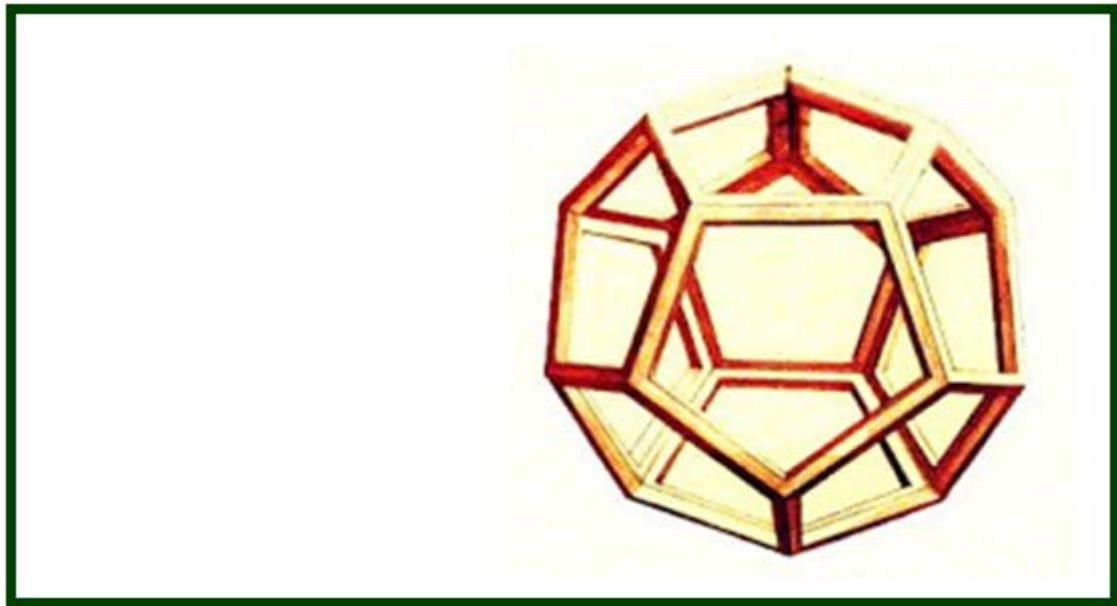


# From Mexico to India, on W. Judge

## One of the Letters Asking for Truthfulness and Justice

José Ramón Sordo



### **Editorial Note:**

The following correspondence is part of a chain of open letters to the president of the Adyar Theosophical Society, Radha Burnier.

Starting in 2006, the annual messages proceeded for various years. After Mrs. Burnier died in 2013, the precariousness of international leadership in the Adyar Society showed it was the time to stop the action. A considerable amount of awareness about the issue of Justice to William Judge had been attained already.

This open letter was sent in 2006 to the president of the Adyar Theosophical Society by one of the leading Mexican Theosophists, Mr. José Ramón Sordo of the “Fundación Blavatsky”. José Ramón Sordo completed his incarnation in March 2014. He dedicated his life with courage and effectiveness to the theosophical Cause and the authentic teachings of theosophy.

(Carlos Cardoso Aveline)

Ms. Radha Burnier  
The International President,  
The Theosophical Society,  
Adyar, Chennai 600 020,  
India.

Tepoztlán, Morelos, México, 13 April, 2006

Dear Radha,

As the present cycle moves into a new era, we see that Humanity needs more than ever the vivifying message of Theosophy, now in the hands of many individuals throughout the world, and kept alive in several Theosophical organizations, Lodges and Theosophical Societies in different countries of the Earth. But, the Theosophical Movement has a very heavy burden of collective Karma created more than hundred years ago which restricts its possibilities of action, of unity, and growth.

This Karma is the result of an injustice committed against William Q. Judge, one of the three Founders of the Theosophical Society.

This injustice has a triple character.

1. He has being denied his role as one of the three Founders of the Parent T.S.
2. He was accused without any proofs of misusing Master's names and handwriting.
3. He is unjustly considered as a secessionist and responsible for the present division of the Theosophical Movement.

Despite the many changes and social transformations occurred in the world during the last one hundred years, the inertia of the events of 1894-1895 which unduly tarnished the image of William Q. Judge, has endured to our days within the Theosophical Society Adyar. All this, however has to change if we want to have a vibrant and united Theosophical Movement fulfilling the mission for which it was established by the Masters. We will have to revise those events in a context free from prejudices and emotions and talk frankly, having the advantage that the passage of time can give.

Please, allow me to revise very briefly the three points mentioned above.

### **1. W.Q. Judge: One of the three Founders of the Theosophical Society.**

Among the sixteen persons present in the apartment of HPB in New York in September 1875 for the formation of the Parent Theosophical Society, only three could be considered as its Founders: H.P. Blavatsky, the Colonel Henry S. Olcott, and William Q. Judge. Since that date they worked for the T.S. the best they could until the very end of their respective lives. HPB was the messenger sent by her Lodge, Olcott and Judge were prepared by the same Lodge to help in the work, both met HPB in 1874. During the early times in New York, both were instructed in Occult matters directly by HPB and by some of the Masters. H.P. Blavatsky, Olcott and Judge were disciples of Mahâtma Morya.

In *H.P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*, Vol. I, p. 125, we have the material proof that William Q. Judge was among the Founders of the Parent T.S. There we find a facsimile of the first page of the Minute Book of the Theosophical Society, New York, held at 46 Irving Place, on

Wednesday evening, September 8th, 1875. The document is handwritten by W.Q. Judge whose signature appears at the bottom of the page.

In the first paragraph it says that “In consequence of a proposal of Col. Henry S. Olcott, that a Society be formed . . . upon motion of Mr. W.Q. Judge, it was Resolved, that Col. H.S. Olcott take the chair. Upon motion it was also Resolved, that Mr. W.Q. Judge act as secretary . . .”

And now a quotation (1890) from the Originator and main Founder of the Theosophical Society, HPB:

“Ingratitude *is a crime in Occultism*, and I shall illustrate the point by citing the case of W.Q. Judge. He is one of the three founders of the Theosophical Society, the only three who have remained as true as rock to the Cause.” (*CW*, XII, p. 593)

Thus there is no doubt that William Q. Judge is one of the three Founders of the Theosophical Society.

## **2. There are no proofs that he misused Master’s names and handwriting.**

Despite the 88 pages written by Annie Besant in her “The Case Against W.Q. Judge”, none of the six main accusations were substantiated with proofs. The whole case is built upon arguments based on suspicion, hearsay, and doubt.

Although Colonel Olcott was the main mover against Judge, (see his letter from Agra, dated Feb. 7th, 1894); when he was in London on July the 10th, presiding the “Judicial Committee”, he reversed his action saying: “Mr. Judge’s defense is that he is not guilty of the acts charged; that Mahatmas exist, are related to our Society, and in personal connection with himself; and he avers his readiness to bring many witnesses and documentary proofs to support his statements. The moment we enter into this questions we should violate the most vital spirit of our federal compact, its neutrality in matters of belief. . . . For the above reason, then I declare as my opinion that this enquiry must go no further. . . . Candor compels me to add that, despite what I thought some preliminary quibbling and unfair tactics, Mr. Judge has traveled hither from America to meet his accusers before this Committee, and announced his readiness to have the charges investigated and decided on their merits by any competent tribunal. . . . I have no right to keep him further suspended, and so I hereby cancel my notice of suspension. . .” (*The Theosophical Movement, 1875-1925*, pp. 513; 514; 515)

From the above quotation we can see: (a) that William Q. Judge was ready “to have the charges investigated.” The alleged charges were not investigated because Colonel Olcott decided not to go any further with the inquiry. We would never know his real reasons for this change, but the fact is that this denied Judge the possibility to defend himself at that moment in front of the Committee, and clean his name.

(b) Colonel Olcott officially canceled his notice of suspension.

(c) On the other hand, another important point which we should consider is that the “prosecutor” never gave him copies of the alleged charges. As late as April 1895, William Judge did not have copies of the “evidence” against him. “And so Colonel Olcott recognized the fact that up to the present day Mr. Judge has no such copies.” (*Lucifer*, Vol. 16, April 1895, pp. 159-162) This fact in itself is a real injustice, untenable in a common Court of Law.

Walter Old, a member of the T.S. and E.S., one of the main enemies of William Q. Judge, not being happy with the abortive results of the “Judicial Committee” and the Convention, took all the documents on which “the charges were based and action taken” against Judge, and gave it to the *Westminster Gazette* for publication.

In a letter published in the *Westminster Gazette* he complains of the results of the “trial” of July 1894 and asks himself: “But . . . What of us Theosophists who had brought these charges against Mr. Judge? Were we not left in the position of persons who had brought charges without proving them? The position was one I felt to be intolerable.” (*Ibid.* p. 578) Yes, indeed, the position is intolerable, because everything that was published in the *Westminster Gazette*, against Judge is only slanders and charges without evidence, and was never proven.

Since 1894-1895 the unsubstantiated accusations of Colonel Olcott and Annie Besant against William Q. Judge, have been transmitted from generation to generation of theosophists as if they were proven. It has been a slanderous inheritance befouling the image of one of our Founders; this, as I said at the beginning of my letter is a heavy burden which prevents the unity and healthy growth of our Movement.

### **3. He is unjustly considered as a secessionist and responsible for the present division of the Theosophical Movement.**

Due to lack of historical perspective, it is wrongly believed by many persons that the original Theosophical Society is the Adyar Society, not knowing that the original Theosophical Society is *The Parent Theosophical Society* founded at New York in September 1875. The Adyar Society is a very important Branch of the Movement emanated from the Parent Society, but it was formed four years later by Col. Olcott in December 1879 in the palace of the Mahârâja of Vizianagram, in Benares. (See: *The Theosophist*, Vol. I, April 1880 pp. 179-180)

In her article “Original Programme Manuscript” (*CW*, VII, p. 157), written in 1886, HPB defines the Parent Society: “. . . the Parent-body *does* exist, and will, so long as the last man or woman of the primitive group of Theosophists *Founders* is alive. This—as a body; as for its moral characteristics, the Parent-Society means that small nucleus of theosophists who hold sacredly through storm and blows to the original programme of the T.S. as established under the direction and orders of those, whom they recognize—and will, to their last breath—as the real originators of the Movement, their living, Holy MASTERS AND TEACHERS.”

In the early days, the three Founders had a very important role in the establishment of the Movement in several continents of the world. In February 1879 H.P. Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott arrived in India, and during several years both worked indefatigable to spread Theosophy in that subcontinent. In 1885, as a result of the Coulomb treason, HPB left Adyar for Europe where she wrote the *Secret Doctrine*, establishing herself in London in 1887. Around HPB in London gathered together an important group of students and disciples, having a very positive impact in the growth of the Movement in Europe.

When H.P. Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott went to India in December 1878, William Judge was left behind, together with General Abner Doubleday which was the President *pro tem*, and about forty members. This period was very difficult for Judge; he was a Chela in probation. But about the end of his 7 years probation in 1883, his Master M. asked him to go to India. In 1884 he went to Europe where he met the other two Founders, and later on went to India, coming back to America at the end of the year. Since then his work for the

Movement was remarkable and by 1895, single-handedly he had established nearly 90 Lodges scattered throughout the territory of North America.

By 1889 the Movement was growing steadily, focused on the three Founders: Olcott in India, and Blavatsky in Europe, and Judge in America. It was in August of that year that HPB, as the main Founder of the T.S. and in her character of Messenger of the Lodge abolished the Parent Society:

“There is no longer a ‘Parent Society’; it is abolished and replaced by an aggregate body of Theosophical Societies, *all autonomous*, as are the States of America, and all under one Head-President. . .” (“A Puzzle from Adyar”, *CW*, XI, p. 381)

As there were only three surviving members of the Parent Society, as said above, located in three different parts of the world, the Parent Body, was divided by HPB in three main Branches. That this is what HPB meant can be very clearly seen by her actions of July 1890 when she assumed presidential powers for all the Lodges in Europe, calling that organization: “The Theosophical Society in Europe.” (See, *CW*, XII, pp. 263-264) In the Notice published by her in *Lucifer*, she says that she is “reluctantly compelled to abandon the position which she originally took up at the foundation of the Society. . . . I, H.P. BLAVATSKY, THE ORIGINATOR AND CO-FOUNDER OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY ACCEPT THE DUTY OF EXERCISING THE PRESIDENTIAL AUTHORITY FOR THE WHOLE OF EUROPE. . .”

Five years later, as a result of the aftermath of the “Judge Case” the majority of Lodges in America federated as “The American Section of the T.S.” since October 30, 1886, decided to form an autonomous body called “The Theosophical Society in America.”

This decision was prompted by a series of actions arising directly or indirectly from Colonel Olcott and Mrs. Annie Besant:

#### **October 1894.**

The publication in the ‘*Westminster Gazette*’ of the series “Isis very much Unveiled; the Story of the Great Mahatma Hoax.” This created one of the worst crises in the history of the T.S. Curiously enough the bad feeling was directed towards Judge and not to Walter Old, who gave the material to the editor of the *Westminster Gazette*. In this case Olcott and Besant were implicated in an indirect way.

#### **December 1894.**

The Resolution presented by Annie Besant during the Convention at Adyar “That the President-Founder be and is hereby requested to call upon Mr. W.Q. Judge, Vice-President, Theosophical Society, to resign the office of Vice-President.”

“An amendment was moved by Captain Banon and seconded by Miss Müller, calling on the President-Founder to take steps to expel Mr. Judge from the Theosophical Society.” (*General Report of the 19th Anniversary of the T.S.*, p. 51. In: *The Judge Case, A Conspiracy Which Ruined the Theosophical Cause*, Ernest Pelletier, Edmonton T.S., 2004, Chronology, pp. 129-130)

#### **January 5, 1895.**

The “Resolution moved by Herbert Burrows that the Blavatsky Lodge (London) ask W.Q. Judge to resign and reply to the charges.” (The Blavatsky Lodge of the T.S., 1 page circular. *Ibid.* Chronology, p. 136)

### **January 25, 1895.**

To that proposal Judge said: “In reply to the request that I shall resign the office of Vice-President . . . I regard resignation as evidence of guilt. If I resign that office I could not be in any way tried on any charges, and very soon after a resignation the same might say I resigned to evade responsibility . . .” “I cannot make a proper reply to the charges until I have in my possession a copy of the documentary evidence. . .” (*Ibid.* Chronology, p. 141)

### **February 1895.**

An article by Mrs. Besant in *Lucifer*: “Should Mr. Judge Resign?” (*Ibid.* Chronology, p. 143)

### **March, 1895.**

A petition for expulsion: “The Indian Section has demanded his [Judge] resignation of the office of Vice-President, and has further requested the President-Founder to seek at Mr. Judge’s hands a satisfactory explanation of the charges against him, and failing such explanation to take steps for his expulsion from the T.S.” (*Ibid.* Chronology, p. 154)

### **April, 21-29, 1895.**

Actions by Annie Besant and G.R.S. Mead in preparation for expelling W.Q. Judge: “Upon arrival at Benares following the Convention, Besant proceeded to write her document, *The Case Against W.Q. Judge*. . . . After Besant had a final draft of her document she sent it to G.R.S. Mead, General Secretary of the British Section, to have it type-set and ready to print when she returned to London. She arrived in London on Sunday evening, April 21<sup>st</sup>, 1895. . . . She likely consulted with Mead . . . reviewed the document in preparation. [A verifying] ‘committee of prominent members of the Society’ met on April 28<sup>th</sup>, 1895. . . the 88 page document was published and released after that date.” (*The Judge Case*, Pelletier, Appendix A, pp. 27; 28)

“*The Case Against W.Q. Judge*. Published by Annie Besant at the Offices of the Theosophical Publishing Society, London, Apr. 29, 1895. Contains Besant’s ‘Statement’ prepared for the July 1894 Judicial Committee, along with a breakdown of the six main charges against Judge. . . . Says if definite action on Judge is not taken at the July European Convention, she and G.R.S. Mead will put forth resolutions from Australian, Indian and European Sections asking Olcott as President to expel Judge from the Society.” ( Pelletier, Op. Cit. Chronology, p. 171)

We should not forget that all these actions were taken after W.Q. Judge had been officially exonerated by Colonel Olcott in July 1894.

Thus we can see that it was not Judge who instigated the Autonomy of the American Group, but the assailments of Colonel Olcott and Mrs. Annie Besant, helped by Walter Old, Bertram Keightley, George R.S. Mead, Herbert Burrows, Miss Müller and others.

The action taken by the American Convention on April, 28-29<sup>th</sup> 1895, was the only possible way to regain the peace and to be able to work again in harmony in America and with the rest of the Movement. The federation of 89 Lodges gathered around William Judge was one of the

three Branches issued from the “Parent Theosophical Society.” As shown above, in 1889 HPB had dissolved that Parent Body declaring that: “There is no longer a ‘Parent Society’; it is abolished and replaced by an aggregate body of Theosophical Societies, *all autonomous*, as are the States of America, and all under one Head-President....” (“A Puzzle from Adyar”, *CW*, XI, p. 381)

William Q. Judge was not a secessionist; his action was in consonance with the directions put forward by the spiritual and occult head of the Theosophical Movement. Olcott and Judge were the only surviving members of the Parent Body. After the declaration of autonomy by the Americans, both could work in amity. Judge recognized Olcott as President-Founder of the Theosophical Society and sent a very fraternal letter to the European Convention of 4<sup>th</sup> July in London; but Olcott refused to accept it.

Olcott “could—had he so chosen—have kept the Theosophical movement one and undivided.” (*Ibid.* Chronology, p. 188) But he chose otherwise.

This letter is getting too long, please do forgive me for that, I know that you are a very busy lady and I don’t want to take too much of your valuable time. But the issue at stake is very important: It is the future of the Theosophical Movement as a whole. You are at the head of the biggest Theosophical organization in the world. All I am asking you to do is to start the revision of the events of 110 years ago and with an open mind recognize that some of the important leaders of the T.S. wronged the third Founder of the Society, William Quan Judge. An opportunity is in your hands to turn a new leaf in the history of the Theosophical Society.

Yours affectionately and truly,

**J. Ramón Sordo**

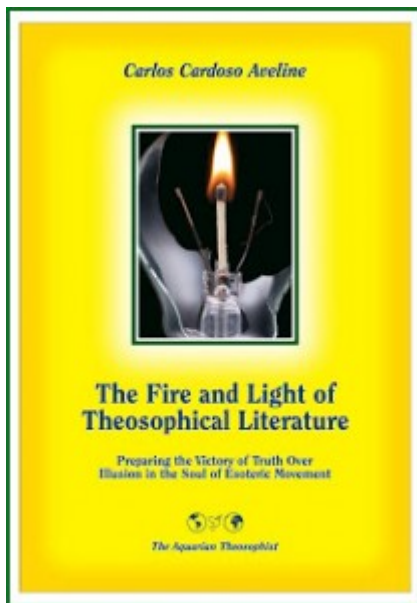
La Fundación Blavatsky, México.

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In September 2016, after a careful analysis of the state of the esoteric movement worldwide, a group of students decided to form the **Independent Lodge of Theosophists**, whose priorities include the building of a better future in the different dimensions of life.

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On the role of the esoteric movement in the ethical awakening of mankind during the 21st century, see the book “**The Fire and Light of Theosophical Literature**”, by Carlos Cardoso Aveline.



Published in 2013 by **The Aquarian Theosophist**, the volume has 255 pages and can be obtained through [Amazon Books](#).

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