

The Founding of The Theosophical Society

C. Jinarājadāsa

The Theosophist [November](#) and [December](#) 1932
Pages, Nov 217-27, Dec 328-33

Colonel Olcott states that the formation of the Society was due to a sudden inspiration which came to him on the evening of September 7, 1875, when a group of friends had gathered to listen to an address by Mr. G. H. Felt on the secrets of the Pyramids. His statement is as follows (Old Diary Leaves, I. 117-8).

I

Of course we passed an informal vote of hearty thanks for his highly interesting lecture, and an animated discussion followed. In the course of this, the idea occurred to me that it would be a good thing to form a society to pursue and promote such occult research, and, after turning it over in my mind, I wrote on a scrap of paper the following: "*Would it not be a good thing to form a Society for this kind of study?*"—and gave it to Mr. Judge, at the moment standing between me and H.P.B., sitting

opposite, to pass over to her. She read it and nodded assent. Thereupon I rose and, with some prefatory remarks, broached the subject. It pleased the company and when Mr. Felt, replying to a question to that effect, said he would be willing to teach us how to evoke and control the elementals, it was unanimously agreed that the society should be formed. Upon motion of Mr. Judge, I was elected Chairman, and upon my motion Mr. Judge was elected Secretary of the meeting. The hour being late, an adjournment was had to the following evening, when formal

action should be taken. Those present were requested to bring sympathisers who would like to join the proposed society.

This same idea that it was "entirely unpremeditated" is also stated in the *Spiritual Scientist*, a paper supported liberally by money and articles by both H.P.B. and Colonel Olcott. The following account occurs in a rare book on Spiritualism, *Nineteenth Century Miracles*, by Emma Hardinge Britten, Manchester, 1883. Mrs. Britten was a "seer," and a friend of H. P. B.

II

As offering the most impartial information concerning the origin of this Society that can be laid before the reader, the following extract is given from one of the New York daily journals, subsequently reprinted in the Boston *Spiritual Scientist* of 1876. It reads as follows:

"A THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

"One movement of great importance has just been inaugurated in New York, under the lead of Colonel Henry S. Olcott, in the organization of a society to be known as 'The Theosophical Society.' The suggestion was entirely unpremeditated, and was made on the evening of the 7th instant, in the parlors of Madame Blavatsky, where a company of seventeen ladies and gentlemen had assembled to meet Mr. George Henry Felt, whose discovery of the geometrical figures of the Egyptian Cabbala may be regarded as among the most surprising feats of the human intellect. The company included several persons of great learning and some of wide personal influence. The managing editor of two religious papers; the co-editors of two literary magazines; an Oxford LL.D.; a venerable Jewish scholar and traveller of repute; an editorial writer of

one of the New York morning dailies; the president of the New York Society of Spiritualists;

1932 THE FOUNDING OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY 219

Mr. C. C. Massey, an English visitor; Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten and Dr. Britten; two New York lawyers, besides Colonel Olcott; a partner in a Philadelphia publishing house; a well-known physician; and, most notable of all, Madame Blavatsky herself, comprised Mr. Felt's audience.

"After his discourse, an animated discussion ensued. During a convenient pause in the conversation, Colonel Olcott rose, and after briefly sketching the present condition of the Spiritualistic movement, the attitude of its antagonists, the materialists; the irrepressible conflict between science and the religious sectaries; the philosophical character of the ancient theosophies, and their sufficiency to reconcile all existing antagonisms, and the apparently sublime achievement of Mr. Felt in extracting the key to the architecture of Nature from the scanty fragments of ancient lore left us by the devastating hands of the Moslem and Christian fanatics of the early centuries, he proposed to form a nucleus around which might gather all the enlightened and brave souls who were willing to work together for the collection and diffusion of knowledge. His plan was to organize a society of

occultists and begin at once to collect a library, and diffuse information concerning those secret laws of nature which were so familiar to the Chaldeans and Egyptians, but are totally unknown by our modern world of science.

"Mr. Felt said, in reply to questions, that communion of mortals with the dead, and the reciprocal intervention of each in the affairs of the other, was not a mere conjecture among the ancient Egyptians, but reduced to a positive science, and he himself had been able to cause the materialization of human forms in full daylight, by magical appliance.

"It was unanimously voted to organise the proposed society forthwith. Colonel Olcott was elected temporary president, and a committee was appointed to draft a constitution and by-laws.

"We hail the movement with great satisfaction, as likely to aid in bringing order out of our present chaos, furnish us a true philosophy of spirit-intercourse, and afford a neutral ground upon which the tired wrestlers of the Church and College may rest from their cruel and illogical strife."

Shortly after the first formation of this Society, in which all the parties alluded to above took part, and

filled offices, it was deemed desirable to conduct the proceedings on the basis of a secret society, from which time, the Fellows of the New York Theosophical Society were known to each other by the usual formulae of passwords, grips, signs etc. In this, as in all other associations banded together for the study of occult subjects, it may be naturally supposed there are esoteric, as well as merely exoteric degrees, and results attainable only to those who could, and would pursue, their studies, to the innermost depths of nature's laboratories. (p. 296.)

Mrs. Britten refers once again to the same gathering, and states also that some of the meetings took place at her own house.

III

"The Theosophical Society took its rise in the interest manifested by a party of ladies and gentlemen who had assembled one evening in the parlours of Madame Blavatsky to hear a reading from Mr. George H. Felt, the Egyptologist, and interpreter of the figures of the Egyptian Cabala. I have already stated, whilst defending myself through the courteous use of your columns, from the extraordinary attacks made upon me for the publication of 'Art Magic,' that at the reading .to

which I refer I met Madame Blavatsky and Mr. Felt for the first time in my life, and that it was the astonishment which my husband and I both felt in hearing from the discourse we listened to on the Cabala, so much similarity of ideas and aims to those which we were then busy in translating, and were about to publish in the work of an esteemed

1932 THE FOUNDING OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY 221

friend, that induced us to urge forward the formation of the Theosophical Society, connect ourselves with it, and do all we could to promote its welfare . . . The initial meetings of the Society took place as before stated at the rooms of Madame Blavatsky, subsequently at my own house, and after our organization had been completed at the Mott Memorial Hall." (p. 441.)

The story is now continued by documents. The most valuable document of all, the original Minute Book of the founding of the Society, is no longer at Adyar. Colonel Olcott quotes from it, and an official document signed by two members at Convention in 1896 attested that certain extracts from the book which Colonel Olcott made in his Convention address had been checked and were found correct. But when the late Recording Secretary, Mr. J. R. Aria, took charge of his office, it was no longer among the records. The page

from it which is reproduced (No. IV, see page overleaf) was photographed by Mr. W. Q. Judge before it was dispatched from New York about 1879 to Colonel Olcott, where he had left it with other papers. I am obliged to the General Secretary for Canada for a copy of the photograph. Its date is September 8th.

The next meeting was on September 18th, and Colonel Olcott quotes from the Minute Book (*Old Diary Leaves*, l. 128—132.)

"The Committee on Preamble and By-Laws reported progress, and Mr. De Lara read a paper which he had been requested to write for the Committee.

"At the suggestion of the Committee it was, upon motion

"*Resolved*, That the name of the Society be 'The Theosophical Society'.

"The chair appointed the Rev. Mr. Wiggin and Mr. Sotheran a Committee to select suitable meeting rooms; and then several new members were nominated and, upon motion, it was "Resolved, That these persons be added to the list of founders.

"After which the meeting adjourned, subject to the call of the chair. The report is signed by me as Chairman and by Dr. John Storer Cobb, for C. Sotheran, Secretary."

IV

Meeting held at
Nos 4 & 6 Irving Place

on
Wednesday Evening, September 8th, 1875.

In consequence of a proposal of Col. Henry P. Olcott, that a society be formed for the study and elucidation of Occultism, the ladies &c, the ladies and gentlemen then and there present resolved themselves into a meeting, and upon motion of Mr. W. Q. Judge it was

Resolved, that Col. H. P. Olcott take the chair.
Upon motion it was also

Resolved, that Mr. W. Q. Judge act as secretary.
The Chair then called for the names of those persons present, who would agree to found and belong to a Society such as had been mentioned. The following persons handed their names to the secretary:

Col. Olcott, Mrs. A. P. Shavatsky, Chas. Sotheran,
Dr. Chas. E. Simmons, H. D. Manacheri, C. C. Maney
of London, W. L. Alden, G. A. Felt, D. E. deLave,
Dr. Britten, Mrs. E. A. Britten, Henry J. Newton, John
Storr Cobb, J. Hyllop, W. Q. Judge, Miss Stevens

Upon motion of Herbert D. Manacheri it was
Resolved, that a committee of three be appointed
by the chair, to draft a constitution and by-laws, and to
report the same at the next meeting.

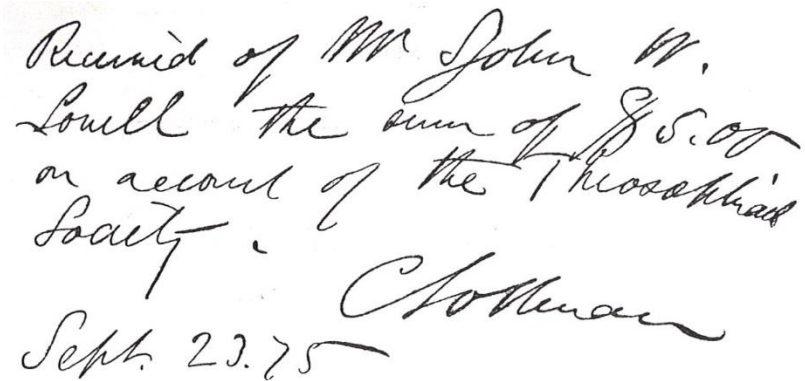
Upon motion it was
Resolved, that the chair be added to the committee.
The Chair then appointed Messrs. H. J. Newton, H. M.
Moore, and C. Sotheran to be such committee.

Upon motion it was
Resolved, that we now adjourn until Monday
Sept. 13th, at the same place, at 8 P. M.

H. P. Olcott Chairman.
William Q. Judge Secretary.

The next link in the chain is a document which was shown to me in 1924 by its then possessor, Mr. John W. Lovell. Mr. Lovell passed away only a few months ago this year. He told me that as a young man in 1875, he had occasion to call on Mr. Sotheran on business, and when talking on many matters Mr. Sotheran mentioned the organization of the Society. Mr. Lovell then and there paid five dollars, the membership fee.

V



Received of Mr. John W.
Lovell the sum of \$5.00
on account of the Theosophical
Society.
Sept. 23. 75

The next document is at Adyar. The members of the Society are called "to organize and elect officers". It is a printed postcard, but the date filled in is in Colonel Olcott's handwriting.

The Theosophical Society.

NEW YORK, Oct. 13th 1875.

The Committee on By-Laws having completed its work, a meeting of the Theosophical Society will be held at the private residence No. 206 West 38th St., on Saturday, Oct. 16th, 1875, at 8 p. m., to organise and elect officers. If Mr. Felt should be in town, he will continue his intensely interesting account of his Egyptological discoveries. Under the By-Laws proposed, new members cannot be elected until thirty days consideration of their application. A full attendance at this preliminary meeting is therefore desirable.

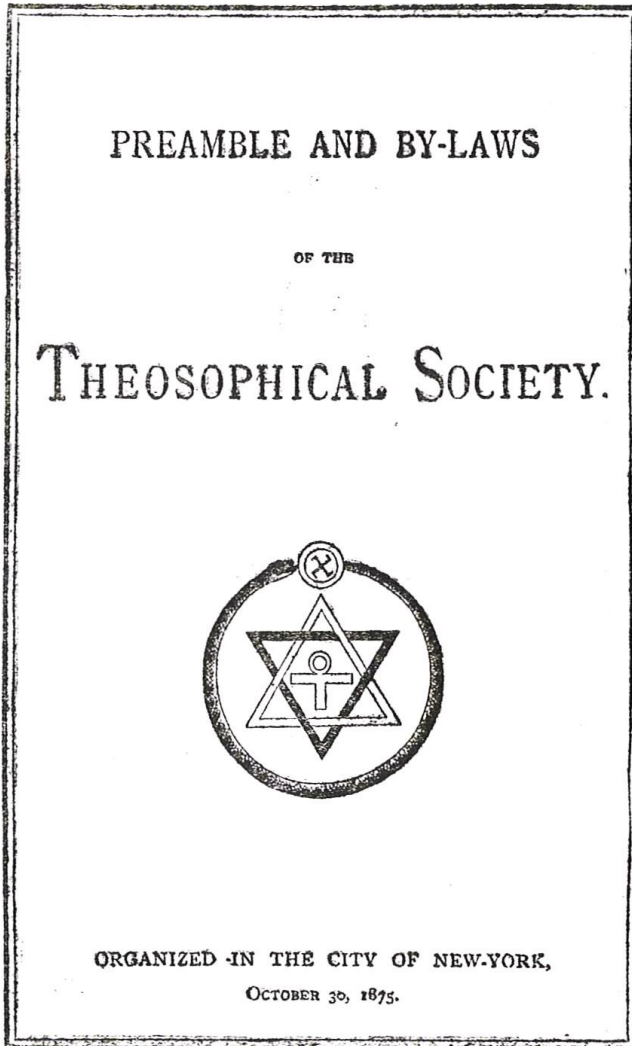
The undersigned issues this call in compliance with the order adopted by the meeting of September 17th ultimo.

HENRY. S. OLCOTT, President pro. tem.

The story is carried on by another document, a small pamphlet. Its front cover, and two principal pages are reproduced, exact size [Ed. Note: in *The Theosophist*]. The seal of the Society has been decided upon; the Society is announced as "organized" on October 30. The Society has only one Object: "to collect and diffuse knowledge of the laws which govern the universe." The phrase "Brotherhood of Humanity," by which the Society is best known among its members, seems to have been first used by Colonel Olcott in Bombay on October 12, 1879, in a humanitarian address to the Jains, in support

of their well-known tenderness towards animals.
(H.S.O. Diary for 1879.)

VII



OFFICERS AND COUNCIL.

President,

HENRY S. OLCOTT.

Vice-Presidents,

S. PANCOAST, M.D., GEORGE HENRY FELT.

Corresponding Secretary,

MME. H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Recording Secretary,

JOHN STORER COBB.

Treasurer,

HENRY J. NEWTON.

Librarian,

CHARLES SOTHERAN.

Councillors,

REV. J. H. WIGGIN,

MRS. EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN,

R. B. WESTBROOK,

C. E. SIMMONS, M.D.,

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Counsel to the Society.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE.

BY-LAWS.



CHAPTER I.

THE title of the society is "THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY."

CHAPTER II.

The objects of the society are, to collect and diffuse a knowledge of the laws which govern the universe.

CHAPTER III.

FELLOWS.

The society shall consist of active, honorary, and corresponding fellows.

1. Honorary fellows shall be chosen on account of their distinction as theosophists.

2. Corresponding fellows shall be chosen from those who have aided the advancement of theosophy.

3. Fellowship shall be conferred only upon persons in sympathy with the objects of the society.

4. Nominations for fellowship shall be made in writing by two fellows in good standing, at a regular meeting of the society, and referred without debate to the council, which shall vote thereon not sooner than thirty nor later than sixty days thereafter.

5. Any fellow may, on the recommendation of the council, and by a vote of two thirds of the fellows present at a regular meeting of the society, be expelled.

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Next came the meeting on November 17th. It met in Mott Memorial Hall. Colonel Olcott delivered his

"President's Inaugural Address". He remarks in *Old Diary Leaves*, I. p. 136:

"Inadvertently, in our first published document, the *Preamble and By-Laws of the Theosophical Society*, the 30th of October was given as the date of organisation, whereas, as seen above, it should properly have been November 17, 1875".

The words "as seen above" refers to his remark preceding these words of his just quoted, and they are:

"Thus the Theosophical Society, first conceived of on the 8th September and constitutionally perfected on the 17th November, 1875, after a gestatory period of seventy days,

1932 THE FOUNDING OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY 227

came into being and started on its marvellous career of altruistic endeavour *per angusta ad augusta*."

[Ed. Note: This last phrase is Latin for—"Through adversity to greatness"]

But looking at all the documents, there was nothing inadvertent "in stating the Society was "organized" on October 30th. It was only about the year 1880 that we hear of the date November 17th as the day of the founding. I cannot help thinking that he selected that date largely because of his great reliance on the number "7". Throughout all his Diaries one notes how the appearance of that number on a steamer berth or railway ticket, in the date of the month, and in all kinds

of other ways, was to him a great encouragement that all would go well. It is true that, in the United States, its President is "elected" on the first Tuesday in November, though as a matter of fact the voters on that date elect only the individuals who compose an "electoral college". On the following year, on March 4th, the outgoing President hands over the administration to the new President, who delivers an "Inaugural Address". In the old "Colonial days" of the U.S.A., when travel was slow and on horseback, this interval of time was allowed, I am informed, in order that the legislators might duly arrive for the inauguration. Following this precedent in his country, Colonel Olcott considered that the Society was not "constitutionally perfected" till November 17th, when he delivered his Inaugural Address.

But apart from all this about the date of founding, I propose to examine his statement that the suggestion for starting a Society came from him in September. On this we have two documents at Adyar which show that a Society was intended by the Masters much earlier. H.P. B. knew that, but not Colonel Olcott.

(To be continued)

The Founding of The Theosophical Society

C. Jinarājadāsa

(Concluded from P. 227)

IN the history of the founding of The Theosophical Society, hardly anyone hears in these days of one individual whom the Masters considered an essential factor, at least in the beginning. This was a young American by name Elbridge Gerry Brown. In the Serapis letters which Colonel Olcott received in 1875, many references show that H.P.B., Colonel Olcott and young Brown were intended to be the foundation upon which the new edifice was to arise. Brown was the editor of the *Spiritual Scientist*, a paper different from others devoted to Spiritualism in that its editor seemed to show a more spiritual outlook, and to be in search not so much of phenomena as of the wisdom underlying them. That a great deal was expected of him is indicated by the Master Serapis associating him with H.P.B. and Colonel Olcott in the following words:

This cause—in your country—depends entirely on the closest unity between you three—our Lodge's chosen Triad—you, verily so, you three so utterly dissimilar and yet so closely connected to be brought together and linked in *one* by the never-erring Wisdom of the Brotherhood.

Brown, however, finally proved a failure, but for a while he was closely associated with the young Movement as follows.

From April 1875 Brown's paper became a medium for paragraphs from H.P.B. and Colonel Olcott to print various bits of occult news that possibly might serve to draw a few together as a nucleus for further work. Thus there was a paragraph in its issue for May as follows:

It is rumoured that one or more Oriental Spiritualists of high rank have just arrived in this country. They are said

1932 THE FOUNDING OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY 329

to possess a profound knowledge of the mysteries of illumination, and it is not impossible that they will establish relations with those whom we are accustomed to regard as the leaders in Spiritualistic affairs. If the report be true, their coming may be regarded as a great blessing; for, after a quarter century of phenomena, we are almost without a philosophy to account for them or to control their occurrence. Welcome to the Wise Men of the East, if they have really come to worship at the cradle of our new Truth.

When H. P. B. pasted this in her Scrap Book, she wrote at the side:

At . . . and Ill . . . [1] passed thro' New York and Boston; thence thro' California and Japan back. M.: appearing in Kama Rupa daily.

[1] Probably Atrya and Illarion (Hillarion). (C.J.)

It was at this time that H.P.B. received orders to make a definite break with Spiritualism. Since her arrival in the United States, she had attempted to uphold its cause by showing that however fraudulent mediums might be, there were absolutely genuine phenomena. But few Spiritualists seemed to care to study the philosophy of the phenomena, and H.P.B.'s purpose was not the sole one of proving the survival of man beyond the grave. Therefore she and Colonel Olcott attempted the formation of an organization called "The Miracle Club". It was announced in Brown's magazine as follows:

A BUDGET OF GOOD NEWS

The organization of Col. Olcott's "Miracle Club" is progressing satisfactorily. Applications are daily received from those wishing to join, but few selections have been positively made; as it is desired that the Club should be composed of men of such standing, and scientific and other attainments, as

shall afford to the public a perfect guarantee of the trustworthiness of any conclusions they may reach.

The medium who is to sit with the investigators being actively interested in certain business operations, has been

temporarily called from New York. Meanwhile in anticipation of the commencement of his report of the séances of the Miracle Club, Col. Olcott authorizes the announcement that he will contribute to the Scientist some of the results of his winter's reading, in the form of a series of articles entitled "What the Ancients knew, and what the Moderns think they know". This popular author in addition to what he gleaned in his researches among the splendid collections of the "Watkinson Library of Reference," in Hartford, has recently had access to some ancient manuscripts, furnished him by "one who knows *when* and *how*," as the phrase goes; and our readers may count upon both entertainment and instruction in the papers which will appear in this Journal.

We shall also begin at once the publication of a most important paper contributed by M. Wagner, Professor of Zoology in the University of St. Petersburg, and the Huxley of Russia; it gives the

results of recent séances held with a French medium, named M. Bredif, by Prof. Wagner and two other professors of equal eminence. The document, which will appear in three successive chapters, has been translated from the Russian language for this paper by Madame Blavatsky, the accomplished lady to whose trenchant pen several American journals are indebted for recent contributions which have elicited the highest praise for the elegance of their style and the vigor of their argument.

After pasting this cutting, H.P.B. has written as follows:

An attempt in consequence of *orders* received from T*** B*** [1] through P*** [2] personating J.K. V. [3] Ordered to begin telling the public the *truth* about the phenomena and their mediums. And *now* my martyrdom will begin! I will have

[1] Tuitit Bey.

[2] Not identified.

[3] John King.

all the Spiritualists against me in addition to the Christians and the Skeptics. Thy Will, O, M.:, be done!

H.P.B.

In connection with the attempt to make the *Spiritual Scientist* the vehicle of the new teaching, Colonel Olcott describes in *Old Diary Leaves* (l. pp. 74-76) a circular issued on April 17th by him and H.P.B. I reproduce that circular in the inset which accompanies this article. [Ed. Note: See picture at the end.]

I wrote every word of this circular myself, alone corrected the printer's proofs, and paid for the printing. That is to say, nobody dictated a word that I should say, nor interpolated any words or sentences, nor controlled my action in any visible way. I wrote it to carry out the expressed wishes of the Masters that we—H.P.B. and I—should help the Editor of the *Scientist* at what was to him, a difficult crisis, and used my best judgment as to the language most suitable for the purpose. When the circular was in type at the printer's and I had corrected the proofs, and changed the arrangement of the matter into its final paragraphs, I enquired of H.P.B. (by letter) if she thought I had better issue it anonymously or append my name. She replied that it was the wish of the Masters that it should be signed thus: "*For the Committee of Seven, BROTHERHOOD OF LUXOR.*" And so it was signed and published. She subsequently explained that our work, and much more of the same kind, was being supervised by a Committee of seven Adepts,

belonging to the Egyptian group of the Universal Mystic Brotherhood. Up to this time she had not even seen the circular, but now I took one to her myself, and she began to read it attentively. Presently she laughed, and told me to read the acrostic made by the initials of the six paragraphs. To my amazement, I found that they spelt the name under which I knew the (Egyptian) adept under whose orders I was then studying and working.

The word made by the initial letters of the six paragraphs is "Tuitit". This was the name of the Egyptian Adept, Tuitit Bey, who worked under the direction of the Master Serapis. H.P.B.

pasted this sole copy now in existence of the original circular possibly a year or two after the Society was founded, in fact, after Brown's failure. When she did so, she added, as will be seen from our illustration, the following caustic remarks:

(at top)

Sent to E. Gerry Brown by the order of S.*** and T.*** B.*** of Lukshor. (Published and issued by Col. Olcott by order of M.):

(*at bottom*)

Several hundred dollars out of our pockets were spent on behalf of the Editor, and he was made to pass through a minor "diksha". This proving of no avail—the Theosophical Society was established. — — [1] (See pages further). The man might have become a POWER, he preferred to remain an ASS. *De gustibus non disputandum est.*

[Ed. Note: This last phrase is Latin for—"In matters of taste, there can be no disputes"]

[1] Here follows a hieroglyphic.

Printed by E. Gerry Brown, by the order of P^r and
 G. & B. — of Lubbock.
 (Published and Issued by Col. Olney by order of M.C.)

IMPORTANT TO SPIRITUALISTS.



THE spiritual movement resembles every other in this respect: that its growth is the work of time, and its refinement and solidification the result of causes working from within outward. The twenty-seven years which have elapsed since the rappings were first heard in Western New York, have not merely created a vast body of spiritualists, but moreover stimulated a large and constantly increasing number of superior minds into a desire and ability to grasp the laws which lie back of the phenomena themselves.

UNTIL the present time these advanced thinkers have had no special organ for the interchange of opinions. The leading spiritual papers are of necessity compelled to devote most of their space to communications of a trivial and purely personal character, which are interesting only to the friends of the spirits sending them, and to such as are just beginning to give attention to the subject. In England the *London Spiritualist*, and in France the *Revue Spirite*, present to us examples of the kind of paper that should have been established in this country long ago—papers which devote more space to the discussion of principles, the teaching of philosophy, and the display of conservative critical ability, than to the mere publication of the thousand and one minor occurrences of private and public circles.

IT is the standing reproach of American Spiritualism that it teaches so few things worthy of a thoughtful man's attention; that so few of its phenomena occur under conditions satisfactory to men of scientific training; that the propagation of its doctrines is in the hands of so many ignorant, if not positively vicious, persons; and that it offers, in exchange for the orderly arrangements of prevailing religious creeds, nothing but an undigested system of present and future moral and social relations and accountability.

THE best thoughts of our best minds have heretofore been confined to volumes whose price has, in most instances, placed them beyond the reach of the masses, who most needed to be familiar with them. To remedy this evil, to bring our authors into familiar intercourse with the great body of spiritualists, to create an organ upon which we may safely count to lead us in our fight with old superstitions and mouldy creeds, a few earnest spiritualists have now united.

INSTEAD of undertaking the doubtful and costly experiment of starting a new paper, they have selected the *Spiritual Scientist*, of Boston, as the organ of this new movement. Its intelligent management up to the present time, by Mr. E. GERRY BROWN, and the commendable tone that he has given to its columns, make comparatively easy the task of securing the co-operation of the writers whose names will be a guarantee of its brilliant success. Although the object has been agitated only about three weeks, the Committee have already received promises from several of our best known authors to write for the paper, and upon the strength of those assurances many subscriptions have been sent in from different cities. The movement is not intended to undermine or destroy any of the existing spiritualistic journals: there is room for all, and patronage for all.

THE price of the *Spiritual Scientist* is \$2.50 per annum, postage included. A person sending five yearly subscriptions, is entitled to a copy for himself without extra charge. Subscriptions may be made through any respectable agency, or by direct communication with the editor, E. GERRY BROWN, No. 18 Exchange Street, Boston, Mass.

For the Committee of Seven,

BROTHERHOOD OF LUXOR. **

Several hundred dollars out of our pockets were spent on behalf of the Editor, and he was to pass through a minor "disheol." This proving of no avail — the Theosophical Society was established in N.Y. (See pages 10-11) — The man who has become a Power, he preferred to remain an add. — It is questionable non-disputandum est. *

Elsewhere among the cuttings, these three lines appear:

*Orders received from India ^{direct} to establish a
Society philosophico-religious Society & choose a name
for it. — also to choose Olcott. July 1875*

Orders received from India direct to establish a philosophico-religious Society and choose a name for it,—also to choose Olcott. July 1875.

It is obvious, therefore that, as early as July, H.P.B. had received instructions both to establish a Society and to make Colonel Olcott its President. Evidently she said no word to him on the matter, but was constantly on the watch for the right moment to launch the young Society. At the particular meeting when the suggestion was made by him regarding the formation of the Society, the presence of Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten, the Spiritualist author, was considered necessary by the Master Serapis. Mrs. Britten became later H.P.B.'s friend for several years. The reference to her in the Serapis letter is as follows:

Be *friendly* to the English seer Emma, for she is a noble woman and her Soul hath many gems hidden within it. Begin not without our Sister.

Whatever may have been the outward events which seemed to indicate that the idea of the formation of a Society came from Colonel Olcott, it is evident from H.P.B.'s memorandum that the Society's foundation had been planned long before. A first attempt was made through the Miracle Club, then a further attempt was ordered and H.P.B. received her orders in July.

All the documents which I have quoted and illustrated were before Colonel Olcott when he wrote *Old Diary Leaves*. I am inclined to think that after he received the Serapis Letters in 1875 he did not read them again. They were left by him among his personal effects to Dr. Besant. We can therefore understand how certain details in the early history of his relation to H.P.B. might be forgotten by him. He had however before him H.P.B.'s Scrap Book, from which he quotes in his work. He must have seen the three lines above in H.P.B.'s handwriting. But it seems as if his recollection of events were not the same as hers, and therefore he ignores this very striking statement of H.P.B. as to who were the true Founders of the Society, from whom orders came to H.P.B. to guide matters towards its foundation on the physical plane.