

Adyar, Madras, S., India.  
November 12th, 1912.

My dear Fritz,

Many thanks for your kind letters; I am very glad to be kept as closely as possible in touch with the work in America. I quite agree with what you say about ritual in the Society, although I was myself a ritualist of quite extreme type when a priest--and indeed for many years before that. I have not the slightest objection to ritual, and even enjoy it when it is really well done and when one can feel that it has a reality behind it. I know that many people have a strong objection to it, chiefly because they think that to concentrate one's thought upon the outer draws it away from the inner and makes the reality behind less vivid. It is really a matter of temperament, and this Temple of the Rosy Cross was founded by Mrs. Besant in order to meet the requirements of the people to whom ceremonial is the easiest method of expression. I have not a word to say against it in any way, but I think we must be careful that it is not put forward as something esoteric in which additional knowledge will be given, and we must see that people do not get the idea that it is necessary for them to join it in order to demonstrate loyalty. That idea was to some extent afloat in England--that not to follow Mrs. Besant when she founded this new organisation was to hang back to some extent, and thereby to lose an opportunity. What I said in my answer to the question on the subject is no more than Mrs. Besant has herself said on several occasions, and it must not in the least be taken to mean that we differ with regard to its value. I ~~had~~ strongly believe in the necessity for whole-hearted devotion to the work of the Theosophical Society, and--for those who are attracted to it--that of the Order of the Star in the East. But I rather feel myself that those two lines of activity ought to be enough for most people. I myself have never even joined Co-Masonry--not in the least that I have any sort of objection to it, but because it means great expense and additional meetings, for which I have no time.

I note that you are going to change the name of The Messenger; of course the new one is undoubtedly more explicit, but on the other hand I cannot help feeling a little regret at losing the old one which we have known so long. You know that Rogers started a magazine called The American Theosophist; but I believe it is now defunct. Perhaps there is something a little local about the title, while The Theosophic Messenger was world-wide. As you say, it makes a break with the old tradition; yet some of those traditions were very noble ones, although of course I know that some others were very much the reverse.

You certainly seem to be giving your people a wonderful list of lectures; does anybody really attend them all? You yourself are evidently bearing a large part in the work; take care that they do not overwork you. The list is on the whole most formidable, but it ought to do the students a great deal of good if they survive it.

I do not know that the caul with which some children are born has any special significance, though of course I know that in popular superstition it is supposed to imply the possession of clairvoyant faculties. It is really nothing but a portion of the sac in which the baby body has been contained; in most cases this sac is entirely broken up, but it occasionally happens that the part which has surrounded the head still clings to it, then it is a caul. But I do not see that this accidental circumstance can well be a sign of any interior faculty.

From what you say of Miss Berenice Banning it is quite evident that she must have been closely associated with some of us in the past, and probably especially with you and your sister; but it is quite certain that she is not Philippa. There are of course very many missing characters still in the lives--probably hundreds of them. You understand that in looking up, we have so far confined ourselves to the families of a very few principal people. We began with Alcyone and his immediate blood-relations; then when any of Those who are now Masters came in, or Colonel Olcott or Madame Blavatsky or Mrs. Besant occurred as a character, we usually put ~~x~~ down their family. That left us with a good many gaps--many people

remaining unmarried, for example--which means of course that we did not recognise the husbands or wives. In Sicily we spread the net a little wider, and included a fresh group of people, and in that way we found ourselves able to complete a good many families which were previously fragmentary. Now if you could see the charts (I shall have much pleasure in showing them to you when you come) you will find that most of the gaps have been filled and that the families are comfortably rounded off. I take that to mean--not in the least that no more of the Theosophical members are discoverable--but that we have got the whole or almost the whole of one particular group, and that if we expand our lists now we shall have to do it either by taking earlier and later generations, and so make our charts much more cumbersome, or by including friends and neighbours as well as blood-relations. Now of course friends and neighbours often have more influence over one's life than one's own relations have; that has certainly been my case, in this present life. So I think we must not in the least imagine that people who have not yet been discovered have been of less importance or had less influence than those whom we have noticed. But the fact remains that we have traced certain people, and have not yet traced some others whom one would expect to find at least as prominently.

We are of course very ready to welcome Miss Banning as an invisible helper; but, as you say, there is really no need to make any special application with regard to that, for anyone who wishes to help can easily form for himself a circle of clients; the field is wide enough for all--for thousands more than have yet offered themselves, at any rate.

The Chambers case is an interesting one; and I should certainly advise the young man to experiment with regard to this alleged Atlantean invention. I have myself no knowledge on that particular point; such things as are described were in use in Atlantis, but it has never come in my way to see exactly the process of their manufacture. We, who have acquired our clairvoyant faculties in a particular way and under certain promises, are of course limited in the practical application that we may make of them; but if any one remembers for himself anything that he knew in Atlantean times, or if anyone on the astral plane is prepared to give information as to Atlantean science, there is no reason whatever why the fullest advantage should not be taken of whatever opportunity is offered. From what you say of this particular invention, it would seem that it ought not to be very difficult to test it, at least in a small way. Do you know whether that has been done?

Was the person whom Douglas Pettit married the Miss Forde of whom you have previously written? I am afraid that the poor fellow is distinctly a danger, for he appears to be suffering under delusions. You may remember that when Mr. Fullerton endeavoured to induce him to accuse me of a certain kind of misconduct he very indignantly denied the whole thing--and indeed the father also said in a letter at the time that he even had to explain to Douglas what the accusation meant. At one time that letter of the father's was out here, but he asked that it should be returned to him, which was duly done. When Douglas came under Mrs. Tingley's hypnotic influence, I understand that she made him confess to this very thing which he had so strongly denied before, and made him execute some sort of affidavit on the subject. Since then he has admitted (I understand) to Mrs. Tingley and Mr. Warrington that he did not know what he was saying when in the presence of Mrs. Tingley, and that he does not now remember anything about it! Meantime, he and his father have gone off into Christian Science, having done to the Theosophical Society all the harm that they can.

With regard to this prosecution against Mrs. Besant, you need not have the slightest anxiety. Mr. Warrington, as General Secretary, will of course be kept advised of everything that happens. The attack is fundamentally spiteful but quite ludicrous. No sane judge could have a moment's doubt as to the decision that ought to be given; but in the meantime it seems quite probable that the court will throw out the case on the plea that it has no jurisdiction. If that happens I fancy that the President as Alcyone's guardian will feel it incumbent upon her to take further steps to clear his name. We are not worrying about the matter in the least; indeed I think that the President rather enjoys it as giving her an opportunity for exercising once more

the splendid fighting qualities which she showed forth so prominently in her free-thought days.

I am sorry from one point of view that the onerous duties which you are performing in America prevent you from coming to Adyar as you had intended; But on the other hand I quite recognise that this is a case where your country needs you, and you cannot choose but obey the call.

With very much love I am ever  
Yours most affectionately,

G. W. Leadbeater.

P. S.---I find another enclosure of yours, from, I think, an earlier letter, to which I have not yet referred. Certainly a picture may have an aura, & I have no doubt that your young lady friend, who saw something of that nature round one of the Alcyone calendars, was visualising a real objective phenomenon. It may of course been partly due to thoughts of love previously directed at that picture; but that does not affect the fact that she saw what was really there. Her experience of being out of her body and seeing a certain smokiness in the room, through which the lights shone dimly, is also quite natural, though not quite proper. I mean that if she were fully away in her astral body she would not see that effect. A certain amount of etheric matter must have been drawn out along with the astral in order to cause the conditions which she describes. The beautiful star that she saw at the same time is almost certainly a thought-form---possibly made by one of those present, but perhaps more probably made by some more advanced person whose attention had been attracted. She was quite right to endeavour to return to her body, and she ought if possible either to be definitely in it or definitely out of it---not half-way between the two. One cannot say whose was the face that she seems to have seen at her masonic initiation. It was clearly not the face of a Master, because she speaks of it as having a sad expression; but it may very well have been that of some other Oriental student.

I do not know whether you remember Bhikkhu Ananda Metteya, the white monk at Rangoon. He has been very ill lately, and needs a change of climate. It seems that he has a sister (living with her husband) in the neighbourhood of Los Angeles, and he thinks of paying her a visit next spring. If he is able to arrange it, it might be very nice if you could manage to call upon him and show him friendliness in any way that suggests itself.

In one of your letters you mentioned a Mr. W. Y. Evans Wentz, who wrote well about fairies. Do you know of any book of his on the subject? If so, I should like to know the name of it, as we ought to have it in the Adyar Library. Where does he live?