The restoration of the sex function to its one proper use by the gradual raising of the standard of sex morality, the declaration that its only legitimate use is the creative, that its abuse for sensual pleasure is immoral and unnatural, and that humanity can only be raised out of its present sensuality by self-control. This view is not likely to be acceptable in a society hereditarily self-indulgent, but occult morality is higher and sterner than that of the world. Also it cares for realities not conventions, and regards unbridled indulgence within marriage as degrading both to mind and body, although, because monogamous, somewhat less ruinous to both than outside the marriage union.

Hence, Occultism condemns "neo-Malthusian practices," as tending to strengthen sex passion;\* it condemns the medical advice to young men to yield to their "natural passions"; it condemns solitary vice as only less harmful than prostitution; all these things are degrading, unmanly, unwomanly. It exhorts man to remount by self-control the steep incline down which he has slipped by self-indulgence, until he becomes continent, not incontinent, by nature. On all this Mr. Leadbeater and myself are at one.

I do not seek to impose this view on the Theosophical Society, for every member is free to form his own judgment on the sexual problem, as on any other, and mutual respect, not wild abuse, is the rightful attitude of members in face of this, the most difficult problem which confronts humanity. I speak on this as Occultist. "He that is able to receive it, let him receive it."

I turn now to the accusations against Mr. Leadbeater, reminding the Society against whom these accusations are leveled. Mr. Leadbeater was a clergyman of the Church of England who in 1883 entered the Theosophical Society, and in 1884 threw up his career to devote his ripe manhood to its service. From that date until now he has served it with unwavering fidelity, through good and evil report, has travelled all over the world to spread its teachings, has contributed to its literature some of its most valued volumes, and thousands, both inside and outside the Society, owe to him the priceless knowledge of Theosophy. During the last two and a half years, under a hurricane of attack as unexampled as his services, he has remained silent, rather than that the Society should suffer his reproach. Because he loved the Society better than his own good name, I, at his wish, have also kept silent. But now that I am appealed to, I will speak, and the more gladly because I also wronged him

\*See my *Theosophy and the Law of Population*, 1891.

believing that he had admitted certain statements as true; I wrote in 1906: "On June 7th, I received an account of the acceptance by Mr. Leadbeater before the Committee of the facts alleged in the evidence"; I thus accepted on what I believed to be his own word, that which, on the word of others, I had rejected as impossible, and that which I ought to have continued to reject even coming as from himself; both he and I have suffered by my blunder, for which I have apologized to him, to an extent which our unmerciful critics little imagine; but it is over, and never the shadow of a cloud can come between us again.

The so-called trial of Mr. Leadbeater was a travesty of justice. He came before judges, one of whom had declared beforehand that "he ought to be shot"; another, before hearing him, had written passionate denunciations of him; a third and fourth had accepted, on purely psychic testimony, unsupported by any evidence, the view that he was grossly immoral and a danger to the Society; in the commonest justice, these persons ought not to have been allowed to sit in judgment. As to the "evidence," he stated at the time: "I have only just now seen anything at all of the documents, except the first letter"; on his hasty perusal of them, he stated that some of the points "are untrue, and others so distorted that they do not represent the facts"; yet it was on these points, unsifted and unproven, declared by him to be untrue and distorted, that he was condemned, and has since been attacked.

It was also on these points that I condemned his teaching; on the central matter I had before expressed disagreement, but no condemnation.

The following statement is the one which has been so widely used against him, and contains the teaching that both he and I condemn. That condemnation I hold to, but the teaching thus condemned was never his; part of it was repudiated by him before the Advisory Council in 1906, and the rest of it had been denied in a private letter of February, 1906, since widely published. I wrote, on the false information then in my hands:

"The advice supposed to be given to rescue a boy, as a last resort, in the grip of sexual passions, became advice putting foul ideas into the minds of boys innocent of all sex impulses, and the long intervals, the rare relief, became twenty-four hours in length, a daily habit. It was conceivable that the advice, as supposed to have been given, had been given with pure intent, and the presumption was so, in a teacher of Theosophical morality; anything else seemed incredible. But such advice as was given in fact, such dealing with boys before sex passion had awakened, could only be given with pure intent if the giver were, on this point, insane."

The two points on which stress is laid here, to which my condemnation applies were: (1) the fouling of "the minds of boys innocent of all sex impulses"; (2) the advice for daily self-indulgence. Neither of these is true, and with the falsity of these, my condemnation no longer applies to Mr. Leadbeater's advice.

(1) In the case on which most stress has been laid, the boy had already contracted an evil habit; Mr. Leadbeater found it impossible to cure the vice at once, but he induced the boy to give up his daily habit, and to lessen the frequency of the self-indulgence, gradually lengthening the intervals, that it might at last be entirely renounced. In a second case, the boy wrote to his father, expressing his intense gratitude to Mr. Leadbeater for helping him, and adding: "They were to be continued only for a very short time. Do not call them a habit, because they were never intended to be anything of the kind." Instead, then, of advising self-indulgence, Mr. Leadbeater sought to help boys in their difficulties, by leading gradually up to a perfect control of the sex-functions, laying especial stress upon the avoidance of haunting lascivious thoughts. If a man is poisoned with arsenic, what is the treatment by a doctor? He does not cut off the poison at once, for that would kill; he prescribes lessening doses till the body regains its normal state. Is the doctor to be

denounced as a prisoner because he takes the only means of saving his patient?

Mr. Leadbeater says positively that he has never given such advice except in cases where certain symptoms had already shown themselves either on the physical plane or in the aura, even though in one or two instances this may have taken place before what is commonly called puberty. Unhappily—as is known to every teacher of children—this vice is found at a very early age, an age much below that of any boy to whom Mr. Leadbeater spoke. This statement of his—sufficient to all of us who know him—is thoroughly borne out by the fact that most of the boys who were much in his company had never heard of any such advice being given. His usual habit was to speak to the boy of the danger of both solitary and associated vice, to advise non-stimulating diet, exercise and the turning of thought away from subjects connected with sex—advice on the lines borne witness to by a lad who was much with him, in a brave letter to the “Vahan.” This was Mr. Leadbeater’s ordinary advice, as it is the advice of all of us.

(2) This Mr. Leadbeater positively denied before the Advisory Committee, and there is not a shred of evidence to support the charge. He said: “The interlineation in writing giving a statement by the mother as to interval is untrue. The original interval was a week, and then it was lengthened to ten days, then a fortnight, and so on.”

I ask the members of the Theosophical Society to consider whether this simple explanation is not more consonant with the character of the great teacher who has lived among them for twenty-four years, than the lurid picture of the monster of sexual vice painted by the inflamed fancy of a few Americans and English? It must be remembered that every effort has been made to construct personal charges against him, without avail.

I have had in my possession for nearly two years a letter from one of Mr. Leadbeater’s most prominent enemies, addressed to a boy whom Mr. Leadbeater was said to have corrupted, in which (with many caressing words, himself using an expression stronger than that which has been taken, in Mr. Leadbeater’s case, to imply impropriety) the writer tried to coax the boy into confessing criminal relations with Mr. Leadbeater, begging him not to show the letter to his father, and to destroy it when read. The lad, utterly ignorant of what was suggested, took the letter to his father, and the father indignantly sent a copy to me. I have also seen the original.

It is not true that this advice was given as theosophical or occult. On the contrary, Mr. Leadbeater has stated throughout that it was a purely physical matter, from his standpoint, and was given as a doctor gives advice to a patient, as a temporary expedient to avoid a worse danger, while lifting the boy out of vice into purity. Mr. Leadbeater agrees with me that the advice is dangerous when scattered broadcast—as has been done by his assailants—and from the very first he volunteered the promise never to give it again; but in the few special cases in which he gave it, he thought he had safeguarded it from the obvious danger.

Much has been made of a “cipher letter.” The use of the cipher arose from an old story in the “Theosophist,” repeated by Mr. Leadbeater to a few lads; they, as boys will, took up the cipher with enthusiasm, and it was subsequently sometimes used in correspondence with the boys who had been present when the story was told. In a type-written note on a fragment of paper, undated and unsigned, relating to an astral experience, a few words in cipher occur on the incriminated advice. Then follows a sentence, unconnected with the context, on which a foul construction has been placed. That the boy did not so read it is proved by a letter of his to Mr. Leadbeater—not sent, but shown to me by his mother—in which he expresses his puzzlement as to what it meant, as he well might. There is something very suspicious about the use of this letter. It was carefully kept away from Mr. Leadbeater, though widely circulated against the wish of the father and mother, and when a copy was lately sent to him by a friend, he did not recognize it in its present

form, and stated emphatically that he had never used the phrase with regard to any sexual act. It may go with the Coulomb and Pigott letters.

There is no doubt that the sex problem is in the air, and it may be, as Dr. Van Hook thinks, that that problem must be discussed in the Theosophical Society, as it is being discussed by sociologists, doctors and teachers outside. It can, however, only be decently and usefully discussed by mature men and women, possessed of physiological and pathological knowledge and of experience of the darker side of life. On the moral question we are all at one; it is method of dealing with dangerous physiological conditions which is under debate. Personally I think—basing the view on well known physiological facts—that as every secretory gland is readily stimulated by thought, and without stimulation does not work to excess, the occupation of the mind along healthy lines will generally avoid dangerous excess, and will preserve in the body the vital elements necessary for the continuance of youth and strength. Dr. Van Hook's medical experience is, of course, enormously wider than my own, but many doctors hold the view expressed by me that nature may, in normal cases, be left to give any necessary relief. But this does not touch Mr. Leadbeater's effort to help boys through a difficult period by counsel often given by Catholic priests under similar circumstances, and given by himself when a priest of the English Church. Mr. Mead has lately stated, in the pages of the "Theosophical Review," that the facts of sex should be explained to boys and girls, so as to avoid the dangers to which they are exposed by hearing the coarse talk of evil-minded servants or vicious comrades. I agree with him on this, but he will be a bold man who ventures to give such instruction, in the face of the hideous misconception with which Mr. Leadbeater has been met. The giving by an elder of a scientific and common-sense explanation would be incredible to a society which can only regard sex through an atmosphere of prudery or vice. In all speech thereon a vicious purpose would be taken for granted.

With regard to the preamble of the resolution condemning Dr. Van Hook I am bound to say that it is based on a misrepresentation. Dr. Van Hook does not say that any "corrupting practices . . . are the high doctrine of Theosophy and the 'precursor of its introduction into the thought of the outer world'"; he says that certain habits, characterized a few lines lower as "this degrading practice," "could not be instantly interrupted by unspiritualized boys. What more natural than that he should recommend that the practice be curbed? And who knows how many boys, taking this advice from Mr. Leadbeater, have not been gradually weaned away from their vice and brought to entire cleanness of life?" (Italics are mine.) He then speaks of other boys who had not yet fallen into vice, but who were surrounded by dangerous thought-forms, as already mentioned above. Dr. Van Hook, after this, says that "the introduction of this question"—obviously the question of how to deal with boys addicted to vice or on the brink of it, alluded to on the preceding page as a "problem" known to "every woman school-teacher dealing with children"—"into the thought of the Theosophical world is but the precursor of its introduction into the thought of the outer world." It is a proof of the danger of introducing an important resolution without notice, and of inflaming the listeners with a garbled account of a paper which they had not read, although they were called on to vote its condemnation, that such a misrepresentation should have been imposed on the Convention.

The further statement that Dr. Van Hook has said that his letter was "dictated verbatim by one of the Masters" suggests, though it does not say, that Dr. Van Hook had made this statement publicly. It would, perhaps, have been fairer to point out that Dr. Van Hook had said this privately, with a request that it should not be published, and that it was promptly published by the person to whom he privately wrote it. On this, as President, I follow the decision laid down by the General Council on July 7th, 1894, in the case of Mr. W. Q. Judge. Mr. Judge was charged with certain offences "with respect to the misuse of the Mahatmas"



names and handwriting"; Mr. Judge contended that he, as Vice-President, could not be tried on such a matter; the Council, on the motion of Messrs. Keightley and Mead, decided that the point was well taken. The Judicial Committee, on July 10th, followed this decision, and apart from the question of his office, it further declared that they could not consider a charge which involved declaration on their part as to the existence or non-existence of Mahatmas, as "it would be a violation of the spirit of neutrality and the unsectarian nature and constitution of the Society." The President-Founder further declared: "The authoritative and dogmatic value of statements as to the existence of Mahatmas, their relations with and messages to private persons, or through them to third parties, the Society or the general public, is denied; all such statements, messages or teachings are to be taken at their intrinsic value and the recipients left to form and declare, if they choose, their own opinions with respect of their genuineness; the Society as a body, maintaining its constitutional neutrality in the premises." Until those decisions of the General Council, the Judicial Committee of 1894, and the President-Founder are annulled, I am bound by them, and cannot officially, nor can the General Council, express any opinion on the origin of Dr. Van Hook's "Open Letter." By parity of reasoning, no Sectional Council should express any opinion on such a matter. Dr. Van Hook is perfectly free to assert publicly—though he has not done so—that the "Open Letter" was dictated verbatim by one of the Masters, and any other member is equally free to deny it.

This is apart from the undesirable nature of the precedent set by a Sectional Convention in its condemnation of the chief officer of another Section; every General Secretary is amenable to his own Section primarily, and this hasty setting of a dangerous precedent is another proof of the unwisdom of springing on an official body an important resolution without notice. While technically accepting this resolution as from "the British Section in Convention assembled," I cannot but know that it is only the individual opinion of thirty-eight persons, unshared in by another twenty-six. It is not the deliberate opinion of the Section.

As regards the main problem:

The Theosophical Society, as a whole, cannot be committed to any special solution of this problem, and its members must be left free. Dr. Van Hook, a medical man of high repute and for many years a university professor, has as much right to his view, without being charged with supporting solitary vice, as his assailants have a right to theirs, without being charged with favoring prostitution. Both accusations are equally foul and equally unjust, and people who fling them about are *ipso facto* disqualified from being judges. These difficult and delicate questions of sex cannot be efficiently, or even decently, discussed in open conventions, in which young people are present. The conclusions arrived at under such conditions are inevitably those of passion, not of reason. We are all at one in condemning vicious practices, solitary or associated, and in desiring to rescue the young who have fallen into either form of vice. There is no approval of vice anywhere within the Theosophical Society; there is therefore no need for the Society to repudiate pernicious teaching on this matter any more than to repudiate assassination. Mr. Leadbeater and myself labor as earnestly to help others to pure and noble living as do Mr. Sinnett, Mr. Mead, and their co-signatories, and there should be room enough in the Society we all love for us as well as for them.

Mr. Leadbeater resigned two and a half years ago in the vain attempt to save the Society from this dissension; he does not ask to return. I am not at liberty to resign, being where I am by my Master's order, nor am I at liberty to ask him again to take his place within the Theosophical Society without a vote of the Theosophical Society. If the Theosophical Society wishes to undo the wrong done to him, it is for the Convention of each Section to ask me to invite his return, and I will rejoice to do so. Further, in every way that I can, outside official membership, I will welcome his co-operation, show him honor, and stand beside him. If the

Theosophical Society disapprove of this, and if a two-thirds majority of members of the whole Theosophical Society demand my resignation because of this, I will ask my Master's permission to resign. If not, is it not time to cease from warring against chimeras, and to devote ourselves wholly to the work? The trouble is confined to a small number of American and a considerable number of British members; can they not feel that they have done their duty by two years and a half of protest, and not endeavor to coerce the remainder of the Society into a continual turmoil? The vast majority of you affirmed last year that you regarded me as the President chosen by the Masters to steer what They have called "our Theosophical ship." In Their name I call on all who are loyal to Them and to Their choice, to work for Them, each in his own way, but in charity with all.

Your faithful servant,

ANNIE BESANT,

President of the Theosophical Society.

P. S.—Since the above was written, Dr. Van Hook has been re-elected as General Secretary, his Section's answer to the British attack on him. In answer to a letter from England, he has repudiated the misrepresentation of his paper, and has made a statement similar to that made by me above, on pp. 9, 10. (Original pamphlet.) No unprejudiced person can read his paper in any other sense.

I am glad to take this opportunity of rebutting a statement widely circulated, but utterly untrue, that Mr. Leadbeater "deceived" me in his statement of the case at Benares. Neither then, nor at any other time, has he said anything to me which has deviated from truth in any way. I have utter confidence in his candor.

#### WHAT CERTAIN BRITISH MEMBERS SAY ABOUT MRS. BESANT'S LETTER.

The Editor of "The Theosophic Voice" is in receipt of a pamphlet entitled "A Reply to the President's Letter of November, 1908," to which the following "Note" is appended:

"At a representative meeting of many of the older and well-known members of the Theosophical Society, held in London, on November 13th, the present situation with regard to the Leadbeater Case was fully discussed. The President's Letter in answer to the request of the Convention of the British Section that she should take steps to put an end to the scandalous state of affairs which now obtains in the Society, was carefully considered. In view of the fact that she refuses to take any steps, but on the contrary would welcome the reinstatement of Mr. Leadbeater, and that, too, without the public repudiation which she promised should be exacted of him, it was decided that a Reply to Mrs. Besant's Letter should be issued, and Miss Edith Ward, Mr. Mead, Mr. Kingsland, and Mr. Herbert Burrows were appointed a Committee to draw up the Reply."

The text of the Reply herein referred to is as follows:

#### THE REPLY.

##### Introductory Statement.

The recent Letter of Mrs. Besant, as President of the Theosophical Society, which has been sent to all the members of this Section (and also to all the other Sections of the Society), purports to be her reply to an earnest appeal, by the British Section in Convention assembled, to the members of the Theosophical Society, and especially to the President and members of the General Council—to unite in putting an end to the scandalous state of affairs which now exists in the Society with regard to what is known as the Leadbeater teaching, so that the repudiation by the Society of this pernicious teaching may be unequivocal and final.

By formal direction of the Convention (held in London, July 4 and 5, 1908), a Special Report of the resolutions and of the proceedings which led up to them (including a full statement of the facts which necessi-

tated the appeal and the debate on the subject) was prepared by a Special Committee (whom the Convention unanimously appointed), to be issued to the members of the Section. This Committee consisted of: Miss Edith Ward, Messrs. G. R. S. Mead, Herbert Whyte, Herbert Burrows and Mrs. Sharpe, General Secretary of the Section. An account of the proceedings of the Committee will be found in "The Vahan" of October, 1908.

This Report, which was duly prepared and passed by the whole Committee, has been suppressed by the General Secretary, who has been supported by a majority of the Executive Committee—nine to five.

The nine are: Miss Bright, Miss Green, Mrs. Larmuth, Mr. Leo, Miss Mallet, Mr. Hodgson Smith, Mr. Wedgewood, Mr. Whyte, and Mrs. Sharpe. (Mrs. Sharpe did not vote on the actual resolution supporting her action, but voted on all other resolutions in the same sense.)

The five are: Mr. Burrows, Mr. Glass, Mr. Kingsland, Mr. Mead and Miss Ward.

Against this solid majority the minority who have endeavored to carry out the wishes of the Convention have been powerless. This policy of suppression has been vigorously maintained; and now, more than four and a half months after the Convention, the members are still in ignorance of these important proceedings. In spite of a resolution unanimously passed at the Convention that "The Vahan," the sectional organ, should be open to the free discussion of all matters of interest to the Section, Mrs. Sharpe refused to print even the following document:

The Report of the Debate, for which two additional sessions of the recent Convention of the British Section of the Theosophical Society were required, and which culminated in the passing of two very important Resolutions, has now been agreed to unanimously by the Special Committee appointed by the Convention to prepare it for publication.

The General Secretary, however, refuses to publish the document, and is supported in her refusal by a majority of the Executive Committee.

We, the undersigned members of the Special Committee (of five), are prepared to carry out the instructions of the General Council in Convention duly assembled.

The official means of issuing the Report, however, having been denied us, we now apply directly to the members of the Section for the necessary funds and addresses (which may be sent to any of the undersigned), in order that we may carry out the imperative duty of acquainting the Section with the present grave state of affairs.

(Signed) G. R. S. Mead.  
Herbert Burrows.  
Edith Ward.

It has thus been deliberately rendered impossible for the facts of the case\* to be placed before the members. And now with only Mrs. Besant's letter before them, the members are being urged to sign a petition for Mr. Leadbeater's reinstatement.

Even in Mrs. Besant's Letter, which has gone out to the whole Society, as well as to members of this Section, the very resolution on which she bases that reply, is not given,<sup>o</sup> and it was only at the last moment that the General Secretary of this Section found herself compelled to enclose the bare text of that resolution with Mrs. Besant's Letter as sent out to the Section.

Even when this opportunity arose Mrs. Sharpe has still suppressed the following two very important decisions of the Convention.

By 33 votes to 31 the Convention rejected an amendment, moved by Mrs. Sharpe, and seconded by Mr. Ernest Wood (of Manchester):

Welcoming the President's policy of collaboration with Mr. C. W. Leadbeater in any work which he is willing to do for the Society.

\*Mr. Burrows and Mr. Mead have since printed their speeches themselves in a pamphlet, and copies may be obtained from them.—Editor.

<sup>o</sup>And yet Mrs. Besant (p. 3) claims that she is submitting "the whole case to the judgment of the Theosophical Society."—British Committee.

This amendment was rejected on its merits before the debate on the Van Hook-Leadbeater resolution (moved as an amendment to Mr. Dunlop's resolution) took place. After the protracted debate which resulted in the carrying of this resolution. Mr. Bell (of Harrogate) moved, and Mr. Wilkinson (of Nottingham) seconded:

That this Convention looks on the teaching given by C. W. Leadbeater to certain boys as wholly evil, and hereby expresses its judgment on this matter.

This was carried *nem. con.*

The Van Hook-Leadbeater resolution was carried by 38 votes to 4 (all the latter cast by one Belgian delegate), 22 declining to vote. This resolution, moved in the form of an amendment, was as follows:

This Convention of the British Section of the Theosophical Society, while affirming its loyalty to the first Object of the Society—namely, "to form a nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity"—strongly protests against evoking the sentiment of brotherhood to countenance what is wrong.

Whereas Dr. Weller Van Hook, the present General Secretary of the American Section, and so a member of the General Council of the Theosophical Society, in a recent Open Letter, which he has subsequently stated to have been "dictated verbatim by one of the Masters," has publicly claimed that the corrupting practices, the teaching of which determined the resignation of Mr. C. W. Leadbeater, are the high doctrine of Theosophy and the "precursor of its introduction into the thought of the outer world":—

This Convention declares its abhorrence of such practices, and, in view of the incalculable harm to Theosophy, and of the disgrace which this teaching must inevitably bring upon the Society, earnestly calls upon all its members, especially the President and members of the General Council, to unite in putting an end to the present scandalous state of affairs, so that the repudiation by the Society of this pernicious teaching may be unequivocal and final.

Moved by Herbert Burrows; seconded by G. R. S. Mead; supported by A. P. Sinnett, C. J. Barker, J. S. Brown, Dr. C. G. Currie, H. R. Hogg, B. Keightley, W. Kingsland, W. Scott-Elliot, W. Theobald, B. G. Theobald, L. Wallace, C. B. Wheeler, H. L. Shindler, A. P. Cattanaeh, Dr. A. King, Baker Hudson, W. H. Thomas, A. B. Green, J. M. Watkins, E. E. Marsden, H. E. Nichol, by the delegates of the London and Blavatsky Lodges, and by many others.

Immediately after the vote was taken Miss Dupuis, of the H. P. B. Lodge, read the following declaration, in which the majority of the representatives who had declined to vote joined by standing with her:

We cannot vote for this amendment as it is worded. We will not vote against it as it involves so much. We stand and hereby proclaim that we utterly condemn the practices alluded to, but refuse to condemn any individual.

#### REPLY TO THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER.

This serious and earnest appeal to safeguard the good name of the Society and to assist in preserving Theosophy from harm, the President now rejects with all her strength. Mrs. Besant's reply takes the form of special pleading in defence of Mr. Leadbeater; she withdraws her former unequivocal condemnation of his teaching and substitutes for it equivocal phrases; humbly apologies to him; and finally invites the Society to vote for Mr. Leadbeater's triumphant reinstatement without further guarantee.

The change in Mrs. Besant's attitude is amazing, but still more astonishing is her forgetfulness of her emphatic pledges given to the Society at the time of her election to the Presidency.

#### THE PRESIDENT'S PLEDGES.

In April, 1907, in answer to a telegram from the Council of the Blavatsky Lodge, in these words: "Would you as President permit X's (Mr. Leadbeater's) readmission?"—Mrs. Besant replied:

"If publicly repudiates teaching, two years after repudiation, on large

majority request of whole Society, would reinstate; otherwise not."

What Mrs. Besant meant by "repudiation," and what we have all understood her to mean, is quite clear from her public letter to the members of the British Section, dated March 24, 1907 (p.5).\*

"As regards his (Mr. L.'s) readmission to the Society—I do not know that he wishes readmission<sup>o</sup>—I shall continue to oppose it, as I have hitherto done, until he says publicly that the teaching is wrong (italics Mrs. Besant's), not only that he will refrain from it, as he promised to do in February, 1906, and also before the Advisory Board in London."

At the Convention of the American Section, 1906, Mrs. Kate Buffington Davis read the following from a letter of Mrs. Besant's, dated from Benares, August 9, 1906./

"Any proposal to reinstate Mr. Leadbeater in the membership of the T. S. would be ruinous to the Society. I would be indignantly repudiated here and in Europe, and I am sure in Australia and New Zealand, if the facts were known. If such a proposal were carried in America—I do not believe it possible—I should move on the T. S. Council, the supreme authority, that the application of membership should be rejected. But I am sure that Mr. Leadbeater would not apply."

Why Mrs. Besant italicises the word "wrong" in the last quotation but one is quite evident to all who remember her exceedingly strong, unequivocal, and repeated acceptance of the phenomenal pronouncements published by the late President-Founder just prior to his decease.

In his Presidential Address at the Adyar Anniversary Meeting, December 29, 1906 (see *General Report*, p. 3), referring to the Leadbeater case, and to the specific question as to whether Mr. Leadbeater's teaching was right or wrong, Col. Olcott stated:

"So when Mahatma M. came to me last Friday night I asked Him the question, and He replied 'wrong.'"

In a letter to Mr. Leadbeater, dated January 12, 1907, Colonel Olcott writes on his death-bed:

"Both Mahatma M. and Mahatma K. H. assured me you did well to resign; that it was right to call a Council to advise upon the matter, and that I did right in accepting your resignation; but They said we were wrong in allowing the matter to be made public, for your sake and the good of the Society. They said you should have stated in your resignation that you resigned because you had offended the standard of ideals of the majority of the members of the Society by giving out certain teachings which were considered objectionable. . . . They have told both Annie and myself that your teaching young boys to . . . is wrong."

In Colonel Olcott's report of one of the Adyar "interviews," dated January 11, 1907, in reply to a leading question, the answer reported is:

"No we cannot tell you this, for that concerns himself alone, but it is different when he teaches things to others that will harm."

And in answer to another question:

"Write and ask him, it is not for us to say. We do, however, affirm that these teachings are wrong."

Moreover, in her pamphlet on "The Testing of the Theosophical Society" (one of her Election addresses), Mrs. Besant writes (p. 7), in reference to Col. Olcott's "Conversation with the Mahatmas":

"I may add that the 'Convention' in no way suggests Mr. Leadbeater's reinstatement, and that we at Adyar could not read that into it, as we were told at the same time that the Master, in answer to a suggestion to that effect, has sternly refused his approval."

\*This was written nine months after Mrs. Besant had received the official Minutes of the Advisory Committee, and her opinion, therefore, was then not based on alleged "false information."

<sup>o</sup>In his letter to "The Vahan" (May, 1907), Mr. Leadbeater himself says that he does not wish to rejoin.

/Mrs. Besant had also already received her official copy of the Minutes by this date.

We do not cite these utterances as authoritative for ourselves, nor do we pause to criticize them, we simply place them on record to show why Mrs. Besant emphasized the word "wrong."

On this point at least we thought we were all agreed on ordinary grounds of morality, whether we accepted or rejected the authority of the phenomenal answers reported by Colonel Olcott. The thing was unquestionably wrong under any circumstances.

#### "MAHATMIC" CONTRADICTIONS.

In May, however, of this year, Dr. Van Hook, the General Secretary of the American Section, and as such a member of the General Council of the Society, in Open Letters to his Section, declared that Mr. Leadbeater's teaching on the point was right in every respect. (Addendum, May 5th, 1908, p. 6):

"No mistake was made by Mr. Leadbeater in the nature of the advice he gave his boys. No mistake was made in the way he gave it."

It was at the same time widely circulated privately, on his own declaration, that these Letters were not really his, but "dictated verbatim by one of the Masters." These astounding statements obtained the widest credence, and the result was that Mr. Leadbeater was invited to take the post of editor of part of the official organ of the American Section, by a large majority referendum vote.

In face of this, many of the members of the British Section could no longer remain silent; they were bound to protest and call attention to the very grave danger that threatened the Society, and in which it is now actually involved.

These "Mahatmic" pronouncements, however, were not the ground of that protest; it may be left to those who believe in their authenticity to reconcile their glaring contradictions. No decision on such manifest incongruities was asked for, and therefore Mrs. Besant's argument as to official ruling, on pp. 13 and 14 of her Letter, is quite beside the point.

#### THE LOGICAL CONSEQUENCE OF DR. VAN HOOK'S CONTENTION

What was strongly objected to and most energetically protested against was the public declaration by a responsible officer of the General Council that Mr. Leadbeater's teaching is right. If Mr. Leadbeater's teaching is right, and he made no mistake in any way whatever, as Dr. Van Hook, (or his "Master," if he prefers it) contends, why should not Mr. Leadbeater continue such teachings, as they have proved, according to Dr. Van Hook, of the greatest value; and by a parity of reasoning, why should not any pupil of Mr. Leadbeater's or anyone else in the Society who wishes to follow in his footsteps, do the same?

Against this hideous prospect we protested and do protest. If Mr. Leadbeater's teaching is right, then it should be followed. That is the only logical position. Mr. Leadbeater himself says it would be "dangerous" only "if promiscuously given"; he as an occultist knows when it should be given, he claims. It is not really dangerous for him to give it; and he simply bows to Mrs. Besant's "opinion that it is dangerous." Mr. Leadbeater is consistent in this, that he has never recanted; he has defended this teaching in the face of everything. What conclusion is likely to be drawn from this by those who believe that Mr. Leadbeater is a high adept? Simply that he knows on this subject; and has only promised not to do it again because of prudish convention, ignorant "hysterical" uproar, and "insane prejudices." He is the "martyr" occultist persecuted for his knowledge! What results? That his pupils will think as he thinks; that they will do as he has done. Why not, if he was and is right?

This view, that Mr. Leadbeater is right, is already being adopted far and wide in the Society at this moment. In what way does Mrs. Besant's Letter help us to stem the tide?

#### MRS. BESANT'S CONTRADICTIONS.

Mrs. Besant's view (pp. 5 and 6) emphasized to a final utterance for

those who accept her authority ("I speak as Occultist. 'He that is able to receive it, let him receive it'") leaves the door wide open for Mr. Leadbeater's teaching. But at the expense of what contradiction! Mr. Leadbeater has taught it, and refuses to repudiate the teaching; yet he is said by Mrs. Besant at the same time to be "at one" with her in condemning it as being "degrading, unmanly, unwomanly" (p. 6), while he himself declares that it is "dangerous" only "if promiscuously given" ("The Theosophist," Feb., 1908), and Mrs. Besant herself elsewhere in her Letter (pp. 7 and 8) expresses only disagreement and withdraws condemnation.

But H. P. B. did not equivocate on the subject—and she, we suppose, could speak with as much authority on occultism as Mr. Leadbeater and Mrs. Besant. (She characterized it to me as "the sin against the Holy Ghost."—G. R. S. M.\*)

Mrs. Besant has now entirely changed her former view on the subject, for in her Letters<sup>o</sup> of June 9, 1906, she writes of her first impression on hearing the charges in February:

"This was the first time I had heard of such a method of meeting the sexual difficulty, let alone of Mr. Leadbeater's recommendation of it. I had always regarded self-abuse as one of the lowest forms of vice, a thing universally reprobated by decent people. To me it was not arguable. But I have since heard that it is sometimes practised and recommended by ascetics, otherwise good men, for the sake of preserving chastity—as though self-abuse did not destroy chastity as much as prostitution, and in an even more degrading way!"

But Mrs. Besant now asserts (pp. 5 and 6) that "Occultism" "condemns solitary vice as only less harmful than prostitution." To us it still remains "not arguable," and to this we make no exception, either on the ground of the lesser of two evils, or on the perverted ground of doing evil that good may come; and therefore we protest and appeal to all who love the good name of the Society, to pronounce unmistakably on this subject, and to resist the triumphant reinstatement into the Society as an injured "martyr" of the man who has brought all this sorrow and suffering upon us. In a Society like ours, just because of the deference his many pupils, adherents, and admirers pay to Mr. Leadbeater's assertions, his obstinate insistence that his teaching is right is the most potent means of erecting it into a generally recognized Theosophical doctrine, of the first importance. This is proved by the fact that Dr. Weller Van Hook in one of his Open Letters (Addendum, May 5, pp. 5 and 6) appeals to the doctrines of reincarnation and karma, as expounded by Mr. Leadbeater especially to suit his teaching, in justification of it. The boy's statements also that it was taught as "Theosophical" formed the basis of one of the charges.

This pernicious teaching is not merely "ascribed" to Mr. Leadbeater, as Mrs. Besant says in her opening words, it is fully and freely confessed by him and strenuously defended. In what way this teaching, which Mrs. Besant now refuses to condemn, when taught by Mr. Leadbeater, can make for "purity" and for "the Society's good name" (p. 3) is beyond us.

#### THE DOCUMENTS.

On p. 6 Mrs. Besant writes, quoting a previous letter of hers (the "Simla Letter"):

"On June 7th (1906) I received an account of the acceptance by Mr. Leadbeater before the Committee of the facts alleged in the evidence."

As this might give the unknowing reader the impression that Mrs. Besant had not had previously before her any of the "facts alleged in the

\*See "The Secret Doctrine," iii. 445 (Diagram).

<sup>o</sup>This is the "Simla Letter" sent to the E. S. wardens and sub-wardens, with a covering note in which occur the words: "You may use publicly my view of the fatal nature of the teaching, should need arise." (The Italics are Mrs. Besant's.)

evidence," or any knowledge of the "acceptance by Mr. Leadbeater" of them, to make it clear we recite the facts.

In February, 1906, Mrs. Besant herself was the first to receive the charges and original evidence on which they were based, from America, drawn up and laid before her by the two chief officials of the E. S. there, in a letter dated January 25.

Mr. Leadbeater, to whom also a copy had been forwarded, was then with Mrs. Besant at Benares. After consultations with her, Mr. Leadbeater wrote a letter of confession and excuse (dated February 27) to the then American General Secretary; and Mrs. Besant also sent a letter to the chief officer of the E. S. in which she repeated Mr. Leadbeater's excuses, but expressed disagreement with his teaching in view of Mr. Leadbeater's promise to abstain from this teaching in future, however, she did not favour the "searching investigation" demanded, and said she saw no reason why he should be withdrawn from activity.

So far all had been kept as silent as possible. Mr. Leadbeater's letter and Mrs. Besant's reply being entirely unsatisfactory, the Executive Committee of the American Section then felt themselves compelled to lay the whole matter officially before Colonel Olcott, the President-Founder of the Society, who promptly called together an Advisory Committee consisting of the then Executive Committee of the British Section, to which Section Mr. Leadbeater belonged. The members of this Committee were: Mr. Sinnett, Dr. Nunn, Mr. Mead, Mrs. Stead, Miss Ward, Miss Spink, Mrs. Hooper, Mr. Bertram Keightley, Mr. Thomas and Mr. Glass. There were also present Mr. Burnett, as representative and delegate of the Executive Committee of the American Section, and M. Bernard, the representative of the Executive Committee of the French Section.

The documents submitted by the American Executive consisted of: (1) The charges and evidence already laid before Mrs. Besant; (2) Mr. Leadbeater's letter of confession and excuse; (3) rebuttal statements of the boys to some of the statements made by Mr. Leadbeater in his letter; and (4) corroborative evidence and testimony in two further cases obtained after sending to Mrs. Besant the first evidence on which the charges were brought.

The original charges, based on the evidence of two boys, were:

First: That he is teaching young boys given into his care habits of self-abuse and demoralizing personal practices.

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

Third: That he has demanded, at least in one case, promises of the utmost secrecy.

It was with regard to the rebuttal evidence (3) and the further corroborative evidence (4) that Mr. Leadbeater said at the beginning of the inquiry, as quoted by Mrs. Besant (p. 7):

"I have only just now seen anything at all of the documents, except the (read "that") first letter."

This "first letter" is the first lengthy document containing the charges and evidence laid before Mrs. Besant in February.

Below, in parallel columns, will be found Mrs. Besant's version of what took place, together with the full text of the Minutes from which she is supposed to be quoting:



## Mrs. Besant's Letter (p. 7).

As to the "evidence," he stated at the time: "I have only just now seen anything at all of the documents, except the first letter"; on his hasty perusal of them, he stated that some of the points "are untrue and others so distorted that they do not represent the facts"; yet it was on these points, unsifted and unproven, declared by him to be untrue and distorted, that he was condemned, and has since been attacked.

## Minutes of the Advisory Board

I have only just now seen anything at all of the documents except that first letter. There have been other supposed rebuttals and other documents which I had only seen to-day, and while there are a number of points I should challenge as inaccurate, yet all those are minor points and do not affect the great question. It is simply that there are points of so-called rebuttal which are untrue and others so distorted that they do not represent the facts of the case but these do not affect the central points.

It will be seen that the important qualifying phrases italicised by us are omitted by Mrs. Besant.

This was Mr. Leadbeater's statement at the beginning of the inquiry, before he was questioned and had to make some damaging further admissions.

Mrs. Besant's statement that it was on the points in the second batch of documents only that "he was condemned and has since been attacked" is not the fact.

The Committee unanimously advised Col. Olcott to accept Mr. Leadbeater's resignation, which was written only just before it met, because of his own confession in the first place, and because to their amazement he still persisted in defending his teaching, and made even further admissions.

At that time in the Society we were unanimous that it was wrong. Mr. Leadbeater's teaching had not yet been introduced into the "thought of the Theosophical world."

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 DENUNCIATION OF THE COMMITTEE.

To weaken this unanimous advice Mrs. Besant now denounces some of the members of the Committee as unfit to advise Colonel Olcott, with whom the ultimate decision rested and whose impartiality Mr. Leadbeater freely acknowledged at the end of the inquiry.

In reply to the late President-Founder's question: "I should like to ask Mr. Leadbeater if he thinks I have acted impartially?"—Mr. Leadbeater replied: "Absolutely." (See Minutes.)

Mrs. Besant, nevertheless, declares that "the so-called trial of Mr. Leadbeater was a travesty of justice" (p. 7), and so asperses the memory of the late President-Founder.

Mr. Leadbeater was not tried judicially; the nature of the Committee was twice laid down by Colonel Olcott as follows:

(a) Of course you know the executive power is vested in me. You are here to advise me and to hear what Mr. Leadbeater has to say, and to act according to your judgment after hearing him.

(b) We should not keep in anything, but have frank disclosure. You are not sitting judicially, but to advise me what to do.

Mr. Leadbeater was given every opportunity to explain his position and justify his conduct; unless, of course, questioning him on the evidence is to be considered unfair and a "travesty of justice."

To show the baselessness of Mrs. Besant's denunciation, it may be stated that the apparently most telling point she tries to make—the shooting story—seems to have arisen from a rumour we heard at the time, that if the matter became public, and Mr. Leadbeater were to return to America, it was likely that a relative of one of the boys might "go after him with a shot-gun." (E. W.; G. R. S. M.) As to psychic influence, though this is quite news to the two of us who sat on the Committee, we may be permitted to remark that it is hardly consistent of Mrs. Besant to denounce belief in psychic testimony as a disqualification.

The unanimous opinion of the Committee was that such teaching should not be given under any circumstances whatever, not even to depraved boys, much less therefore to boys who had no knowledge of such practices. The only real difference of opinion among the members of the Committee was as to whether they should advise expulsion or acceptance of resignation only, as commensurate with the offence, after Mr. Leadbeater's further admissions. They finally took the more lenient course. The unanimous decision of the Committee was given in the following resolution:

That having considered certain charges against Mr. Leadbeater, and having listened to his explanations, this Committee recommend the acceptance by the President-Founder of his resignation already offered in anticipation of the Committee's decision.

On p. 8, Mrs. Besant now expressly withdraws the condemnation of Mr. Leadbeater's advice which she had put on record in her very important letter of June, 1906, on the ground that the "information" on which she had based it was "false." Its falsity is alleged on two points.

#### FIRST POINT OF ALLEGED "FALSITY."

(1) With regard to the first (the "fouling" of the mind), it is sufficient to quote Mrs. Besant's own words of condemnation, in parallel columns with Mr. Leadbeater's own admissions before the Advisory Committee.

Minutes of the Advisory  
Committee.

Mr. Thomas: Your reply as to scarcely recollecting suggests that there were so many cases. I should like to know whether in any case . . . there was definite action?

Mr. Leadbeater: You mean touch? That might have taken place.

\* \* \*

Mr. Mead: I want to ask whether this advice was given on appeal or not?

Mr. Leadbeater: Sometimes without, sometimes with. I advised it at times as a prophylactic.

Mrs. Besant's Letter of June 9,  
1906.

He (Mr. Leadbeater) denied none of the charges, but in answer to questions, very much strengthened them, for he alleged that he had actually handled the boys himself, and that he had thus dealt with boys before puberty "as a prophylactic." So that the advice which was supposed to be given to rescue a boy, as a last resort, in the grip of sexual passion, became advice putting foul ideas into the minds of boys innocent of all sex-impulses.

Still further than this, Mrs. Besant condemned Mr. Leadbeater's teaching in all respects.

**M. Bernard:** Since Mr. Leadbeater was teaching these boys to help them in case of need, considering that men may be in the same difficulty, has he taught this to any grown-up men? Has he taught the same thing in the same personal way to grown-up men as to children?

**Mr. Leadbeater:** I believe that at least on two occasions in my life I have given that advice to young men as better than the one generally adopted.

**Col. Olcott:** Since you came into the Society?

**Mr. Leadbeater:** I think not, but one case might have been. You are probably not aware that one at least of the great Church organizations for young men deals with the matter in the same manner. (!)

It will thus be seen that Mrs. Besant's original condemnation was based not on "false information," but on her own interpretations of Mr. Leadbeater's admissions.

That the reason for giving the "advice" was sometimes other than that professed, may be seen from the fact that, in his letter of confession, Mr. Leadbeater admitted that he had told one of the boys "that physical growth is frequently promoted by the setting in motion of these currents, but that they need regulation." The boy's evidence on this point ("the promise of the increase of physical manhood") formed the basis of one of the charges. The cipher letter further corroborates this evidence.

In the face of the opinion she placed "on record" in 1906, Mrs. Besant now denies (p. 8) that there was any "fouling" of the "imagination" even of the "minds of boys innocent of all sex-impulses." Yet (on p. 9) she admits it was taught not only to boys not yet addicted to the practice, but also to one or two "before what is called the age of puberty."

The plea of justification now urged for this extraordinary change of opinion is that "certain symptoms had already shown themselves either on the physical plane or in the aura."

The giving of this teaching then even to children Mrs. Besant now refuses to condemn in Mr. Leadbeater's case; and thus opens the way for any psychic in the Society to justify the teaching of it on his bare assertion that he has seen this or that "symptom" in a child's aura.

All such excuses and subterfuges we emphatically reject, for the practice under any circumstances can never lessen lust but only enhance it.

#### SECOND POINT OF ALLEGED "FALSITY."

(2) The second point on the "falsity" of which Mrs. Besant withdraws her condemnation is the question of frequency. Here Mr. Leadbeater's denial, quoted by Mrs. Besant (p. 9), and the testimony of the mother of boy No. 3 as to the "original interval" are in direct conflict.

In the letter to the boy, the genuineness of which Mr. Leadbeater acknowledges, he writes:

"There may be this much reason in what he (the Doctor) says, that while you are not quite well we should spend no force that can be avoided. You will remember that when we met in — I suggested longer intervals until you were completely recovered."

**Mrs. Besant, in the Same Letter as Above.**

Let me here place on record my opinion that such teaching as this given to men, let alone innocent boys, is worthy of the sternest reprobation. It distorts and perverts the sex-instinct, implanted in men for the preservation of the race; it degrades the ideas of marriage, fatherhood, and motherhood, humanity's most sacred ideals; it befouls the imagination, pollutes the emotions, and undermines the health.

It is to be noted that this "suggestion" was made because the boy was ill. The "original" interval to which the mother refers was advised prior to this meeting.

The most striking point in Mrs. Besant's plea is her appeal for "utter confidence" in Mr. Leadbeater's statements and denials; frequently she says with regard to evidence "it is not true that . . ." when this simply means "Mr. Leadbeater says it is not true." Mr. Leadbeater is always to be believed no matter what the testimony against him of the boys and mothers (or even of his own letters) may be, for Mrs. Besant has "utter confidence in his candour."

But one of the main points against Mr. Leadbeater is that he taught these practices without the knowledge of the parents and bound the boys to secrecy, as has been fully admitted by himself. Mrs. Besant writes, in her Simla letter of June 9, 1906.

"Nothing can excuse giving to young boys instructions on sexual matters to be kept from their parents, the rightful protectors of their children."

Why, then, if Mr. Leadbeater is so candid with Mrs. Besant, did he not breathe a word to her of his teaching before he was detected? For in the same letter Mrs. Besant writes:

"This was the first time I had heard of such a method of meeting the sexual difficulty, let alone Mr. Leadbeater's recommendation of it. I had always regarded self-abuse as one of the lowest forms of vice, and a thing universally reprobated by decent people. To me it was not arguable."

Now we are not labouring this point as to precisely "daily" practice, but Mrs. Besant knows, as we know, that the cipher letter says, "twice a week is permissible," preceded and followed by words that make it impossible to put a curative construction upon the "advice." How then does Mrs. Besant deal with this most important document, which, unfortunately, came into the hands of the American Executive only a day before the meeting of the Advisory Committee in London, too late to be included in the evidence? No contemptuous words can brush aside this document.

#### THE CIPHER LETTER.

The "fragment of paper" is sufficient to accommodate not a note only but a letter of 229 words, beginning with "My own darling boy," and ending with "Thousand kisses, darling" (in cipher). It is true that the first half of this letter refers to a psychic experience, but the second, of equal length, begins with the words "Turning to other matters," and these matters are sexual; it is in the latter part that the cipher sentences occur, and it is in the body of the cipher, towards the end, that the sentence referred to by Mrs. Besant ("glad sensation is so pleasant") is found.

If, as Mrs. Besant says (p. 11), the boy replied to the letter (though his reply was not sent), the letter can hardly be a forgery to "go with the Coulomb and Pigott letters." If the boy himself did not understand the sentence in the sense implied, as Mrs. Besant says—the mother (in a covering letter addressed to one of the members of the Investigating Committee in America) says she so understands it, and makes it an additional ground of complaint. As the letter stands it is impossible to read the sentence otherwise than as applying to its immediate context. It could not apply to the psychic experience, for that was not of a pleasant nature.

Mrs. Besant, however, says that Mr. Leadbeater states he does not "recognize it (the letter) in its present form." Who then has changed the "form" of the letter—the boy or the mother? And if so, what possible purpose could be served thereby? Will Mr. Leadbeater himself venture to assert that the letter or any part of it is a forgery?

But even if the sentence in question was entirely eliminated, there is that in the rest of the letter which calls for the most searching inquiry, and its genuineness is further corroborated by the identity of its very

peculiar phrasing with that of the other letter in evidence which Mr. Leadbeater has acknowledged as his.

It is, therefore, impossible to join Mrs. Besant in letting it "go with the Coulomb and Pigott letters."

As to this document we agree with Miss Ward in her recent circular that:

"If it is genuine it settles for us (me) the whole question of Mr. Leadbeater's attitude: if it is not genuine it is a piece of inconceivable wickedness, which leaves Mr. Leadbeater grossly wronged and of which the perpetrator should, by every code of honour and justice, be unveiled and punished."

Mr. Leadbeater, however, in a reply to a letter from Miss Ward, refuses absolutely to have anything to do with the impartial board of investigation which she has proposed, and characterises any attempt at such investigation as "gross impertinence" and our condemnations of his teaching as "insane prejudices." Mrs. Besant herself also refuses to entertain the idea of any such unbiassed investigation.

So much, then, for the two main points of "false information" on the ground of which Mrs. Besant withdraws her condemnation of Mr. Leadbeater's "advice."

#### DR. VAN HOOK'S "REPUDIATION."

The fundamental difference between us and Dr. Van Hook is that what he calls the "advice of a wise teacher," and regards as of such inestimable value, we characterize as "corrupting practices," and it is against this teaching in any shape or form as being theosophical, occult (in a good sense) or moral that we protest.

Mrs. Besant says (p. 16) that Dr. Van Hook has "repudiated the misrepresentation of his paper" made in the preamble to the resolution passed at our last Convention, and contends (pp. 12 and 13) that his statements in his Open Letter to which we take exception refer only to the discussion of the general sex problem with regard to children and not to Mr. Leadbeater's "solution" of it.

It is remarkable that Dr. Van Hook himself has nowhere published this "repudiation," but from a copy of a letter written by him to Mr. Whyte, which Mrs. Besant has had printed in "Theosophy in India" (Sept., 1908), which we find that Dr. Van Hook expressly states that "in the Letters published over his (my) signature" the "general problem" has not been dealt with, but only the "specific question" of Mr. Leadbeater's "solution" of it.

We may here point out that it is not the fact that the Convention had before it only a "garbled account," as Mrs. Besant says (p. 13), of Dr. Van Hook's utterances; every sentence that could be used to persuade the Convention that Dr. Van Hook did not mean what he wrote, was insisted on by Dr. Van Hook's and Mr. Leadbeater's supporters; his paragraphs were read repeatedly in full, and the sentences Mrs. Besant quotes (p. 12) were especially insisted on.

In his Open Letter (Addendum, May 5) Dr. Van Hook speaks of nothing else but Mr. Leadbeater's teaching and method and "solution" of the problem. And if the following paragraphs in it do not refer to Mr. Leadbeater's "solution" to his "system," to the blessing he is conferring by it, then to what on earth do they refer? Dr. Van Hook's "repudiation" of his own plain meaning simply makes nonsense of his whole contention. Dr. Van Hook (or, if he prefers it, his "Master") writes:

"Hence the "crime" or "wrong" of teaching the boys the practice alluded to was no crime or wrong at all, but only the advice of a wise teacher who foresaw an almost limitless period of suffering for his charge if the solution for his difficulties usually offered by the World were adopted and relief obtained by an associated instead of by an individual and personal act.

"The introduction of this question into the thought of the Theosophical World it but the precursor of its introduction into the thought of the outer-World. Mr. Leadbeater has been the one to bear the persecution

and martyrdom of its introduction. The solution of the question can only be reached by those who study it from the Theosophic standpoint, admitting the validity of our teachings in regard to thoughts and their relations to acts. Hence the service of Theosophy to the world in this respect will be of the most far-reaching consequence, extending into the remote future of the progress of Man.

"No mistake was made by Mr. Leadbeater in the nature of the advice he gave his boys. No mistake was made in the way he gave it. Nor did he make any mistake in the just estimation of the consequences of any other solution of the terrible problem which was presented to him.

"If any mistake was made it was a mistake of judgment in trusting too much to the confidence of the parents of the boys who, he thought, knew and loved him so well that they would accept his judgment on matters about which ordinary people have little or no knowledge and about which he, by the nature of his occult training, had a full comprehension.

"Betrayal of confidence on the part of some parents of the boys resulted in the scandal which brought this problem to the attention of Theosophists as a preliminary to its introduction to the world. Woe to those who violated their vows in making disclosures in this case. All honor to those parents who, braving the opinion of the World, have boldly set themselves against the current of the World's prejudice and have avowed themselves and their sons under undying obligation to the great teacher who aided their sons in overcoming difficulties which without his aid would not only have been insuperable in this life but would have led them into almost inconceivable complications in future lives."

If this does not mean the introduction into the thought of the Theosophical Society, and thus into the thought of the outer world, of Mr. Leadbeater's "solution" of the problem, what can it possibly mean? Mr. Leadbeater's "martyrdom" is not because of his introducing the general sex problem with regard to young people; that has been introduced into the thought of the world for many centuries. It is because of his "solution" of it that Dr. Van Hook calls on us to exalt Mr. Leadbeater to the highest pinnacle of honour, for he gives "all honour" to the parents who entrust their children to Mr. Leadbeater to receive such teaching, and who avow their undying obligation for this high favour!

Against the introduction of this "solution" of the sex problem into the "thought of the Theosophical world" and against Dr. Van Hook's glorification of it, we protest with all energy; we characterise the teaching of it in any case as a "corrupting practice" and "wholly evil," no matter who gives it, not excepting occultists and psychics; and we call for the public repudiation of it by the man who has confessed to teaching it practically, before he is invited to return in triumph as a "wise teacher" to the Theosophical Society.

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#### THE MAIN ISSUE EVADED.

As to the main issue, then, Mrs. Besant evades it when she says (p. 14):

"The Theosophical Society, as a whole, cannot be committed to any special solution of this (the sex) problem, and its members must be left free."

This we have not asked; what we do ask our fellow-members to do, is to condemn one special and corrupting practice as a solution of the problem. Advice to break off gradually this corrupting habit when once it had been contracted, is not the ground of our protest. It is the teaching of this thing to men who have never practised it, and to boys and children who have never heard of it even, against which we protest.

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#### THE REAL CAUSE OF THE PRESENT DISSENSION

Mrs. Besant says (p. 15) that Mr. Leadbeater:

"resigned two and a half years ago in the vain attempt to save the Society from this dissension."

As to a magnanimous resignation there was little choice; the wording of the unanimous resolution of the Committee shows that clearly enough.

There was, however, only one way in which Mr. Leadbeater could save the Society from dissension, as he himself said before the Advisory Committee:

"Since this has come forward it would be undesirable that I should appear before the public." (Italics ours.)

The trouble has not been made by those who accepted Mr. Leadbeater's resignation as the natural sequence of his conduct, but those who have persistently forced him into ever greater and greater prominence; and although he has once stated that he does not seek re-entry, he has lent himself in every way to being pushed forward publicly, and has thus aided most powerfully in keeping this scandal and this dissension alive in the Theosophical Society with ever greater and greater intensification. The Letter of the President in answer to our earnest appeal will only bring more dissension, and help the more to ventilate the unsavoury subject of Mr. Leadbeater's "solution" and methods in the Theosophical Society. Under such circumstances how can people be invited to join our ranks? It is manifestly unfair to allow outsiders to involve themselves in such scandalous state of affairs without warning, and that means stating the facts. Just the very people whom we desire to welcome will be kept out, and that, too, even with Mrs. Besant's Letter alone before them, much more when they come to know the whole matter. What folly is this to sacrifice the welfare of the Society in the vain attempt to re-establish the public reputation of an individual who has lost it on his own confession and by his persistent refusal to repudiate his pernicious teaching and practice!

#### COMBINED ACTION NECESSARY.

Already many have left because of the policy pursued by Mr. Leadbeater's supporters. In America hundreds, it is said as many as a thousand and have gone out in the last two and a half years; and here, among a number of other good members, we have lost two old General Secretaries and one former Acting General Secretary. Why, we ask, should old and valued members, or even the latest recruit, be driven out of the Society for the sake of one man, who has taught self-abuse to men, boys and children, and refuses to repudiate his corrupting system?

Combined action being now forced upon us, we earnestly appeal to our fellow-members not to resign individually, but to join us in our present protest, and register their names with us; so that if still further action is forced upon us we may take it together as a united body. We appeal not only to the members of our own Section, but also to all members of the Society who sympathize with our protest, to give us their support by also registering their names.

We would further ask our sympathizers to let our protest be known as widely as possible in the Society. For while the President has at her disposal not only the official organization of the whole Society but also the good services of a widespread inner order, we are dependent on unorganized effort.

#### TRUE LOYALTY.

Finally, Mrs. Besant calls on us to be "loyal" to the Masters, and "to Their choice," and "to work for Them." Is it, we ask, loyalty to Masters to tolerate and to refuse to condemn the teaching of self-abuse?

We say that it is because of our loyalty to all the Masters of Morality who have taught the world throughout the ages that we protest, and that in so doing we work for Theosophy, and should fail in our plain duty were we not to protest. It is the best loyalty, therefore, to the Theosophical Society, and also to its elected President, no matter how "chosen," to protest, and resist the introduction of this teaching into the thought of the Theosophical world, and therewith also the reinstatement of Mr. Leadbeater in the Society without his full public repudiation of this teaching.

We cannot do better than conclude with the following words, quoted from the leaflet entitled "Occultism and Truth," issued in 1894, at the

time of the Judge crisis, and signed by H. S. Olcott, A. P. Sinnett, Annie Besant, Bertram Keightley, W. Wynn Westcott, E. T. Sturdy and C. W. Leadbeater:

"A spurious Occultism dallies with truth and falsehood, and argues that deception on the illusory physical plane is consistent with purity on the loftier planes on which the Occultist has his true life; it speaks contemptuously of "mere worldly morality"—a contempt that might be justified if it raised a higher standard, but which is out of place, when the phrase is used to condone acts which the 'mere worldly morality' would disdain to practice. The doctrine that the end justifies the means has proved in the past fruitful of all evil; no means that are impure can bring about an end that is good, else were the Good Law a dream and Karma a mere delusion. From these errors flows an influence mischievous to the whole Theosophical Society, undermining the stern and rigid morality necessary as a foundation for Occultism of the Right-Hand Path."

G. R. S. MEAD.  
HERBERT BURROWS.  
W. KINGSLAND.  
EDITH WARD.

16 Selwood Place,  
Onslow Gardens,  
London, S. W., Nov., 1908.

(Copies of all the documents may be seen by members of the Theosophical Society on application to Mr. Mead or Miss Ward.)

#### SOME NOTES UPON MRS. BESANT'S LETTER.

Such able replies to Mrs. Besant's Letter have been received from both England and India that "The Voice" feels it is hardly necessary to contribute at length all that the Editor had previously contemplated publishing. We shall append, however, certain notes which have not been made by our colleagues as fully as they might have been. colleagues as fully as they might have been.

NOTE A.—Mrs. Besant makes a virtue of the "silence" maintained up till the present time by herself and Mr. Leadbeater. Mr. Leadbeater has not in his own person had much to say; but his supporters have said all there was to say and more. We do not assert that the outrageous conduct of certain of Mr. Leadbeater's friends was instigated by him; but it has been suffered to continue for almost three years when it might have been stopped by a timely interference. Slander, falsehood, deceit, treachery—all have been summoned to the support of Mr. Leadbeater's cause. Anonymous communications have been written to confound the prosecution, letters have been stolen and threats made. The Editor of "The Voice" has been compelled to call upon the Secret Service to protect her mails—a circumstance from which some idea may be formed of the state of affairs now existing in the T. S. under the regime of "silence." Moreover, the statements now made public by Mrs. Besant in this "Letter" were long ago circulated all over the American Section. If this has been "silence," what might be properly considered to represent "speech"?

NOTE B.—We are told that two of the "judges" (who were in point of fact only Colonel Olcott's advisors), had perceived Mr. Leadbeater's guilt by their psychic faculties and that this disqualified them to serve upon the Advisory Board. Why, we ask, could not these persons exercise their psychic faculties, for the same purpose as Mr. Leadbeater used his when he perceived in the "auras" of the boys that they needed to be taught self-abuse? Or as Mrs. Besant used her own psychic faculties when she perceived her Master and learned of him astrally that she was the Presidential nominee?

NOTE C.—Mrs. Besant's first position was that, while she disapproved of the teachings, she thought Mr. Leadbeater should not be held accountable as he meant never to repeat them; her second position was



that the teachings were wholly evil, that Mr. Leadbeater was under the influence of the Brothers of the Shadow (see letter to E. S. members only), and that he ought to retire; her third and present position is that having examined into the nature of the "teachings" she gives it as her verdict—"as Occultist"—that they are right and proper. It appears then that at different stages of this controversy, Mrs. Besant has maintained opinions which would agree respectively with all possible points-of-view! The open question now is whether she has at last arrived at a conviction with which the majority agree. That is a point in which all protesting members are vitally interested. Or will she again change her mind as she says she did about the Neo-Malthusian doctrine?

NOTE D.—It is stated that Mr. Leadbeater did not, as was alleged in the charges, teach boys "innocent of all sex-impulses." This is hedging on a technicality. From a physiological stand-point, no human being, even in embryonic stages, is ever "innocent of all sex-impulses." From the theosophical standpoint, sex is a predetermined factor in individual karma and is said to have its origin in the mind of the "Builders." On the physical plane, as every physiologist knows, sex-impulses, while not consciously felt as such, are an ever-present factor in the development of the child from infancy. It is the sex-impulse—and that alone—that determines the appearance and character of a boy as a "boy" in distinction from the appearance and character of a girl as a "girl." Of course such impulses could be perceived in the "aura"! It does not take a great clairvoyant to do this either. But when such impulses are perceived, it may be asked, very properly, what would be the manner in which a "Wise Teacher" should cope with them? By instructing the child how to practice self-abuse or by teaching him how to hold this impulse in check by spiritual power until such time as the law which governs this Universe of Duality might be sacredly fulfilled? It is contended that Mr. Leadbeater by his superior vision saw that in certain cases in which there was no "habit" as yet established, the boys in question would, if left to themselves, fall into a "habit" and that he therefore taught them how to forestall the "habit" and render the impulse less destructive, or—to do evil that good might come! Now, in the first place, we have absolutely no proof of these statements except Mr. Leadbeater's word and he is a much interested party. In the second place, even if the existing conditions were such as he claims—which we do not admit—we disapprove most emphatically of his treatment of the symptoms diagnosed. It is what a medical person would piously describe as malpractice.

NOTE E.—The sex-problem is, as has been stated by both Mrs. Besant and Dr. Van Hook, a vital issue in social life to-day. But it is an old, old issue and the merit of signaling its importance does not belong primarily to either of these persons. There may, however, on the part of these persons, with justice be lodged a claim to the merit or demerit of having been the first to advocate publicly self-abuse as the best immediate solution of the sex-problem. We will cede this point without discussion. In his letter to Mr. Fullerton (February 27, 1906), Mr. Leadbeater wrote, in addition to what has already been printed in the May "Voice": "A certain type of boy can be carried through his youth absolutely virgin\* and can pass through the stages of puberty without being troubled by sensual emotions; but such boys are few. The majority pass through a stage when their minds are filled with such matters." (Italics mine).

From the foregoing, it is evident that "in the majority," Mr. Leadbeater would see symptoms in their "auras" calling for treatment by self-abuse.

Mr. Leadbeater says, further, as quoted in the May "Voice": "Now all this may be avoided, etc.," going on to advise his remedy.

Yet, in his published letter to Mrs. Besant, which was written at the

\*Does the practice of self-abuse preserve the virginity?—Editor.

same time as the Fullerton letter (February, 1906), Mr. Leadbeater says:

"I recognize as fully as you do that it would be so, (i. e. the advice would be 'dangerous,') if promiscuously given and I had never dreamed of so giving it."

It remains for some nicely adjustly legal mind to define the exact distinction between the giving of this advice "promiscuously" and the giving of it in the "majority" of cases.

NOTE F.—This entire discussion is based on a fallacy. We refer to the assumption that the majority of children require a physical outlet at puberty. This is in line with the contention of certain people that the health of adult males requires some sort of sex-indulgence—a contention often made the basis of sexual license. We are well aware that this view is maintained by a number of physicians, but we contend that, when this view is not itself a psychosis, it is the outcome of a pure materialism which seeks for the easiest way out of an admitted difficulty. We set on one side the views of people with delusions of a phallic nature which lead many to identify the Christ principle with the generative function per se—a very common form of "occult" insanity. The claim that children, as well as adults, require some physical outlet is somewhat novel. Heretofore physicians have been almost uniform in their conviction that the sex-energy of children at puberty can usually be diverted into other channels by providing ways and means for the expenditure of the surplus vitality. This is still the prevailing view and it is the correct one. There are, we admit, children whose bodies exhibit a bad physical heredity (which is of course karmic) and in whom the sex-impulse is abnormal, manifesting itself in vicious tendencies. In the majority of children, this is not so. The first promptings of sex are for the time being little more than the coquetry which may be observed in the animal kingdom at the onset of the oestrus. The best authorities on pediatrics all admit this. The real trouble arises much later than the stage of puberty—say, on the average, in this latitude and climate, at eighteen. Mr. Leadbeater taught boys his system, according to Mrs. Besant's own statement, when the sex-impulse had not yet manifested at all in the physical plane, but when it was simply present to his vision, in their "auras"! What guarantee have we that he himself did not project it there?—since the extraordinary views he holds are evidently of the class known as "fixed ideas." This, of course, is assuming Mr. Leadbeater's astral vision, as such, is always reliable, which, in spite of his presumptive attainments along this line, we do not admit. "The Voice" does not regard the subject of sex as in any sense "impure" and the Editor can hardly be charged with "prudery"! We contend simply for the relegation of the sex-problem to its proper status in the development of spiritual man—which is a totally different status from that which pertains to the development of animal man. The "solution" proposed by Mrs. Besant and Mr. Leadbeater belongs, we hold, in the latter category. Medical schools, hospitals, the slums and the "dark side of life" and even phallicism are not unfamiliar to many of us. Yet in the face of all such observation, we say that, except among "degenerates," it is not true that the average child is in pressing need of physical relief along the line of sex-indulgence at the age of puberty. Nature provides for her own and, even allowing for the excessive stimulus of modern life with its sensuous allurements we still assert with emphasis that the wide prevalence of the habit of self-abuse is a result of contagion from the too-close herding of children in schools and tenements rather than the natural outgrowth of a physical need. It is emphatically not true that the majority of boys—and girls?—must do one of two things, namely: (1) resort to prostitution or (2) to self-abuse. We appeal to all decent people to judge from their own experience whether this is so. It is the contagion of this pernicious idea that is one of the worst features of the present controversy. Mr. Leadbeater has spread this contagion, not those who condemn his teachings. The crying need of our times, is not physical relief but a restitution of our ideals and a vitalizing of our spiritual wills so that they may imbue us with the power to meet our enemy

fact to face not impel us to sneak away under the cover of a disguise. We need to teach neither self-abuse nor prostitution, but renunciation and self control. To a teacher of Theosophy, such as Mr. Leadbeater was by virtue of his position as an official propagandist for the T. S., is it not a plain duty to imbue his pupils' minds with the highest ideals he can apprehend? Or is he to instruct them in some way of compromising the question easily—some method of gratification always at hand and therefore extremely dangerous to the maintenance of a lofty ideal? It has been shown that it is extremely difficult to curb this practice once it has been inaugurated, since, unhappily, like the use of certain drugs, its immediate tendency is to warp the moral nature before the physical has shown the effect of its ravages. Yet Mr. Leadbeater admits that he not only taught the boys this practice when they were not already addicted to it but that he even went so far as to give practical demonstrations of how the children should proceed to inaugurate it!

NOTE G.—Mrs. Besant says that one of the boys had already contracted an evil habit. This statement is made on the authority of Mr. Leadbeater. Those of us who have read the rebuttal evidence, which is withheld from publication at the request of the parties concerned, know that this statement has been refuted and that the circumstances attending this case involve Mr. Leadbeater in a new set of difficulties of which as yet no mention has been publicly made. Moreover, these charges are in direct contradiction to statements made by Mr. Leadbeater at the time when he was selecting "disciples" in America on the basis of distinguished moral attainments. We leave out of the controversy entirely this phase of the question as we feel that the privilege of discussing the private affairs of the boys in question belongs only by right to the parents concerned. We are content to let the case rest on the merits or demerits of the method defended by Mrs. Besant.

NOTE H.—The plea for the "gradual conquering" of a vicious habit is one of those medical fallacies one hears so often defended by the laity. All psychoses are not treated in the same way. The writer has seen patients in an Asylum for the Insane where the habit under discussion was treated with a strait-jacket. Drug habits and psychopathia sexualis are two different things, not properly amenable to the same treatment, in spite of many foolish contentions to the contrary. Indulgence increases the sex-desire. Mrs. Besant herself, indirectly admits this, in her remarks about the effect of memory and anticipation upon the passional nature of man. The idea of "gradually controlling" the sex-impulse by the regulated practice of self-abuse is ridiculous. Moreover, the office of Mr. Leadbeater at the same time he undertook to exploit these theories, was to perform the function of a physician not to the bodies of his pupils primarily but to their souls. We do not cure a man of dishonesty by advising him to steal only a little at a time at stated intervals—but rather at the very outset do we strive so to raise his standard of living, so to elevate his ideal—that he will stop stealing not gradually, but at once.

NOTE I.—It is a distinctly bold charge that Mrs. Besant makes concerning the character of the cipher letter—bold because it is utterly untrue. We assume that she herself believes that this letter is a forgery and also that the first letter had been tampered with. This assumption presupposes that two boys living at a great distance from each other without collusion trumped up exactly the same libel against Mr. Leadbeater at exactly the same time. To what end? We are disposed to feel sorry for Mrs. Besant when we realize with what an unworthy spirit Mr. Leadbeater has placed upon her the onus of making this charge of forgery on grounds that are untenable on their very face. Mrs. Besant has confused the two letters which have been submitted in evidence. The mother of the boy to whom the letter which deals with "intervals" was written, had not seen that letter. It was the mother of the boy to whom the cipher letter was written who found it, the second letter and,

jointly with the father gave it to an officer of the E. S. The first letter was found in the boy's own pocket, by accident, in an old coat which was examined by an outsider before being given away. The first letter had evidently been carried in the pocket for a long time as it was much creased and soiled. The boy in question was devoted to Mr. Leadbeater, and those who knew him—in whose house he was a guest—testify that that he treasured everything that Mr. Leadbeater ever gave him. This missive had been kept apparently from the same motive but was left by mistake in a cast-away garment and fell—by mere accident shall we say?—into the hand of a member of the T. S. It was marked in several places "Private." The paper on which the letter was written was of a peculiar green color, water-marked so as to make it possible to identify it directly with the paper on which the cipher letter was written. This paper, we were told by a reputable member of the American Section T. S. was given to Mr. Leadbeater by him in considerable quantities. Mr. Leadbeater admitted that he wrote the first letter. The interlineation was upon the cipher letter when it was found. This was interlineated to a slight extent in Mr. Leadbeater's own hand. The "interlineation" referred to in the comments of Mr. Leadbeater (see Report of the Advisory Board) was not made by the mother at all, but was a comment upon the charges as preferred, made by the party who preferred them (the Head of the E. S.) and was based upon the direct and independent testimony of two boys. This letter, with the cipher letter, is in safe-keeping. It was not given up voluntarily and the fact that it was confiscated by the authorities of the Section, has been made a basis of complaint by the parents. The charge that the letter contains an interlineation by the mother who never saw it and has not favored the prosecution in any way, is intenable. As to the mooted question of the length of the intervals prescribed by Mr. Leadbeater, there is direct testimony from two boys on that subject. We would also call attention to the partial copy of this letter printed in the August "Voice," (p. 61), wherein Mr. Leadbeater says: " \* \* \* I suggested longer intervals until you were completely recovered"—the only obvious implication being that the boy was to practice the "system" more frequently when he was in better health! Mr. Leadbeater admitted having written this letter.

NOTE J.—Mrs. Besant without the least justification, drags into the discussion a reference to a certain letter a copy of which has been in her possession for two years. We also have a copy of this letter. The use which Mrs. Besant makes of it is most unworthy. The fact that, in her estimation, this letter "from one of Mr. Leadbeater's most prominent enemies" is on a par with the letters of Mr. Leadbeater himself to which exception is raised, does not affect the case at all. The defence of one person is not furthered by the accusation of another. Such an action is childish and—essentially feminine. The person who wrote the letter in question, is not an "enemy" to Mr. Leadbeater, but a man of character who in our presence has shed bitter tears over the degradation of one whom he has admired almost to excess. Mr. Leadbeater has, moreover, since this trouble, accepted a handsome gift of money from the author of this letter, (a fact discovered by accident and not through any statement made by the donor). We may also say that Mr. Leadbeater was, as several American members are aware, a beneficiary under the will of this person who is designated as one of his "most prominent enemies"! Mrs. Besant does not know the circumstances under which this letter to which she refers was written. We do, as we were a party to the "circumstances"! We, ourselves, asked the writer to ascertain from this boy, if possible, just what Mr. Leadbeater's relation to him had been. The request made to the boy to refrain from showing the letter to his father, we cannot justify; but it is only fair to say that from the point-of-view of the writer—whether just or not we do not pretend to say—there was a reason in his mind for this request which does not appear in the text of the letter. The body of this letter contains not as Mrs. Besant has said an attempt to "coax" the boy into a confession of criminal relations with Mr. Lead-

beater but a straightforward and searching inquiry whose sole purpose was to ascertain whether there still remained any further evidence which might properly be made a part of the prosecution. There was no effort made, as Mrs. Besant alleges to "construct" personal charges against Mr. Leadbeater, for the parties concerned in the prosecution were most anxious that the case should be disposed of without casting any such reflection on the unfortunate boys who had been the object of Mr. Leadbeater's "experiments," (this is the word he himself used); and the parents, as has since been shown, were opposed to inquiry along these lines. As to the "caressing words," judging from Mr. Leadbeater's letter, all that seems to be apparently a matter of taste. The father of the boy, in discussing this letter recently, has said that he has no objection to the expressions made in this letter and that they have no objectionable purport. To compare the terms used in this letter with those with which the cipher letter closes, is not sensible nor does it smack of honesty. It is the connection of the sentences in Mr. Leadbeater's cipher letter which has given his terms of endearment quite a different turn. This matter has, however, no proper bearing upon the general subject, but since Mrs. Besant has dragged it in, *vi et armis*, we feel constrained to refute her injustice.

NOTE K.—The cipher letter is not a forgery, neither in part nor as a whole. Like the first letter it is marked with great care "private," every effort having been made to conceal the contents not only by the use of the cipher but by the added caution of secrecy. If this letter be a forgery which can be dismissed with a phrase of deprecation, why have there been such studious and persistent efforts made to obtain possession of the original? The contents of this letter were not kept away from Mr. Leadbeater, nor was it, as has been stated, widely circulated against the wishes of the parents. Miss Ward, in her circular, says she was shown a copy of this letter in England by one of Mr. Leadbeater's supporters. In America, the greatest care was exercised to safeguard the contents of this letter out of deference to the wishes of the parents. The closing sentences of the letter were published with the parents' consent. The Editor of "The Voice", though from the first in touch with the whole matter and having seen the original letter, did not possess a copy of it until after the last Convention. The copy then supplied came to her from a person not connected with the officials at all, not a member of the E. S., nor able to state at the time where the copy in question originally came from. This letter, like the first one, was apparently an enclosure in another letter, as Mr. Leadbeater implied in his reply at the Hearing when he said that "this (the first letter) is part of the letter I wrote him." This added caution about secrecy was inconsistent with the assertion that there was an intent of absolute honesty and candor. As to the claim that the reference to certain sensuous pleasure concerned "an astral experience," that is our very contention and complaint! We declare that Mr. Leadbeater's "teachings" were of such a nature as to develop the astral consciousness along sex lines and we hold that to be part of the most damaging phase of the evidence against him. Yet *en passant* he rejoices over this. Concerning the charge of forgery, it is obvious that Mr. Leadbeater knows it is intenable, for he has declined the investigation suggested by Miss Ward. Will Mr. Leadbeater come to America and substantiate this claim of forgery? We venture to say that a summons of this sort would not be easily met in America.

NOTE L.—Concerning Dr. Van Hook's position, we have already said sufficient; but we may observe in passing that Mrs. Besant has made what appears to us an unwarranted effort to twist Dr. Van Hook's very specific utterances to fit the exigencies of the situation. It is an interesting contribution to the general misconception in regard to these "Open Letters" that has been made by Upendra Nath Basu in the November *Theosophy in India*. He says that he has learned that Mr. Leadbeater does not believe in Dr. Van Hook's "Mahatma." This is obviously

a position which would be forced upon Mr. Leadbeaver, aside from any "occult" knowledge of facts. Mr. Leadbeaver has declared that the adyar "Mahatmas" are genuine and he cannot consistently support two opposing "Mahatmic" Schools.

NOTE M.—The Editor of "The Voice" is alone responsible for the publication in print of the claim of Dr. Van Hook concerning the source of his "Open Letters." It is true that Dr. Van Hook asked us not to print his statement concerning this matter; but it is also true that the Editor of "The Voice" replied by letter that she could not conscientiously regard this request in view of the fact that the supposed origin of these letters was being extensively circulated by members of the E. S. with a view to influencing the vote of members upon the question of the Leadbeaver referendum. It became necessary to combat this secret manoeuvring by a publication of the claim and a discussion of its merits. The fact that Mrs. Besant shelters herself from the necessity to deal with these letters behind a decision in the case of Mr. Judge, is unfortunate—especially in view of much that is on record in the old files of "The Theosophist." Mrs. Besant announced in her pamphlet about the Judge case that she intended to demand Mr. Judge's expulsion from the T. S. The Secession prevented this demand from being carried into execution. The criticism of two of the "judges" as having condemned Mr. Leadbeaver on "psychic testimony" is doubly inconsistent when the details of the Judge affair are recalled. It was as an official that Dr. Van Hook's publication of his "Open Letters" was criticized. Dr. Van Hook was not "condemned" by any one; he was rebuked—and justly so—for abusing the privilege of his office. The resolution passed by the British Convention concerned him not in the capacity of General Secretary of the American Section but as a member of the General Council with whose deliberations all sections are concerned. It comes moreover with bad grace from Mrs. Besant that this resolution is in the nature of an interference with the affairs of another Section!—in view of her own attitude at the American Section of 1907 at which she took practically entire charge of the politics of the Convention and brought upon herself the well-deserved rebuke from the Inter-State Branch which was printed in the August "Voice."

NOTE N.—The members of the T. S. should indeed be left free to solve the sex-problem as they choose, but no official propagandist should be permitted to exploit his peculiar "solution" at the expense of the Society's good name. We hold that the teachings of Mr. Leadbeaver disqualified him for membership in the Society and we hold that Mrs. Besant's endorsement of his course of action, even in the manner in which she represents it to have been undertaken, disqualifies her for the Presidency of the T. S.

Therefore, "The Theosophic Voice" asks Mrs. Besant, for the good of the Theosophical Society, to resign her office.

## INDIA SPEAKS

### The Dreamer's Letter in Reply to Mrs. Besant

The scholarly Hindu theosophist known to members as "The Dreamer" and highly-esteemed by virtue of his commentaries of the Gita and other works of importance, has replied at considerable length to Mrs. Besant's Letter in reference to Mr. Leadbeaver. "The Dreamer's" reply begins with a philosophical discussion of the issue as a morale. We print the first part of his letter under a separate head. Concerning the Leadbeaver case *per se*, he writes as follows:

\* \* \* \* \*

As to the responsibility of persons performing the function of a teacher or a lecturer in the name of the Society as to the teachings given under the cloak of authority, direct or implied, I need only say that the same has been tried to be enunciated in a paper contributed by me to "The Theosophist" entitled the "Basis of Theosophic Morality." In a subsequent discussion with our revered President at Calcutta, she fully endorsed the position taken up in that article, that while condoning and

gently dealing with the moral shortcomings of ordinary members too weak to tread the razor path of virtue, the case would be different with our public workers and teachers, and that it would be right to expect that they should not only try to live the life they preach, but should to say the least, conform to the ordinary principles of morality in vogue amongst us. The Society as an organism has certainly the right to expect this, and to insist upon the conformity with ordinary morals. The fact will be apparent that we are here to work in the Master's vineyard, and not to use the Society for the airing of our pet theories. It is a matter of wonder that this ideal of individual renunciation and sacrifice for the well-being of humanity should have to be re-asserted before our members; and I have no doubt that, had not the temptation of ranging in the higher planes with the help of the so-called Initiates coloured our consciousness so much, there would have been very little room for a controversy.

Then as to what Mr. Leadbeater has done: His faithful follower and advocate Mr. Van Hook himself admits of two classes of cases in which the advice of self-abuse was given: First, the cases of boys addicted to this vice. In combating this vice Mr. Leadbeater offered them a "very immediate and practical" solution. We would have expected an Initiate of the T. S. to have thought of the verities of Theosophy ere giving such advice. But this he did not do. He brought to bear on the subject "the same common-sense reasoning which medical men use." Instead of discountenancing the abominable practice immasculating man, instead of setting his face against it, thereby generating in the mind of the boys a strong motive against the vice, he advocated the occasional easing. Evidently, to consider his action in the best light, he thought more of the body than of the ego; he evidently did not believe much in the Self within from which alone comes all strength, endurance, and power. The only effect of such a course would be that, though in exceptional cases the pernicious habit may be less frequent, yet the moral obtuseness, the intellectual hiatus, would persist.

Observe what Lord Buddha did, when the woman came to Him with her dead child. The Great One asked the weeping mother to procure something trivial from a house where no one had died. He could have at once revived the child; but instead, He gave this strange advice which made the poor mother realize a great law in nature. Thus, He not only cured the sorrowing, but at the same time illumined her soul by indicating the immutable Self in the midst of the mutable. Mr. Leadbeater never thought that this tacit assent to the practice would fetter the poor souls in a far greater bondage, fattening the selfish, separated and the personal self. One would have naturally expected something of the Theosophic life to have come out of the teachings of an Initiate, and that the advice given would have helped, ever so little, in the realization of the Life, which clothed in the garb of the Master, the Society is trying to bring before the eyes of men. If this is not culpable in a teacher of Theosophy, I know not what is.

When we come to the next class of cases, the enormity of moral obliquity becomes at once patent. It is said that Mr. Leadbeater saw "thought-forms hovering over certain other boys not yet addicted to this practice" and that he gave necessary advice to discharge these. I wonder, that any one having very little of common sense can seriously believe that such thought-forms could be best dealt with in the way advised. The most pitiable sight is that of our revered President endorsing this statement, and giving it the sanction of truth. Can any one believe, that the practice alluded to can be performed without kamic thoughts, and that these thoughts have no sexual relation or tendency in them? Dr. Hook thinks that this a-sexual practice is better than the bi-sexual, and that kamic thought-forms lose in their power by the device advised by his teacher. In the first place, it is absurd to believe that a boy of seven\* can have such precise and overwhelming thought-

\*Eleven?—Editor.

forms. They cannot be the result of the present incarnation; for the boy must be presumed to be without any concrete experience of the matter. They can neither be the relics of a past incarnation; for what we bring back are not isolated thought-forms, but rather desire-tendencies. These thought-forms therefore, could not have been hovering round the child, and must be regarded as a pure myth, unless we come to conclude that they must have been all the while in the Initiate's thinking. Marvellous was the advice given, truly surpassing even the highest flights of the imagination of even the loyalist Theosophist! The abstract and vague tendencies which under suitable guidance could have been directed into better and more suitable channels expressing the love-side of our nature, was made to take concrete shape in the physical plane, giving additional food to the alleged morbid sex-impulse. This is the solution arrived at by our Theosophical prodigy, and as his devoted disciple says, it is "the precursor of its introduction into the thought of the outer world." The poor parents are charged for having betrayed the confidence placed in them by this Initiate and for bringing out this scandal, as if they were the wrong-doers. If we are to believe the stenographic report of the inquiry in 1906, then instead of holding that Mr. Leadbeater denied the charges, we must come to the conclusion that not only he did teach the solitary vice, but what is further he did things which would have brought him within the pale of the criminal laws for the foulest and the most indecent offence which brute man may commit. This is our latter-day saint who must be re-admitted, nay, invited back, into the Theosophical Society.

It is alleged that no fair trial took place; that some of the judges spoke bitterly against Mr. Leadbeater; and that no chance was given to him for self-vindication. The absence of a professional reporter is also made one of the corner-stones of the campaign. Col. Olcott was in the chair; and the members consisted of some of the oldest and most respected of our fellows. But as Hamlet said "Be thou chaste as ice and pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny;"\* so also has their fairness been questioned. One in tempted to ask the unpleasant question as to what has our particular body of knight-errants been doing all the while, and why was not this belated question raised within a reasonable time of the inquiry? As a fact, Mr. Glass who acted as the Secretary, was fairly up in stenography, and the notes taken were submitted to our late President for his approval. 'The garbled report' therefore, is also but another example of the play of imagination in certain of our prominent members; or shall we say, of a subliminal uprush at the most psychological moment? It is significant also that Mr. Leadbeater never complained as to unfairness.

The most important part of the affair is the alleged part played therein by the Masters. Dr. Hook's letters are claimed to have been dictated verbatim by one of the Great Ones. We should not however question the psychology of these remarkable productions. Dr. Hook must as a fact have been passive when he received them; for, otherwise, we have no other alternative but to question his sanity. Now, the question is as to the source of this psychologization. In the report of the Adyar phenomena which once formed the key-note of Mrs. Besant's campaign, we are told that "Col. Olcott was right in calling a meeting of the Advisory Council and that he was right in accepting Mr. Leadbeater's resignation." In a letter from Col. Olcott to Mr. Leadbeater, dated 12 Jan. 1907, the Col. says "The Masters have told both Annie and myself that your teaching young boys \* \* \* is wrong." So also ran the communication through Mrs. Russak. But Dr. Hook's mahatma seems to think otherwise. According to him the crime of teaching the practice "is no crime at all, but the advice of a wise teacher who foresaw an almost limitless period of suffering for his charge." It is a bad day when in the very loyalists' camp the Master differs so much. This mutability which is of the very essence of all things, is however not

\*We have taken the liberty of correcting this quotation.—Editor.



confined to the sources of Dr. Van Hook's inspirations,—but has spread downwards, touching many a soul specially fitted to receive. To cap the situation, our revered President while sheltering herself under the decision of the Judicial Committee of 1894 and declaring her inability to interfere with such open letters, herself finishes her 'Letter to the Members' with an exordium bringing in the Holy Ones.

The frequency and plentifulness of the occult communications forcibly brings to one's mind the apprehensions entertained by Mr. Mead as to "psychic orders from Adyar." Unless better sense prevails, the turn which events are taking, points rather forcibly to similar performances of Mr. Brigham Young and his saints of Salt Lake City.

Do not therefore for a moment believe in the threats held out by Dr. Van Hook's master; for these at once indicate the source from which the letters emanate. Such fire-and-brimstone performances do not fit in with the consciousness of the Self in which Muktas really live, move and have Their being. They are called the Lords of Compassion; for verily They cannot be otherwise, seeing as They do, the One Life pulsating through everything. We are to strive for peace, for charity, for harmony; but the peace is only of Self, and not that sort of makeshift artificial quietness which we long to secure at the terrible cost of sacrificing the Divine within us. As individual members, we should try to view things and persons from the standpoint of not occult advancement but of the divine power of expressing or indicating the Self. But as members of the Society in a definite period of the world's history, we must be guided in our public activities by the sole question of the effect of our action upon humanity at large. No one knew better than the Lord in the field of Kurukshetra, of the One Self dwelling equally in the hearts of the contending parties who ranged themselves on the respective sides of Dharma and Adharma; and yet the advice to Arjuna was to fight and conquer. Arjuna illumined by His teachings saw the Self seated in all, and yet fought against Adharma; for thereby only could the best interests of humanity be truly guarded. Individually, let us try to see the Self, not only in the virtue of the virtuous, but also in the vice of even the most hardened criminal. There can be no two questions as to that. But we must not also forget that there is another aspect of our being the formal or the concrete aspect, in which we are but a link in the chain of evolving humanity and an integral part of the total expression of the Divine Life. Thus, while our hearts must not entertain any feelings of separateness towards any, much less of envy or malice, our bodies and actions must conform to the needs of our younger brothers, inside and outside the Society.

Call up for a moment that wonderful picture of the Son of Ganga, the greatest warrior-sage Bhishmacharya, and note how He followed the Dharma. His body fed by the Kauravas fought in their side, while in his heart he saw the unerring hand of the Lord guiding the course of events. So, let us not also forget in the glamour of the so-called occult, our debt to humanity. With most of us, the unity of the Self is but an empty word,—the Master but a concrete physical man with but higher powers. Our quest is still separative; we still want to possess for ourselves; we are striving for personal stature; we speak of those who are for purity as being the enemies of this, or that personage; we are using, the best of us not excepted, some of the lower tactics of party-politics. We think that this or the other person as such can bring us into contact with the Life which radiates unstintingly through all. The temptation for occult powers believed to result from specific yogic practices, controls us; we forget that the Divine Power can only manifest in us, when we have carefully eliminated the personal and the individual from our equations. We fondly believe that the cause of Brotherhood would be best furthered by sacrificing the interests of millions of human souls around, at the altar of a so-called Initiate-disciple, who though compelled to resign, so far forgets his Master's cause as not to express his contrition and humbly seek for admission into the society, but must have an invitation from the members to soothe his wounded amour

**propre.** Mr. Leadbeater's letter to Mrs. Besant on the subject would at once decide his claim to Initiateship; and to conceive that for the doubtful advantage of having him back, while he is still of his former mind and unrepentant, you are going to trample under foot the best interests of humanity and to question even the pronouncements of your own Master beside Col. Olcott's death-bed, pronouncements which accord with the testimony of Religion as well as our inner self!

You speak of the wrong to Mr. Leadbeater; and you forget not only the teachings of the various Scriptures, not only the testimony of history as to the one case of decay and degeneration of the occult schools of the past, but what is most wonderful, you forget the claims of the struggling humanity around you. It is an anomaly that the T. S. should of all institutions, lose sight of the Divine in man. You forget how much depends upon your solution of this problem, and on your disapprobation of the pernicious system from the effects of which millions of boys and girls are suffering. Is it Brotherhood to forget all these, just for the pleasure, illusory as it is, of a party-victory? If it were simply the question of admitting a contrite member, if it were simply a question of that chimerical thing called liberty of action and speech, why are the Masters dragged into it? Why are the higher truths of Theosophy perverted and distorted out of recognition? Why are the so-called scientific half-truths so gladly impressed into the service? The issues as presented in the Presidential pamphlet are far-reaching in their bearing. Already, occultism has been divorced from spirituality; and one cannot help misgivings that such a teaching is sure to yield a capital out-turn of cheap contempt towards morality—and a condescending patronising attitude towards “the crutch-like” teachings of the Great Religions. And now the wrong-doer, unrepentant, must forsooth, be brought back in order to prove that we in the T. S. have no need of the lower devices of morality. I am no occultist, and do fight shy of the latter-day occultism; hence I cannot justify inconsistency as an occult virtue. But I may assure you, that the one object with which I and perhaps many others are protesting against the sacrifice of Truth, is that by looking to the best interests of humanity so as to make it the living tabernacle of the One Life, the T. S. will justify its Divine origin and its Divine guidance. Let us not forget that the Society is no field for personal advancement or personal stature, but that individually and collectively we exist for the manifestation of the Divinity in man, and that not only in our organic life, but also in our individual endeavours and aspirations, we should be guided solely by the needs of the orphan for whom Helena Blavatsky did fight, and for whom even the Lords of Compassion have gladly relinquished the bliss of Nirvana.

Calcutta, 14-10-08.

THE DREAMER.

### THE PHILOSOPHICAL ASPECT OF THE LEADBEATER ISSUE

An Extract from “Another Letter” by The Dreamer.

In the first place, let us consider the mission and the work of the Theosophical Society. Its object, as I take it, and as evidenced also by the very condition of its membership, is to try to form a nucleus of **Universal Brotherhood**. All other objects are secondary, and must be always subordinated to this one *raison d'être* of its existence. The Society may or may not have an occult origin, though I personally believe in the former. But its uniqueness does not consist so much in its occult origin, as in the re-affirmation of the principle of the Unity of Life. The ideal of Universal Brotherhood held up by the Society, is truly one in which we make no difference between the sinner and the saint, but penetrating through the veils of “Maya” and of the separate uniqueness generated by the Ahankara principle in us we seek to catch a glimpse of the One Life seated equally in the heart of all things. The Brotherhood aimed at is the outcome of the transcendent spiritual vision, and has nothing to do directly with the separative sources of

individuality in us, much less with transient, ephemeral, feeling and acts. It is an ever-present reality in the domain of the Spiritual, and cannot be disturbed by anything done in the lower planes, however high or ignoble be the acts. I am quite sure, that our beloved President had this unity in her mind while writing the letter to the members, and that this has prompted her to take this most extraordinary step. No one, however ignoble, however criminal, can be divorced from this Unity, which is of the very essence of the Self, the Atman, in us. Virtuous acts can no more increase this Life, than can vice diminish the flow of this all-sustaining Life. Condemnation or approbation of acts has no reference to this ever-present reality; punishment or reward has no bearing on this Life, which forms the innermost Self of man. The terrible carnage of the Mahabharata heroes in the field of Kurukshetra no more affected this Life than the brutality of Duryodhana or Dushyashana. Acts and deeds, thoughts and aspirations, the highest of Yoga, cannot measure this Life nor condition it; and this Self of unity cannot be reached by austerity, by meditation, by endeavor alone. Yet it expresses itself or gets itself indicated in and through the meanest of acts as well as through the highest. This Life is the essence of the Brotherhood, which the T. S. seeks to realize.

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But to express this Life in terms of the phenomenal planes, certain conditions are necessary. The principal of these is the absence of all separative I-reference, of all notions of separation. What we call a sin or a crime, is thus distinguished from a virtue. If we analyse sin, we find that, in its essence, it consists of the accentuation of the separated self in us disturbing the universal expression of the Life in a given plane. The sinner or the virtuous is neither of them, per se, the representative of this Life. No separated thing, nor ever a collection of separate things, can represent this Life which is rather of the nature of an irradiation, somewhat in the same way as the I in us radiates and gets itself indicated through concrete finite acts. But this indicativeness itself is vague and abstract when compared to the concrete richness of the personality, which like the noon-day glare eclipses and throws into obscurity the soft and mellow effulgence of the moon and the stars. The separative personality, the self-assertive individuality, thus prevent and stand in the way of, the radiance of the Self reaching the soul. What are called sins have this tendency, though specifically and in their presentative and representative aspects they are utterly valueless. Just as every of our actions, however gross, physical or trivial it may be, always indicates the I in us and can to a trained observer show something of the consciousness working within, so also the virtuous or the vicious actions of men equally indicate the Self, and cannot, from this stand-point, be distinguished from each other. But they can be distinguished, when we consider their effects on a given organism with its definite life and character. The learned physician knows that the very painful symptoms of a fatal disease are expressions of the life and indicative thereof; but none-the-less, he strives to combat against these which tend to disrupt the life of the organism. Sin also is an expression of the Life and always indicates the presence of the mighty Self behind—the Fount of all energy; but when we consider its effects on the total human consciousness, on society, we feel that it is a destructive energy. Hence we find in the Gita, that though the Self is the same in all beings and has no one to like or to dislike—yet the same Self manifests as the power for restoring equilibrium when there is decline in Dharma and increase in Adharma.

“Whenever there is decline of Dharma or righteousness and an increase in sin and uprighteousness, then I create myself a phenomenal body for the purpose of protecting the righteous, of destroying the unrighteous, and re-establishing the Sanatana Dharma in every Yuga.”

Well might the Theosophist of the Leadbeater school, characterise the conduct of the physician as well as of Ishwara as being hostile to the unity of the Self. Some day, in the near future, we will perhaps see

the phenomena of the Theosophist hurling anathemas on the Lord for disturbing the Brotherhood of humanity.

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All sin is thus an accentuation of the separative principle whether having an emotional or an intellectual bias, and as such stands in the way of the One Life shining in and through us. Nowhere are its effects so pernicious as in the Theosophical Society, where man is taught not to look to himself but to the collective humanity around. Neither the Theosophist nor the Society exists for the separated self. The possessions which a Theosophist must have, are measured not by their result on the personal or the individual self in him, but consist solely on their capability of being shared by the whole humanity. The standard of virtue and sin is not personal but rather organic and one should not shelter himself behind any revelation of an individual character, ancient or modern, but should rather on the contrary always look to the Self, not as an individual something—but as the irradiation of a Divine glow bodying forth through everything. He must always look for the Self as an Universal Life and Power, and not the attribute—nor the possession, of any individual, however high. If any action of his, helps in making life sweet and noble to others, if it helps in drawing the attention of his hearers and pupils to the mellow radiance of the Self dimly bodying forth through all, if he thus strives to indicate to the illusion-bound humanity the one perennial, never-failing Source of strength and beauty, of peace and bliss, then only are his acts truly Theosophic and as such acceptable to the One Hidden Deity present equally in everything. He should not even confuse the minds of ordinary men by suggesting to them a depth which their separated consciousness cannot fathom.

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Once I had occasion to discuss this point with our revered President some years ago. A promising young man had fallen owing to some pernicious teachings given by another. It was claimed for the latter, a very high state of spiritual evolution. I questioned her on this point, as I could not believe that such injurious teachings could emanate from one connected with the Great Lords of Compassion. Note what her reply was: "There are enough sin and sorrow in the world for the Holy Ones not to add to them, to further mystify and perplex humanity with doubtful teachings."

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The Brotherhood which the Society aims at is the spiritual and ever-present verity realizable only, by the spiritual consciousness in man. Everything that accentuates the separative principle is a real and positive bar to the recognition. This spiritual apperception of the Truth is not possible, unless man transcends not in a separative fashion, the limitations of the *upadhis*. The moral aspect of our life is the first indication of this dawning truth; for the essence of morality consists in the recognition by the separative consciousness of the claims of the humanity around and of the solidarity of the whole human race. It is unfortunate, that in the present moment attempts are being made to prove, that morality is not essential to a would-be occultist. Occultism has been divorced from spirituality in certain quarters. The scientist may afford to be immoral, though even in his case immorality is sure to bring his intellect along certain lines; but the case is entirely different in one who tries to understand and realize himself. His consciousness is the only thing with which he works, and whatever gives a bias to it, is a real hindrance. The occultist who believes in the separated activity (and the enjoyment resulting) of any of the human functions is thereby helping effectively to prevent the light of the Self to illumine and transmute that portion of his being. He must not again, in himself or others, seek to continue and accentuate the separated self. He must no longer seek for the personality or the individuality even, as the result of his acts and aspirations. But if he does so, his knowledge is sure to be clouded by the colourings of his personal nature; and his

occult perceptions would not be anything but a further and perhaps more recondite knowledge as to the personal self only. As regards others, the occultist should be a centre of light and comfort, not in his individual possessions or proclivities, but as glorifying in his person the hidden Master. Only in so far as he can fulfil these conditions, only in so far as he can indicate the transcendent life and consciousness of the Master, only in so far as he can open the eyes of others to this hidden thought ever-present Fount of wisdom and peace within, only in so far as he can be said to be connected with the Master-consciousness. But when we find a so-called Indicate not stimulating whatever is high and noble in man, but actually resorting not only to the physical, not only to the immoral but actually the criminal modes of sex-indulgence, and that too in the name of the Theosophical Society,—then certainly it is time to interfere. In the heat of the moment, we may not perceive the truth; but the same is apparent that all a-sexual indulgence is the outcome of the spirit of selfishness, and has not even the faintest tinge of love in it as a redeeming feature, as is the case with the excessive indulgence in married life.

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Brothers! We are living (in) strange times, when men who are striving to purify the atmosphere, to kill out immorality and to purge the Society of elements which can but inevitably lead to its disintegration,—men who are striving to keep up the spiritual ideal, are charged with the breach of Universal Brotherhood; while men who have deliberately, to say the least of it, preached a lower, selfish, materialistic and a carnal gospel of lust to immature boys,—men who have further tried to vindicate unblushingly these pernicious teachings, are lauded up to the heavens as the true exponents of Theosophy. While aiming at the One Life—these misguided and perverse persons are preaching the gospel of the personality in its lowest modes; and yet these persons are held up as our ideals. "The self of matter and the self of spirit can ne'er both remain, one of the twain must die," so wrote H. P. B.: and the question before us is not one directly regarding the right and liberty of individual members to preach doctrines in the name of the Society which militate against the testimony of ordinary human consciousness, but rather as to what Self, of matter or of spirit, the Society is to embody and to express? We are, as believers in the Divine guidance behind the Society, not to think of this or the other personality, however useful in securing members in flocks or in promulgating Theosophy of a sensational type caricaturing that which sometimes does not express itself in the rapt yogi or the mystic. We must consider the problem not from the standpoint of personal loss or gain, in which the picture of an "advanced" Initiate and of the advantages resulting to us therefrom, looms largely before our minds; but on the contrary we must decide the question relying on the guidance of the inner Self, the Divine Charioteer, expressing Himself through every one of us. That which leads to the Divinity of humanity, that only is Theosophy; that which leads to the crowning of the flesh in us with its inevitable consequence—the bondage of the spirit, that is, not only not Theosophy, but is verily the device of Mara.

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We must never forget that the Society exists not as a background for individual aspirations, nor even as a scheme for securing individual exaltation and altitude, but in order that it may help to raise the humanity around us to a recognition of the Self within. So also wrote the Master Himself through Mr. Sinnett to the European aspirant for the establishment of a college of occultism; and there is no better exposition of the function of Theosophy to members than in this sletter which has been embodied in "The Occult World." We should do well to ponder over the significant and soul-stirring words ere rushing to a decision. I cannot however help quoting a few lines therefrom: "The chief object of the Theosophical Society is not so much to gratify individual aspirations as to serve our fellow-men; and the real value of this term 'selfish'

which may jar upon your ears, has a peculiar significance with us which it cannot have with you." I cannot help quoting also from another letter from the same Source from the self-same book. Speaking of the difference between the so-called exact and the occult sciences, the Great One says: "Now for us, poor unknown philanthropists, no fact of either of these sciences is interesting except (*Italics,—mine*) in the degree of its potentiality of moral results and in the ratio of its usefulness to mankind."

### SUNDAY, THE THIRTEENTH.

The recent Convention of the American Section T. S. (September 13) is registered, presumably,—as other Conventions are—in the indestructible depths of the Akasha. It is still the waking memory of a nightmare to many. In years to come—when the giftie gies them power—some members of the American Section T. S. will surely long for an indulgent Deva to sponge off the Akashic slate and efface the memory of this unseemly thing!

It was not a very creditable record made by the majority of delegates in spite of the glamour of success and the thundering drums of the bandwagon! The old slogan of "Brotherhood," shouted in many keys, made but a hollow sound in a Convention Hall where might reigned and free speech was forbidden.

We of the Opposition were in a hopeless minority—57 to 198—but it was a stalwart company that faced without flinching the certain triumph of their political opponents. Such a stand should go down to history with other forlorn hopes, which though they may have failed in execution, were sublime in their purpose, and have served to inspire the world for all time with ideals of courage and determination. We may be routed but we are not conquered. "We shall meet again—at Philippi!"

Believing in the righteousness of our cause and honest of purpose, we must confess that the drift of this Convention was, in some respects, wholly unforeseen. Experience had taught us much, but not to doubt—as yet—the sincerity of the principles for which the majority clamored. But now, at last, we understand what "brotherhood" means! It is a word to conjure with!—with signs and omens, pentacles and circles; it may be spelled backward or forward, Taro, of Rota, "when the River passeth." "Lighten mine eyes that I sleep not in death, lest mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him."

Mr. A. P. Warrington was Chairman of Convention. The minority made his appointment unanimous and gave to him the sacred gift of its trust. We expected neither favoritism nor discrimination, but justice and—possibly—equity. This was an astral illusion. If the General Secretary would only allow us to have a full copy of the Report of the Convention Proceedings (which he will not), there would be no difficulty in demonstrating the extent of this maya. The Convention proceedings were taken down in shorthand but, though a delegate from several branches, the Editor of "The Voice" has been denied access to this Report, of which a very misleading resume has been published in the October "Messenger." Under a ruling to exclude non-members from the Convention, it was impossible for us to secure a stenographer of our own and hence "The Voice" must lodge its complaint in general terms. But in the face of about one hundred witnesses it can hardly be gainsaid with any hope of agreement. Repeated protests were made by delegates against the enforcement of the "gag-law," while protests constitute a part of the Convention proceedings. In the "Messenger" Report, the protests filed by the Editor of "The Voice" are duly recorded; but there were other protests, even more forcible, as for instance those of Judge James, of St. Joseph; Mr. Knothe, of New York, and Mr. Chidester, of Philadelphia. No mention is made of these. The printing of a mere excerpt of the Convention Proceedings is all the account which the Section officials will permit the American members to see. This excerpt gives positively no idea of the determined opposition of the minority and practically effaces their activities from the entire proceedings.

Concerning the conduct of the Convention, the voice of the minority has found some expression in the "Protest and Appeal" to the General Council T. S., printed elsewhere. It is only a plain statement of truth to say that the proceedings were of such a nature that even members of the pro-Leadbeater party have been since heard to deplore the way in which this Convention was conducted. Mr. Read, of Akron, Ohio, went so far as to appeal, on the floor of the Convention, to his own constituency, against the unfair treatment of the minority. We are glad to say also that our General Secretary, Dr. Weller Van Hook, twice made an unsuccessful effort to change the unsightly aspect of affairs by at least a limited exercise of the gentle art of courtesy.

It was all perfectly legal—undoubtedly—but of that phase of legality which relegates the Convention to the domain of cheap politics. Every device of parliamentary lawyerism up to the last resource of Roberts' Rules, was exhausted to defeat even a simple presentment of our case. The "gag-law" was applied in a fashion which may be justly called brutal. A prominent member, after Convention, stated, with unblushing candor, to the Editor of "The Voice" that in caucus it had been agreed beforehand that the minority should not be allowed to speak upon the Leadbeater issue! That the proceedings were, as many insist, strictly in accordance with parliamentary usage, may be technically correct. No one disputes the fact that the majority had power to silence us; but, as theosophists, had they the moral right? A man may have power to club an unsuspecting wayfarer, but among "universal brothers" the code of the brigand is not usually regarded with much favor.

To sum the matter up, 57 delegates representing 399 members of the American Section T. S., and more than one-fifth of the entire number of delegates present, were, by legal processes, prohibited from exercising the right of free speech, on the Convention floor. All motions bearing upon the great issues we have made, were either tabled or killed by a demand for the previous question. The party measures of the majority were executed without the privilege of free debate. The majority cheered the passage of the Martin resolution! The psychology of fanaticism was the feature of the hour. It was an outburst of hysterical devotion to "leaders," a blind following of the blind,—a woeful spectacle!

These are hard words, O, Universal Brothers, but true! No political Convention striving to seat a demagogue in some place of power, ever stooped to measures more drastic than those of your devising. That such a spectacle should have been witnessed in America and in a Convention of Theosophists is surely an occasion for most profound regret. This exultant majority, like many other victors, in the hour of its triumph, intoxicated with success, has committed such acts of violence as must stain its records for all time with ignominy and with shame.

#### THE CONVENTION REPORT.

The abridged edition of the Convention Report which appears in the October "Messenger" sounds comparatively innocuous. There is no Douma in the American Section. The Editor of "The Voice" wrote to Dr. Van Hook requesting a copy of the full Report, and offering to pay for the same; but the request was refused on the ground that the Convention authorized the publication of the Report only after it had been edited by the Executive Committee and that no full copies could be supplied for private use or publication.

Realizing that any further attempt to secure the Report in its original form would be useless, the matter was permitted to rest there, though not, we may say, without a sense of great injustice. We protest against the fact that members are not to be permitted to have copies of the full Report in typewritten form, if they offer to pay for such copies. The publication of an abridged report in "The Messenger" has for the past two years superceded the issuance of a separate pamphlet such as was formerly printed annually, ostensibly, because there was a necessity for economy of the Sectional funds. It has never been signi-

fied by the Convention, in any way, that this new order should be made to further the ends of a political party which seeks to do what has been done in the British Section, namely, suppress facts to a knowledge of which every member of the Section is entitled. The elimination from the present Report, under the censorship recognized as authoritative by our General Secretary, of many facts of grave significance, is in our opinion wholly unwarranted.

#### THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE AMERICAN SECTION T. S.

In the Report of the General Secretary as printed in the October "Messenger," the following statistical table is incorporated.

##### Comparative Statistics of Membership

Report of	Resigned	Dropped	Dead	New	At-Large	Present
1904	36		24	655		2299
1905	43		17	541	318	2637
1906	45	310	21	417	338	2607
1907	82	259	39	328	365	2559
1908	130	368	18	435	333	2479

The statistics relating to members dropped in 1904 and 1905 are not published. We have endeavored to secure from the General Secretary the reports for these years, but have not yet succeeded in obtaining them. Taking the average of earlier years, it is quite safe to say, however, that the figures fell far below the average of the past three years. The report as it stands presents certain features of interest to all who have watched with more or less anxiety the effect of the Leadbeater affair upon the membership of the Section. Its influence was definitely felt, being manifested by an increase in the number of lapses in membership.

In reviewing the statistics furnished by Dr. Van Hook, we note that he reports the membership of the American Section T. S. during 1907 as 2,559. In a supplement to the Annual Report of the American Section to the Convention of T. S. (Benares, India, December, 1907), Dr. Van Hook reported the total membership of this Section T. S. as 2,821 or 262 more than the number now given. Dr. Hook says this discrepancy arose from a confusion of the statistics of the calendar and the fiscal years. Accepting the latest on Dr. Van Hook's authority, as correct, we had then 2,559 members in the Section last year, and we have now 2,479. The losses of members by resignation and lapses, during the years 1906-7-8 (the period covered since the onset of the Leadbeater difficulty), aggregate 1,184. The American Section T. S. has lost almost half of its membership, owing largely, we believe, to the prevailing policy of the Administration. On the other hand the acquisition of new members during the same period was 1,180 or only four less than the aggregate losses. This increase was due to energetic propaganda work on the part of the pro-Leadbeater party. The new members are not *au courant* with the Leadbeater affair, and hence their attitude can hardly be taken as indicative of the real sentiment of American theosophists, although it has undoubtedly served to determine the issues at our late Convention. If the 1,184 members who left in disgust, had only stood by the Section, this chapter in its history might have had a different ending.

#### THE LEGION OF HONOR

The following branches voted at the late convention for the Loyalist cause and against all pro-Leadbeater measures:

Hdye Park T. S.	St. Joseph T. S.
Joplin T. S.	St. Louis T. S.
Lotus T. S.	Topeka T. S.
Inter-State T. S.	Toronto T. S.
Lima T. S.	Toledo T. S.*
Philadelphia T. S.	Wilmette T. S.

\*One delegate out of six dissenting.



Present in Convention, 255 delegates, representing 1785 out of 2479 members. The Branches not represented were: Alpha (Boston), Grand Rapids, Great Falls, Jackson, Kansas City (Kans.), Montreal, Syracuse.

#### DR. VAN HOOK'S POSITION

The following letter from Dr. Weller Van Hook to Mr. Herbert Whyte, of London, appeared in the September issue of "Theosophy in India," at the request of Mrs. Besant:

103 State Street, Chicago, August 11, 1908.

Dear Mr. Whyte,—

The preamble to the recent resolution of the British Section which mentions my name errs in stating that I "claim that the corrupting practices, the teaching of which determined the resignation of Mr. C. W. Leadbeater are the high doctrine of Theosophy." Such a claim has not been made by me at any time or in any manner. Mr. Leadbeater solved the problem presented to him in a way which, for him, was right. It may be for aught I know, that there are other ways of meeting this class of problems. I cannot lay down general principles, not having the knowledge or authority to do so.

The question recently before the Theosophical world has presented two phases.

The first is a specific question: Did Mr. Leadbeater do right under the circumstances under which he was placed? Viewing the matter from his standpoint, I believe he did.

The second phase of the question is: What shall be done to aid young, unspiritualized men who face the problem of the contest with the developing kundalini?

This general problem has not been dealt with in the Letters published over my signature and while I believe that it is a problem which the Western World will be called upon to face, I am not prepared to deal with it.

Sincerely yours,

WELLER VAN HOOK.

Mr. Herbert Whyte,  
51 Brondesbury Villas, London, N. W., England.

A copy of this letter to Mr. Whyte has been in our hands since August, Dr. Van Hook having sent the same, with, however, a request that it should not be printed. Since this letter has now been made public by Mrs. Besant, we are glad to submit it to our readers for analysis. A claim has been made by Mr. Whyte (see Report of British Executive Committee, *Vahan*, October, 1908), that Dr. Van Hook utterly repudiates the imputation placed upon him by the movers of what is known as "the Burrows Amendment" (see August "Voice"). We must confess that English as it is thus interpreted, has not been a part of our training. Mrs. Besant appears to have taken the same stand as Mr. Whyte takes, namely, that Dr. Weller Van Hook does not advocate the "X System" as accredited to him. Yet in the letter published above, it will be noted that Dr. Van Hook says that "under the circumstances under which he was placed," Mr. Leadbeater did right! Such an apparent juggling with facts as has been attempted in this connection by Mr. Whyte, apparently with Mrs. Besant's countenance, is not worthy of those who have lent themselves to it. Because the claim has been made by Dr. Van Hook that the letter in question was "dictated verbatim by a Master" and because the preamble of the British Resolution is not a literal quotation of utterances of that letter, there seems to be a prevailing impression that an *equivocal* of the kind indicated may be properly characterized as an "absolute repudiation!" This is neither true nor honest—and we are inclined to think that some of Dr. Van Hook's zealous friends are making him eat his own words faster than he cares to!

At our late Convention, an definite effort was made to secure from our General Secretary a statement of his attitude on the vital question of the Leadbeater teachings. The majority of the delegates refused to allow such a statement to be asked for! This does not look like an obvious desire to "repudiate" the only possible interpretation which the text of the Open Letter will honestly justify. We must always remember, however, that Dr. Van Hook declares that he did not write those letters in *proprio persona*; though if he signed them, he countenanced their sentiments. As a matter-of-fact, it is Mrs. Besant, Mr. Whyte and others who are anxious to annul the effect of the statements in the Open Letters and who are doing all of this so-called "repudiating." As to our General Secretary, though we dissent most emphatically from his views on this subject, we must confess that his attitude of sturdy insistence on his original point, commands our respect. One credits the consistency and courage of a man who will not retreat under fire. Any other course must rob him of his only justification, namely the evidence of a sincere conviction.

Undue stress is laid by many on the clause "under the circumstances under which he was placed"—referring to some supposititious conditions of an unusual character which, in this instance, made what is always wrong, for the time being right! We are told practically that Mr. Leadbeater did evil that good might come of it. This we suppose is another version of the grip-of-evil story of which there is absolutely no proof apart from Mr. Leadbeater's say-so. There was nothing peculiar about "the circumstances under which Mr. Leadbeater was placed." Mr. Leadbeater simply taught what he believed the majority of boys should be taught, as he declared very frankly in his letter to Mr. Fullerton. We are well aware that Dr. Van Hook does not admit this. But will Dr. Van Hook say that he does not think the average boy may be benefitted by Mr. Leadbeater's teachings? We think not.

The whole difficulty here is that there has been a lack of candor in the definition of these utterances. The grip-of-evil story is said to signify that the boys in question were already addicted to the vicious habit under discussion. This, we believe, is an infamous libel. If cornered, those who frame such a cowardly accusation retreat from the physical to the mental plane. They declare that the boys may not have been guilty physically, but they were guilty on the mental or astral plane!—Mr. Leadbeater having seen it all clairvoyantly! Now God forbid that clairvoyance should ever supercede the *lettre de cachet*! The possibilities of chicanery and fraud along these lines are written in the blood of martyrs; yet it has remained for the Theosophical Society to acquit a man on his own recognizances, because he says he sees on other planes, things no one can either prove or disprove. There are people who claim that the massacre of St. Bartholomew was directly instigated by God Himself!

#### WHAT "THE VAHAN" SAYS.

The following statement appears in the October "Vahan" under the title of "The Special Report Committee." We quote:

The Committee appointed to draft a Report of the Convention proceedings, as far as they related to the discussion on Mr. Dunlop's resolution and amendment thereto, met on July 13.

Present: Mr. Burrows, Mr. Mead, Mrs. Sharpe, Miss Ward and Mr. Whyte, with Mr. Glass as Secretary.

In preparing the report the written speeches of Mr. Burrows, Mr. Mead and Mr. Whyte were accepted in full, being taken as read. The last named having been unable to complete the reading of his MS. at Convention owing to time limit, it was nevertheless unanimously agreed that the whole speech should be taken. The notes of Mr. Glass and Mr. Shindler former the basis of the remainder of the Report and it was agreed that certain speakers who have made serious contributions to the discussion should have the opportunity of reading the digest of their remarks in order that errors might be avoided. This has been done.

It was agreed that 2,000 copies be printed for circulation to the members of the British Section and the General Secretaries of other Sections and that members should be able to purchase extra copies if they so desired, for the use of members of the Theosophical Society only.

The Committee separated under the impression that its work was thus accomplished. On receipt of the printer's proof which was forwarded to each member, Mr. Whyte claimed to notice certain passages in Mr. Burrows' speech which he said had not been read at Convention, and after some correspondence on the subject the Committee was called together again on September 15, it being impossible to assemble a full committee at an earlier date owing to the absence of members from town during the holidays. All members of the Committee were present with Mr. Glass as before.

Mr. Whyte moved a resolution of protest against the inclusion by Mr. Burrows of passages which he had not read at Convention. Mrs. Sharpe seconded.

Mr. Burrows challenged Mr. Whyte to state whether he asserted that the passages in question were interpolated in the sense that they were not in the original MS. from which Mr. Burrows read at Convention, or whether he meant that they had simply been missed in the reading. Mr. Whyte on being pressed withdrew the charge of interpolation. Mr. Whyte then stated with regard to the passages in question that he had a number of witnesses who confirmed his recollection. Within the Committee itself there was a conflict of testimony. Mr. Burrows produced his original MS., which was checked by the Chairman (Miss Ward) and found to contain all the points objected to by Mr. Whyte. Mr. Burrows, while distinctly asserting that he did not admit that these passages had not been read, as there was no reason why they should not have been, although it was impossible to remember every item in a long manuscript, then offered to withdraw them from the official report in order that no excuse might be made by anyone for further delay in publication.

Mr. Whyte then withdrew his motion. This having been agreed to by the rest of the Committee, Mr. Burrows moved and Mr. Mead seconded:

That the proof as amended and with Miss Appel's amended report of her speech, be agreed on as the Report of what took place at the Convention.

This was carried unanimously.

Mr. Burrows moved and Mr. Mead seconded:

That Miss Ward, as Chairman, hand the Report to Mrs. Sharpe, as General Secretary, for publication to the Section.

Mr. Whyte moved as an amendment:

That the Report be handed to the General Secretary.

Mrs. Sharpe seconded. The Chairman, in giving her vote in favour of the resolution as moved by Mr. Burrows, pointed out that the objection to the phrase "for publication to the Section" was only a question of playing with words, as the whole object of the Report was publication to the members of the section, by whose instruction, through their delegates in Convention, the work has been done.

EDITH WARD.  
G. R. S. MEAD.  
HERBERT BURROWS.

Having failed in our efforts to obtain a report of this Committee to which we could all agree, on conditions which we were able to accept, we, the minority on the Committee, regret being obliged to express our opinion that the above does not give a fair impression of the actual proceedings. We do not, however, propose to issue a minority report, as we are unwilling further to complicate issues which are being dealt with elsewhere.

S. MAUD SHARPE.  
HERBERT WHYTE.

### THE BRITISH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE PASSES A VOTE OF STRONG CENSURE ON DR. HIESTAND-MOORE.

The following Resolution was carried at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the British Section T. S., on September 19, 1908, by a vote of 9 ayes to 2 noes, 2 members not voting and one absent.

"That the Executive Committee of the British Section desires to express strong censure of the action of Dr. Hiestand-Moore in publishing in "The Theosophic Voice" a portion of the Special Report of Convention, after having been informed by the General Secretary of the British Section that it was uncorrected; and requested by her not to use it.

"Further that a copy of this Resolution be sent to the General Secretary of the American Section, to use at his discretion, and to Dr. Moore."

\* \* \* \* \*

Mrs. Sharpe, as General Secretary, had properly no authority over this Report which was issued by a Convention Committee. As to the status of the Report, the above quotation from "The Vahan" very clearly defines that. There is a partisan majority in the British Executive in favor of the administration policy.—Editor.

### MISS WARD'S CIRCULAR

Cobden Hill Cottage, Radlett, Herts, October 6, 1908.

To the Members of the British Section of the Theosophical Society.

My dear Friends and Colleagues,

At the present moment we are face to face with the gravest crisis which this Section of the Theosophical Society has yet experienced. It has arisen as you are aware, out of events which occurred more than two years ago, when the officials of the American Section formulated certain grave charges against Mr. C. W. Leadbeater, and sent over a representative to lay them before Colonel Olcott, then in this country. Colonel Olcott called into consultation with him the members of the British Executive and a representative of the French Section in addition to the American representative above referred to. At the Colonel's request Mr. Leadbeater came from Italy to meet this Advisory Board and explain his position. The result was the acceptance by Colonel Olcott of Mr. Leadbeater's resignation in terms which are familiar to you all.

It was hoped that such resignation would terminate the whole incident but the events of the past two years have shown that such hope was ill-founded. In various ways the matter has been kept before the Society, for those who believed that Mr. Leadbeater's actions were determined by good motives were not satisfied that he should withdraw. Most unfortunately of all it came to be mixed up with the recent presidential election and thus further tended to develop along party lines, and gave rise to mutual recrimination which all of us must deplore.

The latest phase of the difficulty came about through the circulation in this Section of some letters written by Dr. Weller Van Hook, who claims they were the direct inspiration of a Master. Amongst other matters these letters contain the definite statement that "no mistake was made by Mr. Leadbeater in the nature of the advice he gave his boys. No mistake was made in the way he gave it." The last clause is important because it very closely concerns the question of motive, which is the real question in dispute—the fact of "advice given" being admitted by all.

You all know that these statements by Dr. Van Hook called forth a strong protest at the Convention in July, the terms of which are, however, not yet before you.\* This protest took the form of an amendment to a clause in a resolution moved by Mr. Dunlop, and it called upon the President of the Theosophical Society and the General Council to take

\*The amendment to this Resolution has quite recently been printed and circulated in connection with Mrs. Besant's reply to it, which appears in this issue.—Editor.

some action, in view of the fact that Dr. Van Hook is *ex-officio* a member of the governing body of the Theosophical Society and therefore responsibly linked with the whole Society and not only with the American Section. The debate was a heated and difficult one and the Convention was prolonged to three sittings. It was finally agreed that a special Report of its proceedings should be issued to all members. The cause of the non-appearance of such Report up to the present is known to you.

A vital difference of opinion exists in your Executive Committee as to the desirability of issuing a document which, of necessity, contains plain statements as to the nature of the advice and actions admitted by Mr. Leadbeater and which Dr. Van Hook endeavored to justify in his Open Letter. No doubt that difference of opinion would be found to extend to the members at large, and my purpose in addressing this letter to you is to suggest a way out of our present difficulties which I trust may commend itself as both wise and just, not only to the large numbers of earnest workers who have not had all the facts before them, but also to those who have already taken up a strong attitude on the question on either side.

It is of course admitted by those who claim to be Mr. Leadbeater's friends, that certain advice, generally agreed to be dangerous and immoral, was given by Mr. Leadbeater, but they most of them claim that his motive was good though his action mistaken. Those of his friends who spoke at Convention with one accord took this view. On the other hand, there are those who consider that, whatever the motive, one who has taken the course adopted by Mr. Leadbeater should no longer be placed before the world as a teacher of Theosophy, and that the Society should publicly disassociate itself from any such asserted palliatives for the Social Evil.

It is therefore clear that any evidence which throws light on the question of "the way in which it was given" is of vital importance and should be searchingly investigated. Now after the Advisory Board had dissolved, a cable was received from the U. S. A. announcing the dispatch of some additional important evidence, and in due course there came to hand a brief extract from a letter, said to have been sent by Mr. Leadbeater to a young boy, written in a cypher, the key to which was furnished by the boy to his parents. This extract was handed to the members of the British Executive and was felt to be of a character that left no doubt, if its genuineness were granted, of the true attitude of Mr. Leadbeater in this matter. This extract has been quoted in part and has been widely referred to, but speaking for myself, and I believe for other members of the Advisory Board, a copy of the whole document had never been seen till September 25th of this year. On that day I was shown a copy by the courtesy of one of Mr. Leadbeater's friends, and Mr. Mead at the same time received a full copy from the U. S. A. Of this document I wish to state most emphatically that if it is genuine it settles for me the whole question of Mr. Leadbeater's attitude; if it is not genuine it is a piece of inconceivable wickedness, which leaves Mr. Leadbeater grossly wronged and of which the perpetrator should, by every code of honor and justice, be unveiled and punished.

The original of this document is stated to be in safe-keeping. Mr. Leadbeater's friends suggest more or less vaguely that it has been tampered with in such a fashion as to give it an evil meaning; an explanation of the use of a cypher is offered, and the particularly noxious phrases are said to refer to something else. On the other hand, those who have alluded to the document in this country indubitably believed they were dealing with a genuine letter.

Now I come to the practical disposal which I wish to lay before you. Can we not unite in demanding that a thorough investigation be made into this matter by independent and competent persons? And can we not all of us agree to abide by the issue? I will urge several reasons why this should be done.

1. It has been asserted that Mr. Leadbeater had a "mock-trial."

There was no "trial" at all. The Advisory Board had certain statements and correspondence placed before it; Mr. Leadbeater was heard in comment thereon, and, in answer to questions, made certain admissions in addition to those already made over his signature. Thereupon the Board advised as previously stated.

2. It has been asserted that the discussion at Convention was an *ex parte* presentation which it would not be fair to circulate. It may be pointed out that *ex parte* statements on the other side have been circulated in the Society, but the true view is that no statement from any person whatsoever, writing either for prosecution or defence, can be other than *ex parte*, and that we therefore emphatically need—first, investigation, and then judicial summing up by some one entirely unconnected with the Theosophical Society.

3. The matter cannot rest where it is; it has got to be cleared out of the way before harmony on a true basis can be restored. We claim to be pioneers of a new race where spiritual wisdom shall rule—what better proof can we give of the reality of our claims than to be ready to submit the whole question to arbitration rather than break the Section in pieces? Surely we have learned something by past experiences?

4. The question at issue can never be settled by a "split." Each party will inevitably continue to believe itself right and the other wrong: by investigation it should be possible to settle the matter finally.

5. Mr. Leadbeater would surely welcome this solution himself.\* If innocent of evil intent he will be glad to have the weight of suspicion removed: if guilty then he will surely, in view of his claim to be a gentleman, gladly insist on his friends allowing him to retire in reality and not merely in name. Or, if he be the occultist and initiate that some maintain, then he will bow to the ruling of the "Good Law," which exacts the penalty for a "mistake."

It will be asked what kind of tribunal could be appealed to, and what powers would it have of compelling information. I say frankly on the latter point that there could be no compulsion but the honest determination of every one concerned to place the whole evidence freely in the hands of the investigator and to be willing to testify as in a court of law. That should not be impossible in a Society like ours, and the one reason for reticence which might be urged if the inquiry were a public one (i.e., stigma attaching to those concerned) need not exist in connection with such a tribunal as I have in view. Naturally the co-operation of our American brethren would be a *sine qua non*, but I cannot think that this would be lacking for such an end.

On the question of the constitution of such a Board of Investigation I naturally offer only a tentative suggestion, but to me it seems not improbable that we could secure the services of a barrister in good standing, a medical expert—preferably an alienist, and, as president, a public man of repute, such, for example, as a journalist, who would be in sympathy with occultism and with arbitration and uphold that high ideal of moral purity for which the Theosophical Society is supposed to stand. Obviously this end could not be achieved without expense, but I think there are many of us who would make any possible sacrifice in order to clear this horrible incubus from our shoulders, where it has hung for the last two-and-a-half years and now threatens to throttle the life out of the organization which we have been proud to regard as a vehicle for the spiritual uplifting of the world.

I have written this entirely in my private capacity and not as an official of the Section. I make my appeal to all fellow members if they think of this as a way in which our difficulties may be solved to either write me individually to the address above, or to move in their Lodges for a resolution to be sent to the Executive Committee asking for an attempt to be made towards the formation of some such Board of Investigation.

As I feel sure that none of those who oppose the action and advice of

\*He has practically declined it.—Editor.

Mr. Leadbeater do so on any other than public grounds, I am convinced they will welcome the fullest inquiry. To those who are friends and defenders of Mr. Leadbeater I can of course appeal with confidence, as they can only rejoice in an impartial investigation, which they assert has not yet been made. To the great number of members who are weary of controversy, I express my conviction that only by such unbiassed investigation can settlement be assured and the Society return to its proper work. And to one and all I assert that in the name of justice, truth and charity there is no other way than to court the fullest inquiry, for "there is no religion higher than truth."

Yours faithfully,

EDITH WARD.

\* \* \* \* \*  
 The suggestion made by Miss Ward has much merit. If this plan were undertaken, its failure—should such accrue—would not result, we feel certain, from any lack of sympathy or co-operation on the part of the members of The Ways and Means Conference in the American Section. "The Theosophic Voice" endorses the plan suggested by Miss Ward and, should a Commission similar to the one proposed by her be appointed in this country, we should do all in our power to further its purpose. Such a Commission could be safeguarded against all possibility of injustice. Opposition to such an eminently fair and practical scheme will hardly come, we may assume, from those who have cried out so loudly against the decision of Colonel Olcott and the Advisory Board.

\* \* \* \* \*  
 Since the above was written we learn that though the proposal of Miss Ward would have been gladly accepted by the former officials of the American Section, both Mrs. Besant and Mr. Leadbeater have practically declined an investigation.—Editor.

#### THE RETIREMENT OF UPENDRA NATH BASU.

It is with sincere regret that we learn of the resolution of Babu Upendra Nath Basu, Joint General Secretary of the Indian Section T. S., who is a distinguished lawyer and editor of "Theosophy in India." The occasion for this change is the ill-health of our eminent Hindu colleague who has already severed his connections with the Central Hindu College and given up other work which has proved too severe a tax upon his strength. For fourteen out of the eighteen years of its life, Babu Upendra Nath has edited "Theosophy in India" (Prasnottara) and has been a prominent figure in the activities of the Indian Section T. S. We sincerely hope for his speedy recovery and a subsequent return to duties he has discharged with thoroughness and distinction. In a farewell to his colleagues published in "Theosophy in India" (November, 1908), Babu Upendra Nath takes occasion to discharge what he regards as his last duty to the Indian Section, namely, to urge it not to vote for the re-instatement of Mr. Leadbeater until the members have duly examined the merits of his case and decided accordingly.

His reasons are given as follows:

1. The Indian Section did not take any part whatever in the trial that is now sought to be quashed, and is therefore in no way responsible for any alleged wrong that might have been done by it.
2. To impugn the trial is to cast a slur not only on the Board that sat upon it, but also on our late revered Founder who presided over it, and this would be highly improper now that he is longer in our midst to speak for himself, seeing that his decision was accepted without challenge during the 8 months he survived the same and more than 30 months have elapsed since it was passed. Surely nothing short of a thorough investigation by the most representative body can justify an upsetting thereof.

3. I have carefully studied all the evidence in the case both as lawyer and as Theosophist, and I am bound to confess that I fail to perceive any personal bias vitiating the judgment given therein. In fact nothing but a judicial frame of mind is observable in the course of the investigation on the part of the Advisory Board, and they formed no conclusions that were not fully warranted by Mr. Leadbeater's own admissions.

4. The so-called wrong consisted only in the acceptance of Mr. Leadbeater's resignation tendered in consequence of certain charges, and the publication of this simple fact in the Official Organs of the Society. It is difficult to see how any grievous injury could be done to any one by such a perfectly natural course.

5. The stenographic report of the Proceedings shows that Mr. Leadbeater himself was "absolutely" satisfied as to the fairness of the President-Founder's conduct of the trial.

6. The whole Society had the most emphatic assurance of its highest dignitaries that in the months of December, 1906, and January, 1907, the two great Masters, who are believed by most members to be its guardian angels, manifested themselves bodily to our late revered President-Founder and in unequivocal language pronounced it as Their definite opinion that Mr. Leadbeater was "wrong" in the "teachings" he gave to boys entrusted to his care, and that "the acceptance of his resignation was right." The same Society is now told that Mr. Leadbeater has been wronged, and consequently the acceptance of his resignation was not right. The two statements are hardly reconcilable; and that being so, should not the members abide by the more authoritative pronouncement?

7. When the Head of the E. S. issues to students of occultism a formal circular dealing with a matter of grave import and seeks to enlighten their minds on a question of morality, it is hardly likely that such a document can be based on unsifted and dubious information—especially when it virtually expels one of the most prominent members of the School. Is it not therefore far more reasonable to regard the E. S. Circular of 9th June, 1906, as emanating from much higher inspiration and deeper illumination than the "Letter to the Members of the Theosophical Society," of September 7th, 1908, which is controversial in its origin and in its function not nearly so sacred and solemn as the other?

8. As Mr. Leadbeater was not expelled there can be no "reinstatement" in his case.

9. There is no rule in the Constitution of the T. S. which allows of the admission of one member at the request of other members. Nor is it a dignified position for such a body as the T. S. to implore a member, who has resigned and does not care for a place in its ranks, to rejoin it for its own sake. Now in his letter published in "The Theosophist" for May, 1907, he expressly denies all intention or desire to resume his membership. There is thus no case before us and the petition from the American Section has no *locus standi*. If Mr. Leadbeater has since changed his mind he can apply in the ordinary way, and then it would be for the President, in view of her telegraphic promise to the British Section, to demand compliance with the terms thereof and thereafter to refer the matter to the various Sections for their opinion. It will then be time for the Section to deliberate on the question.

10. We learn from very reliable sources that the Van Hook communications out of which all this controversy has arisen, have been disclaimed by Mr. Leadbeater as dictations from any Master.

These reasons may or may not appeal to all my readers. But I trust not many will dissent when I say that no great harm can be done by putting off the matter for some time, whereas hasty action is almost certain to result in the practical dropping out of some of our best and oldest members. Those of us who are disposed to treat the subject lightly may be reminded how on a much less grave moral issue the Society was on the point of being wrecked about 14 years ago, when



Mrs. Besant, who at the time held no office even in the T. S., was charged with nothing more serious or reprehensible than mere condonement of fraud on the part of Mr. W. Q. Judge. My last word to you, brothers, therefore, is "leave things in statu quo until the proper time for action comes, and then proceed in a judicial manner."

UPENDA NATH BASU.

### THE SUPPRESSED SPEECHES OF BR. BURROWS AND MR. MEAD

It is with considerable satisfaction that we note the appearance in England of a pamphlet containing the speeches of Mr. Burrows and Mr. Mead which were published in the August "Voice" but suppressed abroad by the General Secretary of the British Section. This pamphlet is issued by Mr. Burrows and Mr. Mead personally. The text of these speeches is already in the hands of our readers, but the certain statements at the end of the pamphlet are of interest as bearing upon the coup d'etat of Mrs. Sharpe and we print them in part:

A Special Committee was unanimously appointed by the Convention to edit for publication that part of the Convention proceedings which had to do with the Leadbeater case. \* \* \*

Before the final form of the Report was agreed on, a member of the Committee took exception to certain passages in the first proof of Mr. Burrows' speech, as not having been read at the Convention. Mr. Burrows did not admit this, but in order to remove any excuse for non-publication, he consented to withdraw the passages. (An account of this will be seen in the October "Vahan"). The report of his speech as it appears here is as agreed on by the Committee, but below are given the passages in question:—

#### NOTE A

This is in part the testimony of still another boy, but even more emphatically the discovery of two notes from X to two boys. It is impossible to put such writings in print; but their prurency, their cold-blooded injunctions as to methods and times of indulgence, and the personal satisfaction expressed in the remark "Glad sensation is so pleasant," all make impossible the defence that the prescriptions were given from honest desire to save the victims from sex relations.—Mr. Fullerton's Circular.

#### NOTE B.

Needless to speak of my sorrow for the loss of one with whom I have worked for so many years with never a jar or a cloud, and with whom I can work no more. My life is the sadder and poorer for his loss; but the Theosophical Society must stand clear of teaching that pollutes and degrades, and it is right that Mr. X is no longer with us. Frankly, it would be far easier for me if I could say to you: "Your conventional ideas of morality do not bind the occultist. It is hard to side with the crowd against a friend." But on my conscience I cannot say that. I am bound to say to you: "I have blundered badly in my judgment and my insight, and must bear the Karma of it. I dare not believe that the White Lodge could ignore such ill thoughts and deeds in the Temple open only to the pure in heart." (And further on) "If the day of my fall should come, I ask those who love me not to shrink from condemning my fault, not to attenuate it or say that black in white, but rather let them lighten my heavy Karma, as I am trying to lighten the Karma of my friend and brother, by proclaiming the unshaken purity of the ideal, and by declaring that the fall of an individual leaves unshattered their trust in the Masters of Purity and Compassion."—Mrs. Besant's Letter.

#### NOTE C.

And who regularly took them to sleep with him, although they strongly objected and begged for a separate room, as I have actual proof.

## NOTE D

That is the line that Miss Ethel Mallet takes in her letter of resignation from the Council of the Blavatsky Lodge.

## NOTE E.

In my manuscript and read by me were these words: "And in one of the occult groups here, of which one of his firm supporters is the chief, members have been told that they must accept him as their spiritual teacher." Mr. Wedgwood, the supporter in question, objected to this statement as untrue and at his request I took out those words. I have since had an opportunity of questioning the member referred to and am informed that she was told she must support Mr. Leadbeater—which in my opinion, is, if correct, worse than the other phrase.

H. B.

By way of comment on Note E by Mr. Burrows, the Editor of "The Voice" desires to say that in one instance of which she knows, a member was suspended from the E. S. because she refused to accept Mr. Leadbeater as her spiritual teacher. The Editor has seen the letter from the E. S. officer in which notification of this was sent to the member in question. When appealed to in this matter, Mrs. Besant said substantially that the suspension had not occurred under her instruction. The Editor has seen also a copy of this reply. Since this incident was closed, we learn that it is now denied by one of the parties concerned that it ever took place!

We are also in possession of direct proof that the members of the E. S. are now organized into what is practically a league "pledged to support the Administration."—Editor.

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 THE LEADBEATER AFFAIR AND THE PUBLIC PRESS

The question of more or less publicity in connection with the Leadbeater Affair, has been settled irrevocably by the interference of persons unknown. In May, 1906, a garbled account of the matter was given to the Chicago newspapers by some person evidently in rather close touch with the Society officials who, however, never sanctioned such action. The Chicago newspapers were also all supplied before Convention with copies of "The Theosophic Voice." It is only fair to say that the Editor was not consulted and had no knowledge of the proceedings until it was too late to stem the current of events. It was hence obviously impossible to secrete the Leadbeater matter, and in view of this fact, we made no further attempt to do so, feeling that, since the matter had already been made public, it would be well to have the facts clearly stated. "The Voice" was therefore freely distributed.

Reporters interviewed the Editor during Convention week—naturally; but it was somewhat of a shock to find that one of the reporters was supplied by some unknown person with complete copies of the Report of the Advisory Board and of Mr. Leadbeater's letter to Mr. Fullerton! The reporter who had these documents in his pocket and showed them to us, declined to say where he obtained them. Such utterances as appeared in the Chicago Press during Convention week, were largely based on the subject-matter of "The Voice," and on the documents in the possession of the reporter. We had hoped to restrict the circulation of "The Voice" to members of the T. S., and even now we pursue a policy of careful distribution, though various requests have come to us to exchange with non-theosophic journals and to supply "The Voice" to non-members. The Editor realizes fully that if the subject-matter of this journal becomes a theme for popular discussion, the future of the T. S. in America is blighted for this generation. Theosophy stands unscathed in the midst of all disasters, but an organization which will tolerate such proceedings as were countenanced by the late Convention American Section T. S., is certainly doomed to extinction. We view such a possible outcome with sadness, though we know that in America, under various names, the cause of Theosophy is prospering and will prosper, no matter what becomes of the T. S.

## FOR CO-OPERATIVE EFFORT

Branches or individuals who are opposed to the attitude of the President of the T. S. on the Leadbeater issue as defined in the "Letter to Members of the Theosophical Society" printed in this issue, are requested to communicate at once with the Editor of "The Theosophic Voice," 6109 Monroe avenue, Chicago, in order that there may be co-operation in any effort that may be made to reply to this by concerted action in the way of protest.

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 VIEWS OF SOME OFFICIALS OF THE INDIAN SECTION REGARDING MR. LEADBEATER'S RECALL

The following circular has been received (December 13), from India: We, the undersigned Officers and Members of Council of the Indian Section T. S., feel that a serious crisis has come in the history of the T. S., and that a grave danger is threatening its future in the proposal to invite Mr. Leadbeater to return to its ranks. In this connection we wish to put forward the following considerations:—

1. We fully recognize that the utmost latitude in all matters of opinion is the right of its members, and that the Society has no claim to exercise a censorship over their conduct. But we consider that a distinction should be drawn between ordinary members and those who have occupied a prominent position in the past, or who are now put forward as leaders and great teachers. For, in the latter case, their opinions and teachings will necessarily be regarded as being endorsed by the Society as a whole. The assertion of freedom from dogma and independence of judgment will not prevent this, for the actions and attitude of a majority of members carry more weight than the mere verbal expression of principles. Now it is admitted by Mr. Leadbeater's supporters that, while giving rules as to living and thinking, in order to lessen the tendency to certain degrading practices he has also, in certain cases, advised the deliberate continuance of these practices, within certain limits and as a temporary measure. We hold that this is contrary to Scriptural teaching and to the highest standards of morality. In other cases he has himself taught these practices as a preventive measure, somewhat as a physical disease might be inoculated. We hold that this, "inoculation" of a moral disease is still opposed to the spirit of Scriptural teaching, and to even the average moral standards. But Mr. Leadbeater is being held up as a "great teacher," an "Initiate," an "Arhat," as one of the leaders of the T. S., and as a representative of the Masters, whom members are earnestly adjured not to reject; the President herself refers to him as her fellow-Initiate, and as a great teacher. Further, Mr. Leadbeater has never said that he considers these methods wrong; he has, it is true, promised to discontinue them, but only out of deference to the opinions of others. Under these circumstances we believe that to invite him to return to the Society will inevitably commit the Society, practically though not technically, to a condoning, if not an actual endorsement of his methods, and that it will make it impossible to safeguard the honour and purity of the Society. For these reasons we cannot support what seems to us to be so fatal a course.

2. We also believe that it is a serious danger to any Society for any one around whom notoriety and scandal have gathered, to be received as a member, and placed in a prominent position as a teacher or leader, and especially so in the case of the Theosophical Society, for which it is claimed that its moral standard is higher than the average. On account of the methods referred to above, notoriety and scandal have gathered around Mr. Leadbeater, and for this reason also we consider it highly inadvisable that he should be asked to return to the Society.

3. We have, for the sake of argument only, and because we do not wish to enter into matters of controversy, accepted the view put forward by Mr. Leadbeater's supporters. But it does not seem to us to be

right that the vote of the members on a matter of such serious importance should be taken without their being, as far as possible, put in possession of all the facts of the case. We would therefore ask that before any vote in the Indian Section is taken, or accepted as final, all the available information on both sides should be issued in a form accessible to all members, in order that they may be able to judge of the matter justly.

{ BALKRISHNA KAUL	P. T. SRINIVASA IYENGAR
{ LILIAN EDGAR	UPENDRA LAL MAZUMDAR
{ B. K. LAHIRI	SURAJ BHAN
RAJENDRA LAL MUKERJEE	BARANASI BASI MUKERJEE
ISHWARI PRASAD	

I am in full accord with the views here expressed.

UPENDRA NATH BASU.

#### THE WORK OF THE RELIEF COMMITTEE, INTER-STATE T. S.

A new phase of activity has been undertaken by the Inter-State T. S. in New York City under the auspices of a "Relief Committee." This work is of a practical nature and has to do with the promotion of the well-being of the deserving poor in New York City. Mrs. Grace Shaw Duff is directing this enterprise very ably. She has defined its scope as follows: "Partly worn clothing is being repaired and distributed, new garments made for all infants' Hospital and "Comfort Bags" filled for Christmas."

"As may be imagined "Mrs. Duff writes to the Editor of "The Voice," "the demand for such help far exceeds the supply thus far, and we should be glad of assistance from any Branch or individual who would like to co-operate in the work. I will also willingly correspond with any wishing to establish other such centres of Relief Work.

GRACE SHAW DUFF,  
Chairman Relief Com. Inter-State Branch,  
250 W. 14th, N. Y. City."

We hope the various branches of the American Section will co-operate actively in this admirable enterprise. Mrs. Duff is well-known to many as a person with distinguished executive ability and it is certain that, if she receives such support as this undertaking merits, her efforts are bound to result in a signal achievement of the object desired.

#### A PROTESTING BRANCH IN INDIA

We are in receipt of a printed circular of protest from the Secretary of the Lahore T. S., Punjab, India, repudiating the proposal to reinstate Mr. Leadbeater and condemning the present attitude of the Administration in this matter as "most unwise."

#### THE SUTCLIFFE PAMPHLET AND THE BILIMORIA LETTER

Mr. G. C. Sutcliffe, the former Editor of "The Theosophic Gleaner" (India) has perpetrated a communication in defence of the Leadbeater cause which, in its own line, distances all competitors. Mr. Sutcliffe, with his profusion of capitals and italics, approaches rather close to the line of the ridiculous; his contentions distinctly traverse it. Among other things he labors to interpret by a sort of "Higher Criticism" of his own devising, the inner meaning of the utterances of the Adyar "Mahatmas." He says that when the "Mahatmas" declared Mr. Leadbeater's teachings wrong, they did not mean what they said, but something quite different (!)—that they meant the teachings were considered wrong, but that the question as to whether they were or were not actually wrong must be decided by the individual intuition! On P. 25

of his pamphlet, Mr. Sutcliffe says, speaking of the "Mahatmic" censure of the Leadbeater system:

"\* \* \* Undoubtedly the Colonel thought these words means this (i.e. that the teaching was wrong). But a further passage in the same letter shows that the Masters did not really intend to solve this moral question for us. This passage runs 'They said you should have stated in your resignation that you resigned because you had offended the standard of the ideals of the majority of the members of the Society by giving out teachings which were CONSIDERED objectionable.' They do not definitely say they WERE objectionable, but were CONSIDERED objectionable. Whether the majority of the Society was right in considering them objectionable in the safeguarded form actually adopted by Mr. Leadbeater is still left to our intuitions," etc.

Now, as a matter-of-fact, the above statement is essentially misleading. Mr. Sutcliffe quotes from Colonel Olcott's commentary on the "Mahatmic" Interview in his letter to Mr. Leadbeater and twists it to suit his own purpose. The text of the "Mahatmic" Interview is in our hands. Part of it is quoted in "The Theosophist" (Feb., 1907) in which the following statement occurs:

"The Mahatma wishes me to state in reference to the disturbances that have arisen because we deemed it wise to accept Mr. Leadbeater's resignation from the Society, that it was right to call an Advisory Council to discuss the matter; it was right to judge the teachings to which we objected as wrong and it was right to accept his resignation. (ITALICS MINE.—ED.) but it was not right that the matter should have been made so public and that we should have done everything possible to prevent it becoming so for his sake as well as for the Society.

"He said it should be the sacred duty of every Theosophist, if he finds a brother guilty of a wrong to try to prevent that brother from continuing in his wrong-doing and to protect others from being contaminated by that wrong so far as it is possible (Italics mine.—Ed.) but it is also his duty as a theosophist to shield his brother from being held up unnecessarily to general public condemnation and ridicule!"

We note the obvious rebuke to "The Voice" in the foregoing utterances; but we—of the unbelievers—feel no constraint therefrom. What puzzles us, however, is the point-of-view of those who have hailed these "Mahatmas" as the true Theosophical Masters—Mr. Leadbeater, for instance. In an "Open Letter" to "The Theosophical Review," Mr. Leadbeater wrote in 1907 as follows:

"The recent manifestations at Adyar were not the work of black magicians or of 'spooks' as some seem to suppose. In saying this, I know whereof I speak; your contributors (if they will forgive the home-truth), do not."

There is therefore no doubt, according to Mr. Leadbeater himself, that the Adyar "Mahatmas" were entirely reliable and the statement made by Colonel Olcott cannot therefore be questioned by those who accept this ultimatum.

Mr. Bilimoria's letter contains what we may well regard as the piece de resistance of misdirected zeal. He recalls the fact (on P. 4 of his circular) that H. P. B. "was charged with having admitted of herself as committing 'improper actions'" and goes on in a foot-note, quoting from "The Theosophist" (December, 1899, p. XIII) an utterance by Dr. J. Gerard which tends to show that H. P. B. in making these admissions, did not in any sense prove her own guilt because she was a neuropath! The plain interference to which we are led by Mr. Bilimoria is that Mr. Leadbeater is also a neuropath and that his "confessions" signify nothing. The zeal indicated by this plea is more impressive than its discretion. To label Mr. Leadbeater a neuropath is to place his case in the category of insanity and if this be frankly acknowledged, further argument in his defence is impossible because he is thus adjudged to be of more or less unsound mind and by his own supporters!

Lack of space prevents us from reprinting the Sutcliffe Pamphlet which we would gladly include in the archives of "The Voice" as one of

the curiosities of contemporary literature. Mrs. Besant and her "Mr. Leadbeater" must surely, at times, pray with fervor for deliverance from their friends!

### THE OPPOSITION MOVEMENT IN INDIA

In the November issue of "Theosophy in India" appears some account of the opposition that has been thus far made in the Indian Section T. S. against the proposal to invite Mr. Leadbeater to rejoin the Society. The farewell of the General Secretary of the Section whose resignation is printed in the November issue of "Theosophy in India," we print elsewhere; also a circular of protest issued by some of the officials of the Section. The movement to foster Mr. Leadbeater's reinstatement was inaugurated, it seems, last September and the Letter from Mrs. Besant, circulated in America last December, was sent out about the same time. Mr. B. P. Wadia sent from Adyar (October 1) a letter designed to further the agitation in Mr. Leadbeater's interests. To this letter, printed in "Theosophy in India," Mr. Showkatrai Assumal has made a fitting reply which appears in the same journal.

The Resolution sent to the Indian Branches to be voted upon at once without discussion, contains in its preamble a number of false statements and on the basis of these statements (q. v.) proposes that the several Indian branches should request the President to invite Mr. Leadbeater to rejoin the Society. Some branches passed this resolution without questioning its merits; but the membership represented was not very large. At Benares, the Kashi Tatta Sabha T. S. voted to favor reconsideration of the merits of Mr. Leadbeater's case, but refused to invite him to return to the T. S. until his case had been fully examined. The Punjab Branches oppose Mr. Leadbeater's reinstatement; also the Saharanpur Branch and the Lahore T. S. The majority of the Section has not yet been heard from.

Goinda Das, the brother of Bhajavar Das has issued a pamphlet attacking the President's position on the Leadbeater issue.

In this great struggle against a misrepresentation of facts on the part of our President, who has been most seriously misled in this whole matter, we are glad that our Brothers in India are awaking to the danger with which hasty action now threaten the Theosophical Society. "There is no religion higher than Truth"! If crushed to earth, it will rise and confound its enemies.

### THE PASSING OF MRS. BROUGHAM AND MRS. SINNETT.

On October 24, 1908, Mrs. Emma S. Brougham died suddenly at her home in Chicago. Mrs. Brougham was formerly a member of the Chicago T. S., of the National Committee of the American Section T. S., and Editor of "The Theosophical Messenger." She resigned from the T. S. shortly after the Convention of 1907, but her interest in Theosophy continued unabated and was still actively manifested in the service she rendered as Business Manager for the American Agency of "The Theosophical Review." Mrs. Brougham was a woman of unusual character and attainments. Her devotion to the cause of Theosophy was unremitting, and the service she has rendered it during many years of membership in the Society will not be forgotten. Mrs. Brougham's body was cremated at Graceland Cemetery, Chicago. Many members of the American Section T. S. extend to Mr. Brougham their sincere sympathy for his sorrow and loss.

\* \* \*

On November 9, 1908, Mrs. Sinnett died in London "after a long and painful illness bravely endured." Then closed the career of one well-known and much beloved who rendered to the Theosophical Society in the days of its infancy signal service. Mrs. Sinnett was the wife of the former Vice-President of the T. S. She was the associate of H. P. B. and a party to many important incidents which have been embodied in

the chronicles of "The Occult World." Mrs. Sinnett was the author of "The Purpose of Theosophy," and an occasional contributor to current theosophical magazines. Her home in London was always a centre of interest to theosophists and her personal charm and influence did much to command the respectful attention of many who have since become devoted adherents to the cause so dear to her own heart. The sympathy of the whole Theosophical Society should be extended to Mr. Sinnett who, in these dark days of the T. S., has met also with a personal bereavement most severe.

\* \* \*

"To bind together some thousands of men under the control of a single human being who is open to all human temptations, raised above no human weakness, and to place these in his hand \* \* \* \* \* to me this is a real danger of a pressing and a terrible kind. To destroy the conscience, to dominate the intellect, to drug the judgment, is to degrade the human being and to place a barricade before spiritual progress."—Annie Besant.

#### THE INDEPENDENT BOOK COMPANY

The following circular has been received at this office:

Chicago, Dec. 15th, 1908

Having severed my connection with the Theosophical Book Concern of which I have been manager for the last eight years, I wish to inform my friends and the public that I am taking charge of the business of

#### THE INDEPENDENT BOOK CO.

569 East 51st Street

CHICAGO, ILL.

where I will be glad to give prompt and careful attention to all orders. The Independent Book Company has been made the American agency for the "Theosophical Review," and is also the representative in Chicago of The Theosophical Publishing Co. of 244 Lenox Avenue, New York City.

In the hope that many of the pleasant business connections of the past may be continued in my new connection, I remain,

Most sincerely yours,

CLARA F. GASTON.

#### THE AMERICAN AGENCY OF "THE THEOSOPHICAL REVIEW"

Since the death of Mrs. Brougham, formerly in charge of the American Agency of "The Theosophical Review," the Board of Managers has transferred the duties of that office to The Independent Book Company, 569 E. 51st st., Chicago, Ill. All correspondence and remittances should hereafter be sent to this Company at the address given.

ELEANOR M. HIESTAND-MOORE,

President Board of Managers of the American Agency of "The Theosophical Review."

#### MR. LEADBEATER IS SAID TO REPUDIATE THE CHICAGO "MAHATMA."

There are, it seems, no authentic rivals near the throne of prophecy. In "Theosophy in India," November, 1908, the Editor (p. 250) says:

"We learn from very reliable sources that the Van Hook communications out of which all this controversy has arisen, have been disclaimed by Mr. Leadbeater as dictations from any Master."

This is a startling announcement. While it does, on one hand, relieve the situation which, by virtue of a conflict of "Mahatmic" opinions promised to be rather difficult, in clearing away an inspired utterance upon the Leadbeater matter, it leaves Mrs. Besant without any "Mahatmic" support in her present position. The dyar "Mahatmas" were substantiated against the reinstatement of Mr. Leadbeater and now that the Chi-

cago "Mahatma" is said to be an astral illusion—as Upendra Nath Basu declares—the contention of Mrs. Besant's letter has no sort of "Mahatmic" approbation at all!

### STAND FAST!

Members are advised at this critical time to adhere to their membership in the T. S. and await the outcome of the present crisis. After almost three years of struggle, the main issue of Leadbeater Affair has been brought to the point of a crucial decision. "The Theosophic Voice" strongly urges all members to assist in the present great struggle which will specifically define the attitude of the T. S. toward the Leadbeater teachings and settle irrevocably its future status in the world of modern thought. The Society will be called upon publicly to proclaim itself in support or repudiation of the position taken by its President in her recent letter.

### THE DELAY OF THE VOICE.

An unavoidable delay in issuing the present number of "The Voice" has resulted from a most unusual *contretemps*. The entire issue, proofs and copy, including considerable matter not set up in type, disappeared in the mails. No trace of the missing package has as yet been found. This loss necessitated the re-writing of a number of articles, delays incident to waiting for second copies of important papers, etc., and much labor. To offset this, we have, owing to the delay in question, the opportunity of presenting to our readers some very important documents which would not have appeared so speedily, had we gone to press, as we expected to, early in November. The gods are good to us, in spite of our misgivings!

### CORRESPONDENCE.

The Sacramento T. S. and the St. Louis T. S. Dissolve

Sacramento, Cal., Nov. 9, 1908.

Editor of "Theosophical Voice:"

\* \* \* \* \*

I have read October "Messenger" and am surprised at the results of Chicago Convention. Our Branch at Sacramento has given up its charter. I heartily endorse the stand taken by "The Voice" \* \* \* When in March 1907 I joined the T. S. I expected so much but have been bitterly disappointed.

Hoping that morality and truth will be triumphant, I am

Yours truly

\* \* \*

Since Convention, several branches have suspended their meetings, among which is the Superior T. S. The St. Louis T. S. has also surrendered its charter. Some members of these branches have joined the Inter-State T. S., some will become members-at-large, while others will permit their membership to lapse during the coming year.—Editor.

### MEMBERS' ADDRESSES

Inasmuch as "The Voice" desires to have a complete list of the names and addresses of the members of the American Section T. S., we shall be grateful to Branch Secretaries or individual members who will forward the same to the Editor. We desire especially the names and addresses of new members and request those old members who have recently changed their addresses to advise us accordingly, so that we may correct our mailing list. Members will please state in writing to what Branch they belong and, if demitted, from what Branch.

\* \* \*

Strong protests against the reinstatement of Mr. Leadbeater have appeared in both France and Italy.

\* \* \*

A "Boston Centre" of the Inter-State T. S. has been organized and is now in operation.