Chapter 17: The Liberal Catholic Church

Leadbeater returned from his New Zealand tour on February 11th, 1916. Two days later, in the Co-Masonic Temple, in Blomfield Road, London, James Ingall Wedgwood was consecrated to the episcopate as Presiding Bishop of the Old Roman Catholic Church in Great Britain. The consecrating bishops were Federick Willoughby, Robert King and Rupert Gauntlett, the latter two also being members of the TS, as were most of the witnesses who signed the Instrumentum consecrationis, including Georg Arundale, Mabel Besant-Scott and Jose Acuna. [1]

It had originally been intended that Wedgwood would be consecrated by Willoughby, formerly one of Archbishop Mathew’s bishops, but it was feared that Wedgwood might not return from Australia in time. Willoughby was planning to convert to the Roman Catholic Church and believed that he would be received into that Church almost immediately. Therefore Robert King and Rupert Gauntlett were consecrated by Willoughby on September 26th, 1915, to hold the episcopate for Wedgwood. [2] When Wedgwood returned, he was reluctant to accept consecration from Willoughby, or from bishops associated with him, since Wedgwood knew of the scandals in which Willoughby had been involved, and which had acquired notoriety in the press, notably in sensationalist articles in John Bull.
Frederick Samuel Willoughby had formerly been an Anglican incumbent, but was obliged to resign his living after charges of sexual immorality, by which was meant homosexuality. He joined Mathew's small church, apparently informing Mathew of some of the charges against him, and suggesting that they were not only untrue, but part of a plot by his ecclesiastical enemies - that is, low church Anglicans who objected to his high church approach. Mathew consecrated Willoughby as a bishop on October 28th, 1914, in the banqueting hall of the Bell Hotel, Bromley, in Kent. When his attention was drawn to the scandals concerning Willoughby - as the result of the John Bull articles - Mathew suspended him.[3]

Wedgwood knew that the charges against Willoughby were more or less true, and fearing that some of the mud thrown at Willoughby might stick to him, or to the church of which he had been elected leader, approached a number of other bishops seeking consecration. He wrote to the Old Catholic Archbishop of Utrecht, by whom Mathew had originally been consecrated, but received no reply. He endeavoured to persuade Bishop Frederick James, a fellow Theosophist and homosexual who ran a church known as The Sanctuary behind Harrods in London, to consecrate him, and he asked for assistance from a number of other free-lance
bishops. None would oblige. He even thought of applying to the Syrian Catholic Church on the Malabar Coast of India, but finally settled for Willoughby. [4]

Thus, Wedgwood received from Willoughy, King and Gauntlett the Apostolic Succession which HPB had denounced as a "gross and palpable fraud". [5] Within a few months of his consecration, Wedgwood returned to Australia to confer with Leadbeater, leaving Bishop King, who generally earned his living as a psychic, in charge of the work in England.

Leadbeater was most enthusiastic about the possibilities for the new church, "and having placed his services unreservedly at [its] disposal", was ordained sub conditione to the priesthood by Wedgwood on July 15th, 1916, having first received baptism and confirmation, together with all the Minor Orders and the Diaconate sub conditione in case the Anglican sacraments he had received were later called into question. [6] These ceremonies were performed at the residence of the Jonkheer Julian Mazel, a leading Dutch member of the TS, "Nandina", in Undercliff Street, Neutral Bay, a suburb of Sydney.

On July 22nd, Wedgwood consecrated Leadbeater to the episcopate at "Crendon", the home of Mr and Mrs Gustav Köllerström, also eminent Theosophists. [7] The Roman
Pontifical in an English translation was used, and Wedgwood was assisted by two priests whom he had recently ordained, David Morton Tweedie of Adelaide, and John B. McConkey of Melbourne. The witnesses who signed the Instrumentum included the two priests, the Köllerströms, and four of Leadbeater's current boy pupils. [8]

Three days later, Leadbeater wrote to Mrs Besant:

Wedgwood has arrived and is in good health. His consecration to the Episcopate has had the unexpected result of putting him practically at the head of the Old Catholic movement as far as the British Empire is concerned, all his colleagues (except, I think, one) in it being Theosophists ready to work under his direction. This being so, he desires most earnestly to offer the movement to the World Teacher as one of the vehicles for His force, and a channel for the preparation for His Coming. I took him therefore to the LORD MAITREYA at the Festival, and He was graciously pleased to accept the offer, and to say that He thought the movement would fill a niche in the scheme and would be useful to Him. From what He said I inferred that He Himself had so guided
events as to produce this curious result, that a branch of the Catholic Church, having the Apostolic Succession in a form which cannot be questioned, should be entirely in the hands of Theosophists, who are willing and eager to do exactly as He wishes. He explained that this was a method of bringing over the Holy Orders of the old plan into the new one, and that this Old Catholic Church might very likely be the only branch of Christianity which would wholly and officially recognize and follow Him when He comes. He does not want it to be aggressive in any way, but to go on quite quietly for the present, carrying on its services for its small congregation in London (as it is doing), gradually drawing round it those who love the Catholic ritual, but want a Theosophical interpretation of it and of the doctrine of the Church. [9]

He then passed on the news of his own consecration:

With His permission Wedgwood has consecrated me as a Bishop on the understanding that I am at perfect liberty to wear my ordinary dress, and am in no way bound to perform any ecclesiastical ceremonies or to take any outward part in the work unless I
see it useful to do so, but am to act as intermediary between the LORD and this branch of His Church, referring to Him any points of action or of doctrine upon which it desires instruction. An interesting little glimpse of occult ways came to me the night after my consecration. My own Master referred very kindly to it, and spoke of the additional power to help that it have given to me; and then He remarked: "You thought you had given up all prospect of a bishopric when you left your Church work thirty-two years ago to follow Upasika [HPB]; but I tell you that it would have been in this very year that you would have reached it had you remained in your original work, so you have lost nothing except the emoluments and the social position, and have gained enormously in other ways. No one ever loses by serving Us!" That struck me as curious, for I had never thought of it in that way. [10]

It may appear curious that an assistant curate in a small village, lacking a University degree or any social status, should have aspired to be a bishop in the Church of England at a time when its concern with social position was so great.
From the Christ, Leadbeater passed on a message which constituted a commission for Wedgwood in beginning his new phase of church work.

...Close and perfect is the communication which I have opened [with my Bishops]; it is for them to keep it open, and for this sleepless vigilance is needed. This gift I have given to them not for their own enjoyment or advancement, but that through them My flock may be fed. They have been many to whom through the ages I have offered this yet few have understood it and used it aright. I have chosen you to hold it in these last days of this dispensation, and to occupy till I come ... As I said to those whom I chose twenty centuries ago, so I say to you now: Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. [11]

Leadbeater believed that the new church had been inspired by a "thought current" from the Master the Count, or as he was sometimes called, Prince Rakoczy, said to have been Francis Bacon (1561-1626), Christian Rosenzweig (an almost certainly mythical figure said to have lived during the 15th century), Proclus (410-485), Roger Bacon (1219-1294), and St Alban (d. c. 303) in his previous incarnations. He was the Head of the Seventh Ray, which is concerned with universal
and was therefore especially interested in Co-Masonry, Christian liturgy and other forms of ritual. [12] Wedgwood had believed, until corrected by Leadbeater, that he had an active interest in the Temple of the Rosy Cross.

Leadbeater did not lose his interest in Buddhism upon his consecration as a bishop, and endeavoured to fuse Buddhist and Christian traditions together. He insisted, for example, that each New Year's eve his pupils all attend Mass in the Liberal Catholic Church, and then recite *ponsil* to dedicate the coming year to the Buddha. [13] However, Buddhists, both within and outside the TS, saw his involvement in Christianity as a betrayal of the Buddhist faith. The eminent Buddhist, Anagarika Dharmapala, with whom Leadbeater had been associated in Ceylon, concluded that Leadbeater had rejected Buddhism, having stolen some of its doctrines.

...Members of the Theosophical Society who follow Leadbeater and Mrs Besant are against Buddhism. They follow Jesus and he they say is greater than our Lord Buddha. Leadbeater and Mrs Besant steal everything from Buddhism and palm it off as their own and swindle the ignorant members of the TS in England. [14]
Leadbeater, of course, rejected such an assertion. Since he claimed to be in direct psychic communication with the Master at whose inspiration the church had come into being, he could claim personal knowledge of what was really happening. He could also direct questions on matters of ecclesiastical and ceremonial importance to him. He and Wedgwood spent much time discussing various reforms to the liturgy, organization and doctrine of their church, and Leadbeater directed these matters to the Count's attention for final resolution, using "an interesting method that he had learned in Egypt" whereby he could read the contents of a person's mind, and get his thought on any subject without distracting his attention from what he was doing at the time. He could thus discern the Master's opinion on matters without interrupting his normal work, although the Master thought in medieval Latin, and Leadbeater found this somewhat difficult to translate. Eventually, however, he was able to rise beyond the "concrete thought", phrased in Latin, and reach the idea behind it. [15]

Leadbeater and Wedgwood settled down to the urgent work of revising the liturgy of what was still called the Old Roman Catholic Church. The existing liturgy was basically a translation into English of the Dutch Old Catholic Missal compiled by Archbishop Mathew. The revision
was to be based on this original work, reformed in accordance with Leadbeater's clairvoyant perceptions and communications from the Masters, as well as on consultations with books on liturgy and ceremonial. On September 5th, Leadbeater wrote to Mrs Besant:

We wish for your presence while we are working at the reconstruction of the Catholic Ritual. Your splendid gift of language, your wonderful power of putting things poetically, would be invaluable to us. This thing ought to be well done - the Ritual of His Church, the only one combining the power of the ancient Church with a true Theosophical expression of the real relation between GOD and man; all the greatest poets of the age ought to be at work on it, not a couple of obscure though earnest gentlemen who have no special capacity for expression, whose productions are mildly commonplace. [15]

The two bishops worked laboriously through the liturgy of the Mass and the other ceremonies of the Church. They were radically different in temperament and style: Wedgwood was quick and dynamic, Leadbeater slower and more attentive to detail. Leadbeater worked steadily from morning until night; Wedgwood produced large amounts of material in a short time,
and often then disappeared for hours, or even days, at a
time. They experimented with various liturgical forms, and
tried both Anglican, Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox
liturgies; at each experimental celebration Leadbeater would
carefully observe the inner effects with his clairvoyant
perception. The bishops were assisted by Mr and Mrs
Köllerström, and their young son, Oscar, who was at this
time Leadbeater's closest pupil. [16]

The Liberal Catholic rite, which emerged over the
year which followed, was based in part on Roman Catholic and
Anglican sources, and was influenced by the elaborate
ceremonial of the Catholic Apostolic Church (the so-called
"Irvingites" [17]) and Archbishop Mathew's liturgy. The
ceremonial, as distinct from the liturgical text, was based
on J.D.H. Dale's translation of Baldeschi's Ceremonial
According to the Roman Rite, in addition to the standard
work on the Roman Rite, Adrian Fortescue's The Ceremonies of
the Roman Rite Described which had replaced Baldeschi. They
were also influenced by the standard Anglo-Catholic
ceremonial text, Ritual Notes. [18]

Leadbeater's first exercise of his episcopal
office came on September 9th, when he ordained Gustav
Kollerstrom to the Priesthood. At this time, Leadbeater had
involved a number of his boy pupils in the new church, and
soon afterwards he admitted the four pupils who had witnessed his Instrumentum - Oscar Kyläström, Hugh Noall, Walter Hassal (or Hesselman) and Willem Heyting - to Minor Orders, and they thereafter began to serve for his Masses.

[19]

The revision of the Liturgy of the Mass was completed in December, 1916, and Leadbeater wrote to Mrs Besant on the 12th of that month to inform her:

The night before last, we had the honour of submitting to the LORD NAITREYA the revised Ritual of the Mass to be used by the Old Catholic Church, at which we have been working for many months....Our instructions were to preserve the old thought-forms and the working of the old magic - the effect of the various acts at different stages, the descent and return of the Angel of the Presence, etc. - but "to take out all the brown and grey out of it and to substitute Gothic architecture for classical"....Well, we have done what we could, but to make these changes and yet keep the essential part of the old form was no easy task. The Lord was so gracious as to tell us that our result was a great improvement on anything that has been done before, and that it
will do very well to go on with; but I think He regards it as an intermediary stage on the way to a Mass of Affirmation rather than of prayer, in which we shall no longer ask GOD to do for us all sorts of things which we ought to be doing for ourselves. But we must bring people along gradually, and this already departs widely from their pre-conceived ideas. He accepted it most graciously, altering only the expression "Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world", which we had left in because of its age, although we did not like it. [20]

Leadbeater was able to give more detailed information about the Lord's consideration of the new Mass to a group of his pupils in Sydney:

We submitted our Mass and received some short comments on it. I think, if one may venture to speak of such exalted Beings in such a way, and to use such a phrase, that Our LORD was in rather a hurry. He had something else on hand, because He disposed of the Mass rather in a hurry. [21]

However urgent his other business, he remained long enough to deliver several pages of detailed instructions for the
liturgy of the Mass, with comments on ritual movements, the use of Latin phrases, the Apostolic Succession, angels and other matters. He also suggested that "the remarkable prayer which your theologians unkindly insist upon attributing to Me, though in its present form I have certainly no wish to be responsible for it" should be made optional. Thus the Lord's Prayer did not appear as an obligatory part of the liturgy of the Mass.

The Lord also approved the use of an additional Benediction to be added at the end of the Mass, following the traditional Christian blessing in the name of the Holy Trinity. This additional text had originally been written by Mrs Besant, under the inspiration of the Inner Head of the ES, and was used exclusively in that organization. But Leadbeater had desired that it should be introduced into the Mass, and sought the Lord's advice.

The Lord...sent for the Master Maitreya, and, so to speak, asked His permission — well, not exactly His permission — but said it would be useful, and would He consent to it being used. Of course, the Master Morya was glad to do so. [22]

The OH of the ES, Mrs Besant, also gave her permission, and so what was to be known as the First Ray Benediction was
added to the Mass:

May the Holy Ones whose pupils you aspire to become, show you the Light you seek, give you the strong aid of their compassion and their wisdom. There is a peace which passeth understanding; it abides in the hearts of those who live in the eternal; there is a power which maketh all things new; it lives and moves in those who know the self as one. May that peace brood over you, that power uplift you, till you stand where the One Initiator is invoked, till you see his Star shine forth.

[23]

Discussions with the Lord continued for several years, until finally in 1920 he examined the finished form of the Liturgy, and gave his approval.

He was so kind as to ask us to place the ritual in His hands and in a very strange and beautiful way He made its aura or its higher counterpart a kind of coruscating cylinder of light which He then passed between His hands, thereby instantaneously detecting certain flaws in it which He at once pointed out and instructed us to rectify....He told us to ask certain questions from the Masters
K.H. upon points as to which we were uncertain, and the information which we gained in this way was of the very greatest value to us. [24]

Leadbeater was also actively preparing hymns for the new church, revising Anglican originals to delete parts of which he disapproved, and gathering suitable material from other sources, including some rather sentimental Victorian poets, like the "New Thought" writer, Ella Wheeler Wilcox (1855–1919), thirteen of whose poems, usually with a doxology appended, were turned into hymns. These were eventually compiled into the St Alban Hymnal, which included some original hymns by Leadbeater himself, written in his rather pompous Victorian style. For example:

Come, Lord of power and might,
Make Thou us brave and strong,
That in Thy cause we fight
Injustice, hate or wrong;
Thy banner we uphold,
Thy flag we keep unfurled
With fearless mien and bold
Amidst a careless world. [25]

Or:

God is the King of Glory;
He shineth from afar,
He writes the glowing story
Of sun and moon and star.
He is the grand Creator
Of earth and sea and sky;
He the superb Dictator
Though all eternity. [26]

Or

Our Master has called us to work,
Devoting our lives to His cause,
And ill it becomes us to shirk
Or fail to remember His laws. [27]

In *Theosophy in Australasia* Leadbeater was able to inform his readers:

The Old Catholic Church, at least as far as the autonomous section in the British Empire goes, permits to its members the widest measure of liberty in the interpretation of scripture, the creeds and the liturgy. [28]

It was, he noted, a continuation of the "Orders and privileges that He arranged when last on earth", and was
likely to be that religion which he would use when he came again. It sought to revive the older meaning behind the traditional Christian doctrine, and Leadbeater referred his readers to his own work, *The Christian Creed*, for "the old elucidation of the meaning of that beautiful formula". The Scriptures were not accepted as infallible or literally interpreted.

Celibacy was left to the option of the priest, who was required to "revert to the apostolic practice of combining spiritual and secular avocations"—that is to say, "they earn their living in whatever honest manner they can". The movement existed for the use of the World Teacher if he chose to take advantage of it, "putting itself wholly into His hands an an instrument to be used at His will". It continued the use of sacramental confession and absolution, although the general confession at the public services was considered adequate for normal purposes. Priests, however, did possess the power to pronounce absolution, and though much misunderstood, this was "a straightforward and scientific process". Through the absolution the Divine force rushed through a man's higher vehicles, and would "comb out the entanglement and straighten the twisted lines until he is once more in perfect harmony with God's will". Leadbeater was more concerned with the ceremonial and sacramental aspects of the church, leaving the formulation of its
theological and philosophical approach to Wedgwood. [29]

Mrs Besant was enthusiastic about the revival of Christianity which was promised in the Old Catholic movement, and she wrote about it in her "On the Watchtower" comments at the end of 1916:

There is slowly growing up in Europe, silently but steadily, with its strongest centre perhaps in Holland, but with members scattered in other European countries, the little known movement called the Old Catholic, with the ancient ritual, with unchallengeable Orders, yet holding itself aloof from the Papal Obedience. This is a living Christian church which will grow and multiply as the years go on and which has a great future before it, small as it as yet is. It is likely to become the future Church of Christendom "when He comes". [30]

Mrs Besant's confused picture of the movement with which Leadbeater and Wedgwood and other Theosophists were associated suggested that she had not been told the truth. The Old Catholic Church, led by Wedgwood in England, had nothing whatsoever to do with the extensive Old Catholic Church in Europe, which looked with horror on the
proliferation of small sects deriving from Archbishop Mathew, and denounced them, declaring their "unchallengeable Orders" to be invalid. [31] The Church of which Wedgwood was Presiding Bishop had members in Australia, New Zealand and England, but relatively few of them.

However these facts may have escaped her notice, Mrs Besant proclaimed the Old Catholic Church to be one of the three movements inspired by the Masters which would specifically work for the Coming. The other two were Co-Masonry and the Theosophical Educational Trust. [32] Leadbeater was actively involved in both of these, although he resigned from the latter when it was suggested that previous scandals associated with his name might lead to difficulties in promoting the Trust's work if he remained a part of it.

Leadbeater began 1917 with the first of a long series of articles on church work for The Theosophist. Although he was not initially identified as a bishop in Theosophical publications, he was, notwithstanding his "understanding" with Bishop Wedgwood, rarely seen out of episcopal attire, usually purple cassock, with pectoral cross and episcopal ring, and he preferred to be known as Bishop Leadbeater. He proclaimed:
The future is with the Church, for the Seventh Ray — the Ray of Ceremonial Magic — is beginning to dominate the world... The Lord Himself, Who founded the Church, is coming to visit it once more; may He find it ready to receive Him, full of activity, devotion and love. [33]

The first public services of the Church in Australia were held in Penzance Chambers in Sydney in April, 1917, and on Easter Day of that year Leadbeater celebrated the Mass for more than seventy communicants, also preaching the sermon. The congregation averaged sixty or seventy, and a number of priests were ordained to serve it.

However involved Leadbeater may have been with the new ecclesiastical movement, he also maintained his busy round of work for the TS, the ES, the OSE, Co-Masonry, and other associated groups. In 1917 on White Lotus Day — a commemoration set aside in remembrance of HPB on May 8th each year — he set out to deliver an address to the Sydney Lodge of the TS. Instead of the more traditional eulogy he excited the members of the Lodge by presenting them with a message direct from HPB which he had received whilst crossing Sydney Harbour on a ferry. [34] He informed the members that HPB was now in a male body which she had taken immediately upon leaving her old female body on May 8th,
1891. She had located a fourteen-year-old Indian boy, just fallen into a river and drowned, whose body she occupied so that it revived in time to avoid being cremated. She had no direct involvement with the TS in this lifetime, but was interested in keeping a watch on it from a distance, and was happy to give her advice to the Society via Leadbeater, through whom she dictated "various teachings on different points". Her message to the Sydney Lodge was one of encouragement, hoping that they would play their part for the Coming, so that their branch of the new sub-race "may not disappoint Him when he comes to rouse it and to lead it". [35]

There were perhaps a few who recalled the Master's comments in his letter regarding HPB's reincarnation when he declared:

The intense desire of some to see Upasika [HPB] reincarnate at once has raised a misleading Mayavic ideation. Upasika has useful work to do on higher planes and cannot come again so soon. [36]

Leadbeater, however, explained that this meant that she could not "come again so soon" to the TS. Her new body had been only "tentative" initially, and she did not finally "take it over" until 1900, when she began occult work
unconnected with the TS. Mrs Besant had proclaimed, in the
days when she was infatuated by Chakravarti, that HPB had
reincarnated in his daughter, but this teaching had not been
widespread and was quietly, and quickly, forgotten when
Chakravarti fell from grace. [37] Few within the TS
questioned Leadbeater's declaration of HPB's new body during
his lifetime, although various enemies outside the TS at
Adyar were less reverential in their remarks. After his
death a rather busy controversy raged in Adyar TS circles as
to whether there was a contradiction between the Master's
letter and Leadbeater's statement. [38]

New revelations continued. In The Disciple, the
private ES journal, for May, 1917, Mrs Besant announced new
orders from the Master. The Lord Maitreya had commanded the
development of three activities connected with the Coming:
the Theosophical Educational Trust, Co-Masonry and the Old
Catholic Church. He further required the development of the
Ritual of the Mystic Star, which Jinarajadasa had been
writing to replace the old Temple of the Rosy Cross. [39]
The Mass was to be revised, and a Theosophical Medical
College, without vivisection, was to be established. A note
from Jinarajadasa accompanied the order, stating that he
would submit the Mystic Star ritual to the Bodhisattva as
soon as possible for approval. Mrs Besant concluded:
For the first time such a message is sent, and sent by One before Whom every Master bows in reverence and obedience. His word is not to be criticized or ignored by any member of the E.S. from the Candidate to the highest degree. It is to be obeyed. [40]

The Lord also referred to the "Theosophical Church" and the importance of its Apostolic Succession. Mrs Besant could therefore feel that the action of the Government of India in interning her and George Arundale at Ootacamund on June 21st was an event of no significance in the light of the cosmic drama that was unfolding. Her political activities, however, so annoyed the Government, that she was kept out of circulation until September 21st. [41]

On September 24th, Leadbeater and Wedgwood joined in consecrating Julian Mazel according to the English translation of the Roman Pontifical; he was appointed Auxiliary Bishop for Australia. [42] The rest of the year was spent in further work for the Church and its liturgy, and Leadbeater was also busy with clairvoyant investigations into the ceremonial of the Christian church, later published in his book The Science of the Sacraments. This extensive work provides a detailed clairvoyant analysis of the "inner" side of the seven sacraments and the other services of the church, the effects of vestments, church architecture,
music, incense, ritual movements and associated activities.

[43]

Leadbeater noted that, as with the Mass in Sicily, the ceremonies of the Church were designed to facilitate the outpouring of "spiritual force", with the church building serving as a "centre of magnetic radiation through which spiritual force can be poured out upon a whole district". It was important that "such radiation should be done as economically as possible" and therefore

We should realise that such provision is made through the action of intermediate Powers, whose resources are by no means infinite, however stupendous they may be in comparison with ours. It is consequently the actual duty of such Powers to economize that force, and therefore they do what they are appointed to do in the easiest possible manner. For example, in this outpouring of spiritual force it would be distinctly wasteful to pour it down indiscriminately everywhere like rain because that would require the effort of materialization to a lower level at thousands of places at once. It is obviously more practical to establish at certain points definite magnetic centres, where the machinery of such
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materializations may be permanently arranged, so that when force is poured from above it can be at once distributed without unnecessary waste in the erection of temporary machinery. The plan adopted by the Christ with regard to this religion is that a special compartment of the great reservoir of spiritual force is set apart for its use, and that a certain order of officials is empowered, by the use of appointed ceremonies, words and signs of power, to draw upon it for the benefit of mankind.

[44]

Each of the sacraments and services of the Church, when performed by a validly ordained priest, draws upon the "reservoir" and brings down an amount of "spiritual force".

The Holy Eucharist, or Mass, is the most important ceremony in this work:

The particular method for the reception and distribution of this downpouring of energy is derived from the Mysteries of some of the older religions. It had been a favourite plan with them to convey influence from the Deity to His worshippers by means of specially consecrated food and drink — an obviously useful expedient, when
the object is that the force should be thoroughly permeate the man's physical body and bring it into tune with the change which is simultaneously being introduced into the higher vehicles. [45]

In the "Shorter Form of the Holy Eucharist" which Leadbeater compiled without the assistance (and contrary to the liturgical taste of Bishop Wedgwood) this particular method is clearly stated. The priest addresses the congregation prior to the consecration with the words:

Brethren, we have built a temple for the distribution of Christ's power, let us now prepare a channel for its reception. [46]

And, in the prayer of consecration, he says over the bread and wine:

0 Lord, these our oblations have served as tokens and channels of our love and devotion towards thee; but now we break the link with us and with all lower things and we pray these to purify and hallow them as earthly channels of thy wondrous power. [47]

Leadbeater investigated the precise processes
whereby the downpouring and distribution of the energy took place, describing it in terms which some might feel more appropriate to engineering or electronics:

...if we wish to utilize the power of steam, we must collect it in some sort of container, so that we can set up a pressure, so that we can bring it under control, and send out its jets in the desired direction. Exactly the same thing is true of this much higher force...The whole ceremony of the Holy Eucharist may from this point of view be regarded as the construction and utilization of a magnificent machine for the liberation of force, and its direction for the helping of the world...Be it understood, then, that the Angel of the Eucharist erects for us what is called a thought-form of subtle matter, inside which the divine force can be stored, and can accumulate until it can be directed and used, just as steam accumulates in a boiler, or in the dome of a locomotive. [48]

During the initial parts of the Eucharist, Leadbeater declared a "shell" or "Eucharistic edifice" was built up around the Church, with various peaks and spires being pushed upwards at the singing of the "Kyrie Eleison" and the
"Gloria", and a whole structure was erected on the inner planes in preparation for the moment of the consecration of the bread and wine which thereby are joined to a single thread of communication, reaching up, without division or alteration, to the Lord Christ Himself, as the Teacher and Head and the Church, and through Him to a height beyond any power of clairvoyant vision which we at present have at our disposal — into that other divine Aspect of Himself which is Very God of Very God. [49]

While theologians have for centuries debated the meaning of the Presence of Christ in Holy Communion and the doctrine of Transubstantiation, Leadbeater observed it, described it, and explained how it worked.

He likewise employed his psychic powers to consider Baptism, Confirmation, Vespers, Benediction, and Holy Orders. As a man was ordained to the various Orders of the Church, so he was given power to draw upon a greater amount of the power of "the spiritual reservoir in the higher worlds which is linked with the Church". Force was directed into the candidate making certain links in his higher bodies in what is "practically a psychic surgical operation". The higher the Order, the more power that could
flow through the person, and hence the bishop, linked "directly with the Triple Self of our Lord", possessed the most power, and therefore his blessing is stronger.

Leadbeater saw no reason why all those who were interested should not be able to observe as he did, and promised them that

There will be wonderous outpourings of power visible to those who have learnt how to perceive them — floods of light, flashes of splendid colour, great Angels who have come to help them.

[50]

Obviously, the visions available at celebrations by bishops would be more splendid and colourful, and from its inception the church of Leadbeater and Wedgwood tended to be rather top-heavy to ensure that the highest quality force was adequately poured forth upon the world.

The altar, vessels and vestments also had an important role to play in the distribution of this force. The stole, for example, served to distribute the force which "rushes up through the neck-hole" of the vestments, thereafter being attracted to the metallic crosses fastened to the middle of the stole, and flowing down both sides of
it to the ends where "it forms a vortex around each cross attached thereto" so that it can radiate out towards the people through the metal fringe on the ends of the stole. The chasuble, the traditional vestment worn by the priest when celebrating the Mass, served to collect the force so that it should not dissipate.

Thus when the Priest is facing the altar a torrent of force pours out from the central radiating disc on the back, and also from the lower point of the chasuble, and when he faces the people this disc and the pillar beneath it gather up the force and send it streaming over the shoulders to the front pillar thence to radiate out upon the people. The forces boiling up inside the chasuble are caught by the metal apparel of the amice and swept into the general circulation, although a certain amount may overflow from the edges of the vestment. [51]

Useful diagrams were provided showing the lines along which the forces flowed. The biretta, the three-peaked cap which used to be worn by Catholic clergymen but has latterly gone out of fashion, has a value "of the same character as that of a cork in a bottle - to stop evaporation and consequent waste". The forces which are being aroused and accumulated in the priests should not be allowed to "escape fruitlessly
into the higher planes", and therefore the biretta is worn to prevent this waste.

In planning their churches, Leadbeater and Wedgwood decided against the traditional Catholic scheme of having relics of martyrs and saints preserved in the altar-stone, with Stations of the Cross around the walls. They decided that it would be advantageous to place small consecrated jewels in the altar stone, with similar jewels in each of the six candlesticks upon the altar, and in the altar cross, and also in seven "Ray Crosses" around the walls of the church building. In this way, the force could be drawn and directed from altar jewels to ray crosses to candlesticks. If the bishop was present, his pectoral cross and crozier, into which consecrated jewels were also placed, would complicate the already extraordinarily complex interplay of occult forces. Several plans were provided in *The Science of the Sacraments*, giving "circuit diagrams" for this scheme. The jewels used were especially consecrated by a bishop in a private ceremony in which he linked each of the seven jewels with one of the Masters of the "Seven Rays". [52]

Towards the end of 1917 it was decided that the name, Old Catholic Church, was liable to be misunderstood, since it identified the Church with a well established
movement with which it, in fact, had nothing to do. It was also felt that the word "Old" was inappropriate to a movement very much concerned with the New. Therefore the Synod of the Church, meeting in London, changed the name to The Liberal Christian Church (Old Catholic). But on September 6th, 1918, another Synod meeting resolved to change the name again, and it became, as it has remained, The Liberal Catholic Church.

At the beginning of 1918 the first published liturgy of the Church appeared, containing the Mass, Vespers, Benediction, Baptism and Confirmation. The small Church published a directory of its activities in the British Empire, which showed that in England it could claim three bishops (Wedgwood, King and Gauntlett), 13 priests and three place of worship (all oratories in private homes). In Australia there were two bishops (Leadbeater and Mazel) and six priests (including one in Adelaide and one in Melbourne), and one place of worship (an oratory in a private home). There was also a priest in New Zealand, and another in the USA. [53]

According to the Register of St Alban's Liberal Catholic Church in Sydney, 486 people were baptized into the Liberal Catholic Church during the first four years of its functioning in Sydney. Of these, 311 were women, and 51
children. 182 stated that they had no previous religion, 148 had been Anglicans, 16 Roman Catholics, 25 Presbyterians, and 15 Methodists. [54]

By June, 1919, the work of revising the Liturgy was completed, and a full edition of The Liturgy According to the Use of the Liberal Catholic Church was published on St Alban's Day that year. [55] In the "General Information" at the beginning of the book, the bishops informed their readers:

The Liberal Catholic Church exists to forward the work of her Master, Christ, in the world and to feed his flock. It draws the central inspiration of its work from an intense faith in the living Christ, believing that the vitality of a church gains in proportion as its members cease to think only of a Christ who lived two thousand years ago and strive rather to serve as a vehicle for the eternal Christ who ever lives as a mighty spiritual presence in the world. [56]

The readers were not, however, informed that the bishops drew a careful distinction between the Christ and Jesus, or that the "living Christ" was the Lord Maitreya, occupying the office of Bodhisattva in the Occult Hierachy, and
preparing to revisit the world publicly through the body of Krishnamurti. Nor were they informed that one of the bishops was in frequent and regular communication with "the eternal Christ", whose _imprimatur_ had been received, in addition to that of Bishop Wedgwood, for the Liturgy. Between the public presentation of the Church and its inner teachings there was a considerable gap:

The influence of the Lord Christ upon the formation of this Church and upon the compilation of its Liturgy was generally known among the more responsible clergy from the beginning, being chiefly passed along through oral tradition...[57]

The Convention of the Sydney TS Lodge during Easter, 1918, was the occasion for the first celebration of a High Mass for the new Church: Leadbeater was celebrant, assisted by Fathers Burt and Dear. The convention also served as a venue for the first hints of a gathering storm concerning the relationship of the Church and the TS. However, any unpleasantness was overshadowed by the prospect of purchasing a large church as the headquarters for the movement.

A Wesleyan church in Regent Street, Sydney, was
acquired at the beginning of August. It was consecrated by Bishop Wedgwood, assisted by Bishop Leadbeater, who delivered an explanatory address on the significance of the ceremonial. Seven priests were present, including Irving Cooper, who acted as Master of Ceremonies, and fourteen servers. [58] The Church was dedicated to St Alban, as was almost every aspect of the Liberal Catholic Church's work, its official press, and many of its churches throughout the world. When the Co-Masonic Temple was established on one side of the Church, Mortuary Railway Station being on the other, it was also dedicated to St Alban.

This devotion to the noble Roman who is traditionally said to have been martyred during the persecution of the Christians by the Emperor Diocletian around 303 AD was not connected with his martyr's heroism. It was, rather, a means of establishing a link, in terms of Christian symbolism, with one of the Masters, for St Alban had been but one incarnation of him who is known as the Count.

He is the Prince Adept at the head of the Seventh Ray, which is now beginning to rule the world in the place of the Sixth Ray, whose characteristic was devotion - degenerating into rather blind and unintelligent manifestations in the Middle Ages.
Ages...[59]

The Count was also responsible for Freemasonry, and other ceremonial movements, and in his incarnation as Francis Bacon he wrote, according to Leadbeater, the plays traditionally attributed to Shakespeare. The Sixth Ray had at its head the Master Jesus, with whom the Liberal Catholic Church had little to do, since his religion was not that of the New Age. As one member at the time recalled:

...no attempt was made to develop the contacts of the Master Jesus. In fact He was never referred to as the Master Jesus, so far as my acquaintance with Theosophical literature goes...He was declared to be a virtuous Jewish youth, of mediumistic powers, who lent his body for the manifestation of the Lord Maitreya in the same way that Mr Krishnamurti is believed to do for the present incarnation of the same entity. The Liberal Catholic Church, though using Christian ceremonial, aimed at contacting, not the Master Jesus, but the Lord Maitreya; in fact, in Theosophical circles the Master Jesus was very much the poor relation. [60]
quickly established itself as another venue for a hectic round of activities to which the devoted Theosophist was committed. The arrangement of a weekly schedule posed no small difficulty, since it involved regular meetings of the TS, both those for members only and those open to the public, and of the OSE, together with the ES and Co-Masonry, and now the Liberal Catholic Church. The considerable overlap between the TS, the LCC and Co-Masonry can be seen from examining lists of Co-Masonic Lodge officers around this time: the officers of Sydney Lodge No. 404 in 1918 included Mr and Mrs Küllerström, Leadbeater, Mazel, and L.W. Burt, all of them (as they were by then being described) TS, ES, OSE, LCC and Co-M.[61]

Leadbeater himself moved happily from one to the other, writing and lecturing for them all, although his emphasis came to be increasingly on the Church. Even the news that Krishna had failed at his second attempt to matriculate for Oxford could not have dampened the enthusiasm of the man who now held the highest dignities in Church and Masonry at the direct command of those who ruled such things at the Highest Level.

The next bishop to be consecrated for the hierarchy of the Church was Irving Steiger Cooper, the first to be consecrated according to the revised rite in the LCC
Liturgy. He was consecrated by Wedgwood, assisted by Leadbeater and Mazel, in St Alban's Cathedral, Sydney, on July 13th, 1919, and appointed Regionary Bishop for the United States of America. [62]

All was not, however, as happy as it might have appeared on the surface. Mrs Tingley had given further encouragement to Joseph Fussell to produce yet more literature attacking Leadbeater and Mrs Besant. This he had done in two pamphlets issued in 1913 and 1914. The first was entitled Mrs Annie Besant and the Leadbeater Advice, and the second Some Reasons Why the Members of the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society Do Not Endorse Mrs Besant Nor the Society of Which She is President. Much of the old material deriving from the 1906 case was resurrected and republished, and material from the Krishnamurti custody case was also included.

Fussell listed eight reasons why the Point Loma Theosophists rejected Mrs Besant, most of them were connected with Leadbeater. First, they did so "in defence of the innocence of youth, for the protection of the children and the sacredness of home-life, and for the public welfare". Second, because of her declaration that the Theosophical Society did not have "any moral code binding...
Besant's TS "leaves aside the law of Moses to walk in the spirit of the Buddha, the Christ". This implied, argued Fussell, a departure from the Mosaic injunctions against murder, adultery, and theft, though it seems improbable that this was the meaning intended by Mrs Besant. The fourth reason was the "absurd claim" made by Mrs Besant and Leadbeater regarding the "Coming Christ", claims which Fussell suggested were especially absurd when one considered that Mrs Besant claimed that Leadbeater was on "the threshold of divinity", although he had been declared by the High Court of Madras to hold immoral opinions, "unfit to be a tutor of boys" and "a highly dangerous associate for children".

From there, Fussell went on to his fifth reason: "the abnormal and preposterous claims - the influence of which I assert cannot be considered otherwise than most harmful, unwholesome and tending towards insanity" made by Mrs Besant and Leadbeater, of knowledge of past incarnations of themselves and others through thousands of years, of their clairvoyant visits to Mars and other planets, of the powers to read auras, see atoms, and their association of these with menstrual

...
the attention of inquirers away from their duties and the responsibilities of sane living, and tending to produce disorders of the mind. [63]

Fussell noted as evidence of the influence of such "abnormal and preposterous claims" the fact that Mrs Besant had, in The Theosophist for March, 1910, proclaimed as a "Theosophical Worthy" the former General Secretary of the TS in America, Alex Fullerton, who had, at the time the article was published, been under arrest for writing obscene letters to a young boy. As a result, he was sent to the State Lunatic Asylum. Fussell wondered why Mrs Besant's psychic insight into such things had not noted Fullerton's unbalance, since he was been writing the obscene letters in 1909 when she visited him in New York.

Fussell's sixth reason also related to Leadbeater and Mrs Besant:

Because of the influence, which I regard as most harmful and pernicious, of the colossal egotism and mutual laudation of Mrs Besant and Leadbeater one of another, claiming to be fellow initiates, and to have "stood in the presence of the Supreme Director of evolution on this globe," claiming to
clairvoyantly witnessed the dawn of evolution of this world millions of years ago; to have been associated together as "monkey-creatures" on the moon...to have incarnated many times on earth in company with the "Lord Maitreya" and "Jesus" and other great ones, as well as other present members of Mrs Besant's society, changing sexes and family relationships, now husbands of this one and now wife of that, with large families, Jesus sometimes being a man, sometimes a woman. [64]

As examples of these extraordinary claims, Fussell cited the life Leadbeater claimed he and Mrs Besant shared on the moon as monke: creatures, and, even more horrifying to Fussell, twelve lives further on, when Mrs Besant was described cooking rats for the twelve brothers (including Maude Sharpe, Esther Bright, Charles Bradlaugh and Mrs Bright) who were her husbands. Fussell was shocked by the immorality implicit in revelations that Leadbeater had been married to Alcyone (Krishnamurti) and his brother in past incarnations. He was even more incensed at the blasphemy inherent in accounts of the marriage of Julius Caesar and Christ. [65]

His seventh and eighth reasons for rejecting Mrs Besant related to the attacks she had initiated on Mrs Tingley, and her (according to Fussell) malicious and false
claims that Mrs Tingley had been encouraging others to attack her.

Fussell sent copies of his pamphlets with a covering letter to the Attorney General of New South Wales, suggesting that a police investigation should be made into Leadbeater. He noted:

...Leadbeater is a very clever man...and further, that, as is the case with almost all who follow such a line of immoral teaching and conduct with young boys, he is a clever hypnotist and capable of resorting to any sophistry in order to gain victims and blind any who may have the slightest inkling of his proclivities. [66]

The letter noted that Mrs Tingley had requested Fussell to draw the attention of the police to this dangerous person residing within their jurisdiction.

After receiving these documents in July, 1917, the Attorney General instructed the police to initiate an investigation. As was the case on every occasion when the police desired to question him, Leadbeater was declared to be too ill to see them, and was said to be suffering from a heart condition. Although he had previously been staying
with Mr and Mrs Martyn, he had now moved into a flat in the King's Chambers, attached to the headquarters of the Sydney Lodge of the TS. Staying with him was Oscar Köllerström. The police conducting the enquiry noted that Leadbeater had been running some sort of Theosophical School at the Martyns' house for the past three years, and that at present there were six or seven boys in the school, all between eight and fourteen years of age.

The police drew some quite definite conclusions from their investigations:

Leadbeater has the reputation of being a very clever man and a hypnotist...Reputable residents in the locality have been approached and all are of the opinion that Leadbeater is a sodomist, but they have seen nothing that would warrant any action being taken, although a careful watch has been kept on the house. [67]

The Inspector-General of Police reported to the Attorney General on January 2nd, 1918, that there was "no evidence to support any charges that Mr Leadbeater is guilty of immoral teachings or practices", and the Attorney General replied to Fussell along these lines. The police had questioned Mr and Mrs Martyn, and some of the boys. The file was kept open,
and a brief notation was made on September 17th, 1920, to the effect that another enquiry had been received about Leadbeater. Two years later this file was brought out and used in a major investigation.

The illness that prevented him from helping the police in their enquiries continued for most of 1920, and Leadbeater devoted his time to Co-Masonic work, having been appointed Administrator-General of the Order in Australia. He had also become Corresponding Secretary of the ES in Australia, succeeding T.H. Martyn in that office. Martyn's departure from that responsibility marked the beginning of his disillusionment with Leadbeater, and the way Mrs Besant was managing her Society.

Mrs Martyn had become progressively more concerned about having Leadbeater in her home; she had seen naked boys in his bed, and details of the earlier scandals had been brought to her attention. When Leadbeater was force to move out during an outbreak of scarlet fever in 1918-19, she simply refused to allow him to return. She told her husband nothing of her discoveries, and Martyn himself at this time refused to believe any of the allegations about Leadbeater.

But in 1919 Martyn travelled to the United
States, and was horrified to hear Hubert van Hook talk freely about "faking the Lives", and of Leadbeater's immorality with boys. Martyn had already been approached by one of Leadbeater's boys, and had been told by him of Leadbeater's sexual activities when the boy sought Martyn's help. But, having regard for Leadbeater's occult status, Martyn "tried to forget what this confession involved, to explain it away; and succeeded". [68] Now he was obliged to reconsider all that he knew of what had happened in London, in America and in his own home. He came to the conclusion that

....Leadbeater is a sex-pervert, his mania taking a particular form which I have - though only lately - discovered is a form well known and quite common in the annals of sex-criminology. [69]

From the United States, Martyn travelled to London, where he met Mrs Besant; she told him that she had an urgent and most secret task for him to undertake. He was to carry a message from her back to Wedgwood who was then resident in Sydney. Wedgwood was ordered to leave the TS, the BS and associated movements, since he had "seriously compromised himself", and she knew him to have been guilty of "sex depravity". She was concerned that the message should be conveyed in the most secret manner possible, since
it involved "compounding a felony". Mrs Besant further explained to Martyn that an address she had given to the ES concerning black magic and sexual excess was directly referring to Wedgwood's case. Mrs Besant stated quite categorically that Wedgwood was not, and could not be, an initiate. [70]

Martyn was also approached by another Theosophist who sought his advice in the same case. [71] She claimed that the police were preparing to take action against Wedgwood, together with Bishop Robert King, and two priests, Farrer and Clarke, and she wanted to warn Wedgwood. She said that she had arranged for Farrer to leave England, thus removing one of the main witnesses, and hoped that Martyn would pass the information on to Wedgwood. During his stay in England, Martyn heard further allegations against Wedgwood of sodomy and sexual involvement with boys from other officers of the TS, and from members. All this led him to have serious doubts about the claims of Mrs Besant and Leadbeater to high occult status, the promise of the Coming, and the whole foundation upon which the TS and its esoteric structure rested.

Martyn returned to Sydney gravely disturbed. He passed Mrs Besant's message regarding Wedgwood on to Jinarajadasa in the first instance, he being Mrs Besant's
deputy in the ES, and then visiting Sydney. Raja (as he had become known) was horrified; he focussed on the statement that Wedgwood was not an initiate:

... the breakdown of Wedgwood involved to him nothing short of the collapse of Leadbeater as an Arhat; of the divine authority of the L.C. Church; and of all reliance on the genuineness of reported initiations, discipleships, etc. in which great numbers of people are supposed to have participated. [72]

Raja immediately consulted Leadbeater, who repeated his assurance that Wedgwood was an initiate. Raja cabled Mrs Besant:

Martyn reports you said Wedgwood not Initiate. Leadbeater asserts you were present at initiation. Am most anxious members sake there should be no fundamental divergence between you and him on such important occult matters.... Do you mean that since you have no recollection you cannot assert Wedgwood initiate but do not wish to be quoted as saying he is positively uninitiated. [73]

This was despatched on December 17th. On December 22nd Mrs
Besant cabled her reply:

Brother's [i.e. Leadbeater's] statement enough accept fact, cancel message sent. [74]

This only served to add to Martyn's alarm. Prior to Raja sending his cable Martyn had a long, private conversation with Leadbeater in which he informed him of the evidence against Wedgwood. Leadbeater, so Martyn recalled, had said: "Well, we had better get rid of him." It seemed that 1920 was not going to be a good year for the TS, or for its leaders, and simmering hostility was soon to break into open warfare.
Chapter 18: Police Investigations

Leadbeater suffered from diabetes, aggravated by his refusal to follow the diet prescribed for him and his dislike of physicians, and from heart trouble. He told one disciple that, clairvoyantly viewed, his heart resembled a large, over-ripe tomato. And he certainly had cause for ill-health in the next ten years. A lesser man might have succumbed to the pressure. But, even if it meant dictating from his sick-bed, Leadbeater continued his work, exploring the hidden side of Freemasonry, answering his considerable correspondence, and maintaining a flow of articles for various Theosophical journals.

The controversy over the relationship between the TS and the LCC continued to rage. In the March, 1920, issue of The Theosophist Mrs Besant offered some explanation of the relationship and endeavoured to point out that there wasn't one, except insofar as both organizations were working for the Coming, and were inspired by the same Masters. James Wedgwood, as Presiding Bishop of the LCC, had already made a statement on the "misunderstanding abroad" which led to the erroneous idea that the Church is an activity of the Society and that its members must be Theosophists, or even that the
Theosophical Society has converted itself into a Church and taken to calling its officers bishops and priests! [1]

Wedgwood declared that the two bodies were quite separate and distinct, although there was "a large overlapping of membership" and all the leaders of the LCC were eminent Theosophists. But, Wedgwood thought, with Solomon of old, that "In the multitude of counsellors there is safety", and claimed that the LCC allowed a wide range of freedom of interpretation, allowing for the acceptance or rejection of Theosophy. He concluded by suggesting that the solution to all the problems of speculative theology was "first-hand knowledge of spiritual truth" by "direct observation". And, although he did not name any names, there were few who failed to recognize just which direct observers he meant.

If LCC and TS associations caused some questions to be asked, then the marriage in April of George Arundale did likewise. The Brahmin community in India was angered by the marriage because his intended wife was not only a high caste Hindu, but she was also only sixteen years old. Arundale was forty-two.[2] The Theosophical community was amazed that an Initiate should marry, as it had been in 1916 when Jinarajadasa married an Englishwoman, Miss Dorothy Graham. Mrs Besant had stated at the Krishna custody hearing
that Initiates could not have any sexual relations, and a number of marriages had broken up because of one partner's Theosophical devotion. Anything more than a platonic friendship was clearly untheosophical.

In Sydney, Leadbeater had the opportunity of meeting Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1859–1930), best known as the creator of Sherlock Holmes, but equally famous in his own time as a pioneer of spiritualism. [3] Sir Arthur was visiting Australia and New Zealand on a lecture tour and took the opportunity of a discussion with Leadbeater, with whose work on the life after death he was familiar. [4] Leadbeater said that Sir Arthur's tour had done "great good in stirring up the thought of the people, and I hope, in convincing many of them of the reality of the other life". Sir Arthur found Leadbeater "a venerable and striking figure", and "one of the most venerable and picturesque figures I've met in my travels". [5]

Whilst Leadbeater was enjoying polite conversation with an author for whom he had a great admiration, Jinarajaradasa was in London, alarmed that Krishna had become even more critical and less inclined to conform to other people's expectations of him. Krishna was now stating that he wanted to
...stir up the b---- Theosophics! I do hate this mamby-pamby affair we are at present...What rot it all is & to think what it might be. We will have to do it. Change it from top to bottom and knock the personal element into thick air. [6]

Accompanying Jinarajadasa was Rajagopal, and they both brought an enthusiasm for ceremonial, inspired by Leadbeater's masonic and church interests, for which Krishna had nothing but contempt. He wrote on August 7th:

I wrote a long letter to Raja saying rather straight that all these side shows kill the main show....I hope he won't get annoyed with me! [7]

And he proposed that this question should be considered by a conference:

What I want to do is this, that A.B., C.W.L., Raja, one or two others and myself should sit around a table and discuss and lay out a plan, big & clean, and follow that plan putting aside all our personalities and all our petty things. But I don't see how it can be done. We are all so far apart. [8]
Krishna's situation was complicated, not only by the growing antagonism to him from people like Jinarajadasa, but also by Leadbeater's changing attitude towards the potential Vehicle. Leadbeater was already stating that the Coming might not be confined to one Vehicle alone:

I have been given to understand...that in addition to the body He will use most of the time, and in which He will travel about, He will probably choose some one person in each country, whom He will sometimes inspire when He wishes, whom He will guide and direct as to what He wants done. [9]

These words were originally addressed to some of his young Australian pupils, and he concluded by suggesting that the Coming might not happen for some fifteen or twenty years, therefore probably not until after his death, so he would not see the Lord in his present body. This gave an new impetus to various young and hopeful pupils in various parts of the world as they endeavoured to be chosen as the temporary Vehicles for the Coming in various parts of the world. For Krishna, it meant a further decrease in his importance in Leadbeater's scheme of things.

Discontent about the "side-shows" continued into
1921. In March, Mrs Besant addressed a letter to the ES, discussing these "troubles", and attributing them to "the Lords of the Dark Face". [10] These, she said, had been causing gossip about Leadbeater, particular in the USA and in response she suspended the work of the ES there, issuing an ultimatum that Theosophists would either work with her and Leadbeater, or they would not work in the TS and the ES at all. She referred her readers to the Epistle of St James in the New Testament, an unexpected and curious reversion to quoting Christian texts, in which they should find much instruction in the third and fourth chapters. [11]

In the same ES letter Mrs Besant noted how the ES had helped the Masters overthrow the Brothers of the Shadow during the World War, and urged them to continue their efforts to prevent the separation of India and Britain, also the work of the Dark Forces. The Non-Cooperators (including Gandhi, whom she labelled "the pupil of a Russian Anarchist, Tolstoy") were helping the Brothers of the Shadow and any of them who were members of the ES could not therefore remain within that organization.

Mrs Besant repeated some of her ultimatums in the March, 1922, Theosophist, when she demanded to know "Whom Will Ye Serve?". Once again, this demanded commitment to her and Leadbeater, or departure into the ranks of the
apostate. She declared dramatically:

Either I am Their Agent, or I am a liar and a blasphemer. Take me as you will. [13]

Leadbeater, meanwhile, had been expanding on the conspiracy and the Dark Powers idea in the Australian journal of the ES. He noted that "these enemies are exceedingly clever" and difficult for the average Theosophist to identify; he, however, could "pierce that disguise". He had, he recalled, lived through three "great periodic upsettings" of the TS, and identified these as the Coulomb allegations of 1884, the Judge "troubles" of 1895, and "the campaign of slander against myself" in 1906. Out of it all, he was confident, would come good, since the outcome of the battle between Light and Darkness must result in a triumph for Light. [14]

If the army on the side of Right felt assured of victory, the publication of a letter from T.H.Martyn to Mrs Besant may well have raised some doubts. The letter had been written by Martyn on May 20th, 1921, and was headed "Private and Confidential", but, like so many other private and confidential documents at this time, it found its way to the editor of an American publication, The O.E. Library Critic, a small journal originally concerned with prison reform.
which became more and more devoted to attacking what its editor saw as unTheosophical behaviour in the TS. [15] The editor, H.N.Stokes, felt justified in publishing Martyn's letter in a leaflet which gained international circulation. It became a major document in the campaign against Leadbeater, Wedgwood and friends, and reference to "the Martyn letter" and "the cypher letter", together with "the 1906 committee" was frequent - just as reference to "the Petit statement", "the Farrer confession" and "the Gauntlett statement" was to become.

Martyn began by acknowledging a letter written to him by Mrs Besant on April 4th; in this she instructed him to hand over the office of Corresponding Secretary of the ES in Australia to Leadbeater, because of Leadbeater's "high occult rank". Martyn had done this, but noted that although occult rank was the public reason for the change, Mrs Besant had specified differences between her and Martyn as the real reason. Martyn outlined various problems in the TS and the ES, and asked of her "one little favour", since he regarded her as his spiritual leader and "soul's friend". This favour was to explain to him a number of serious contradictions in the TS relating to Leadbeater and Wedgwood.

First, Martyn dealt with Leadbeater. Although he had defended Leadbeater when in London in 1906, Martyn had
been approached by one of Leadbeater's boys who confirmed all the charges against him. In 1919, the same thing happened in America where Hubert van Hook talked about Leadbeater's sexual relations with him, and the fraudulent basis of The Lives of Alcyone. Martyn had been forced to conclude, very much against his will, that Leadbeater was a "sex pervert", and this had been confirmed by evidence gained in his own home when Leadbeater resided there, although he had learned of this evidence only when he returned from America in 1920.

Martyn had also been led to doubt Leadbeater's clairvoyance. There was the statement by Hubert van Hook that he had assisted in "faking the Lives", and the fact that in July, 1917, Leadbeater had told five Sydney people that they had taken various Initiations whilst out of their bodies the night before, whereas not one recalled anything happening during the night concerned, and several of them, highly excited by the prospect of occult advancement, had not slept at all.

To this was added the problem of Wedgwood, of whose sexual immorality Martyn had no doubt, and considerable evidence, yet whom Leadbeater insisted was a high Initiate. Martyn was also curious about Leadbeater's disloyalty to Mrs Besant in his private conversations about
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To this was added the problem of Wedgwood, of whose sexual immorality Martyn had no doubt, and considerable evidence, yet whom Leadbeater insisted was a high Initiate. Martyn was also curious about Leadbeater's disloyalty, to Mrs Besant in his private conversations about
her, questioning her actions on the political front, and saying she was deluded in working for Home Rule for India, thereby going against the will of the Hierarchy. Leadbeater privately stated that Mrs Besant's actions were disloyal to the British Empire. But everything he said publicly about her was flattering and loyal.

Martyn devoted the rest of his letter to the problem of James Wedgwood. Whilst he was in England, Martyn heard of serious charges, including sodomy and sexual relations with young men, made against Wedgwood, and spoke to senior Theosophists in London who confirmed these charges. He recalled events surrounding the message sent by Mrs Besant regarding Wedgwood's removal from the ES, the reply from Leadbeater, and Mrs Besant's reply to it. Martyn had also been told of Wedgwood's immorality whilst in America, and had spoken to people there and in England who claimed to have heard from Wedgwood himself of his activities, and who had assisted him—temporarily—to give up his "vices". Martyn also recalled that Leadbeater had said that they had better "get rid of" Wedgwood when he heard of the charges against him, but had nevertheless allowed a cable to be sent to Mrs Besant declaring Wedgwood to be an Initiate. Was Wedgwood really an Initiate, Martyn wanted to know, and, if so, how were the stories of his sexual activities to be refuted [16]
Martyn also asked questions about the occult relationship between Mrs Besant and Leadbeater. Leadbeater frequently stated that she had cut off "from physical brain intercourse" with the Masters when she began her political work, and this was confirmed by Jinarajadasa. But Leadbeater, at the Sydney Convention of Easter that year, declared that Mrs Besant and he exchanged notes, physically, on their psychic work on the other planes. And Leadbeater claimed that quite frequently their letters, detailing the same messages or revelations from the inner planes crossed in the mails. He claimed that this had happened with regard to the founding of the Liberal Catholic Church, and the idea of the Three Activities (the Church, Co-Masonry and the TS). [17] Had Mrs Besant cut off psychic communication, or had she not, Martyn wanted to know. And why did Leadbeater's statements on the matter contradict one another?

Martyn drew several conclusions about Leadbeater and Mrs Besant:

1. That Leadbeater is not always reliable.
2. That you have been relying upon C.W.L. as sole intermediary between the Hierarchy and yourself – for many years.
3. That you have not been kept fully acquainted
by Leadbeater with what the Hierarchy is doing.
4. That C.W.L.'s word is final and his seership
is infallible to you. [18]

Martyn recalled the time when Mrs Besant regarded
Chakravarti as "a Master in the flesh" and later had to
repudiate him, and he speculated that the same may be
necessary in the case of Leadbeater. He sought Mrs Besant's
advice on the matters he had raised, especially the question
of sexual activities.

I can with least difficulty regard the
solution...that sexual irregularity is a matter of
the personality and does not prevent a person
being used by the Masters even as Their sole
agent. That explanation would leave room for the
acceptance of both C.W.L. and Wedgwood....I really
do not want to have to think of Leadbeater and
Wedgwood as monsters veiling their illicit
practices under the cloak of humanitarian
interests and acting with such clever ingenuity
and cunning sometimes met with in such cases. That
is the viewpoint of lots of people anyhow. [19]

Mrs Besant did not immediately reply with a simple
explanation for the whole problem, and one can assume that
Martyn did not expect her to. But as the letter became more widely known, there were demands for some sort of explanation to account for the clear contradictions Martyn had specified.

Meanwhile, not content with publishing the Martyn letter, The O.E.Library Critic devoted itself to a series of articles attacking Wedgwood and Leadbeater. It suggested that Leadbeater had advocated a condition of "psychic orgasm" which he called "buddhic consciousness" in his book on the monad, and left its readers to speculate on how this might be attained. [20] It further declared him to be a "gross and palpable fraud", "an ex-professor of Onanism", and reprinted details of the "cypher" letter, although not the text, which it declared to contain language not to be uttered "outside a nuptial chamber or a brothel". [21] The Old Catholic or Liberal Catholic Church represented to the editor "The serpent in the Theosophical Garden". [22] Then, turning its attention to Wedgwood, the journal declared he had stated that morality was not a pre-requisite for Liberal Catholic priests, and noted enthusiastically that both the Lambeth Conference of the Anglican Church, and the Utrecht conference of the Old Catholic Church had repudiated the orders of the Liberal Catholic Church. [23]

In 1917 Mrs Besant, to meet the needs of those
who sought something like a monastic community, had established the Brotherhood of Service within the ES. [24] Those wishing to be full brothers put all their property into a common fund under the control of Mrs Besant, and took a solemn pledge:

I pledge myself to serve the world in such ways as the Brother Server of this Order [Mrs Besant] shall direct me. I pledge myself to carry out the commands and to subscribe to the rules and regulations of the Brother Server and of his Delegates without equivocation and to the best of my ability; and I pledge myself to resign at once my membership of the Order should I ever find myself unwilling to carry out such commands or to subscribe to such rules and regulations. I pledge myself to live a life of renunciation, obedience and service. [25]

Now, in 1921, there was a renewed emphasis on recruiting in the hope of stimulating a new wave of dedication and enthusiasm within the TS. Dr Rocke and Jinarajadasa were prominent members, and Fritz Kunz was engaged in a program to admit new members.

Amidst all this excitement, scandal and
"malicious intrigue", the departure from the TS of Mrs Alice A. Bailey went virtually unnoticed; she and her husband drifted away with a number of other American members and eventually established the Arcane School, producing an extensive range of books said to have been dictated by the Master DK, generally known as "The Tibetan". [26] There is a curious similarity between the material present by Mrs Bailey (or DK) and that given out by Leadbeater in those of his books published after Mrs Bailey's volumes began to appear in 1922.[27] In TS circles Mrs Bailey was denounced or ignored, since her claims to be a pupil of the Master DK was clearly bogus - the Theosophical authorities, notably Leadbeater, would have known had she been - and therefore her works were not to be read. But Leadbeater purchased them as they appeared, and read them, and made enthusiastic comments about them privately, although he never referred to them publicly. [28]

If 1921 had been a year of attacks and intrigues, 1922 must have achieved a record in the history of the TS for seemingly endless "troubles". The O.E. Library Critic continued its series of happy proddings, reprinting a good deal of the old material, and including "Private and Confidential" documents almost as soon as they were printed for the ES and its Inner Group. The editor was curious to know why, with their combined clairvoyant powers, neither
Mrs Besant nor Leadbeater could discover who was leaking these documents, although they tried very hard, and published warnings of the dire consequences of such treachery. The editor was also curious to know why, if the Apostles had been an historical fiction - as Leadbeater stated in *The Inner Life* - there was a prayer of thanksgiving for their lives and work in the Liberal Catholic Liturgy. [29]

Despite such attacks and slanders, doubtless not even read by Mrs Besant, although she had been receiving *The O.E. Library Critic* with the editor's complements since 1913, the year began on a note of self-congratulation. [30] At the suggestion of Madame de Manziarly, the Russian widow of a Frenchman and a close friend of Krishna, it was decided to set aside February 17th each year in thanksgiving for three heroes of Theosophy: Giordano Bruno (1548-1600) (an Italian Dominican friar and philosopher who was burnt as a heretic on that day in 1600, and who reincarnated as Mrs Besant), Henry Steel Olcott (who died on that day in 1907) and Charles Webster Leadbeater (who said he had been born on that day in 1847). [31] A small booklet was produced describing the celebration of what was to be called "Adyar Day", and containing statements in praise of the three heroes. It included a brief biography of Leadbeater, which declared the story "Saved by a Ghost" to be true, and
referred to his career at Oxford. This account was reproduced from The Theosophist for November, 1911. [32]

In January, 1922, Irving Cooper published a circular letter in defence of Leadbeater; it was quoted by L.W. Burt in an article entitled "War Against Mrs Besant":

Year after year I have been with him, and never did I see or sense the slightest taint of immorality or coarseness. On the contrary, I marvelled again and again at the singular purity of mind, so different from that of other men. Do you think I could be with him for five years and not sense vicious tendencies in his character if they were there? Mrs M [Martyn] is said to have drawn certain opposite conclusions from something she saw in her home. I happen to know that the incident described was of the most innocent character. [33]

But self-congratulation, thanksgiving and defence were quickly followed by yet another scandalous document: "the Farrer confession". Reginald Farrer was a friend of Wedgwood, and a Liberal Catholic priest. He had been a pupil of Leadbeater, and was one of Krishna's bodyguards in 1912 and 1913. He was also Secretary of the League of Redemption,
a Theosophical society concerned with "the nature and cure of the social evil" [presumably prostitution]. Farrer had been the subject of various accusations in association with Wedgwood, and in 1919 admitted to various people that the accusations were true. On February 28th, 1922, he wrote to the leader of Co-Masonry in England tendering his resignation, and specifying his reasons:

The imputation against myself as well as against Wedgwood, King and Clark in Mr Martyn's letter is but too true. Yet I would have you believe that I was led astray by those whom I considered to be my superiors both morally and spiritually. I was not strong enough to control my own lower nature and gave way to a practice that I am now heartily ashamed of. Reparation for the stain that I have brought upon the Order I cannot make, and I have come to the mournful conclusion that it is incumbent on me to ask you to strike my name from the role of Co-Masonry. Wedgwood absolutely declines to give up the malpractice. Again, [Jose] Acuna who is also addicted to this vice had actually stood sponsor for one of his "friends" who was initiated into Emulation Lodge recently. [34]
Farrer sent copies of his confession to Mrs Besant, Leadbeater, Jinarajadasa and Krishna, as well as Miss Bright, Josephine Ranson and various others. [35] He left the country on the same day he wrote his resignation.

An English Theosophist, J.W. Hamilton-Jones of London, spoke with Wedgwood on the 28th, and Wedgwood protested his innocence, mentioning also that he had received an anonymous letter to the effect that if he had not left the country by March 1st he would be arrested. Wedgwood left England that day. Along with the other documents, the "Farrer confession" was reprinted in The O.E. Library Critic, and privately printed in leaflet form for easy distribution.

On March 2nd, 1922, Mrs Besant issued a letter "To All Members of the Theosophical Society" in which she dealt with the current controversies, and, so she thought, resolved them all. [36] Opposition to the LCC she attributed to a hatred of Roman Catholicism, the very name of which was "historically detested" in Australia and North America. It was the "seal of the apostolate" of the LCC that it should be attacked so violently, and foreshadowed the imminent coming - the "hour of temptation" mentioned in the Book of Revelation to which Mrs Besant referred her readers.
The allegations against Leadbeater had, she recalled (with a less than impartial and less than accurate memory), been dismissed by "a Committee in England". She denounced The O.E. Library Critic, denied that she had ever regarded "a well-known Indian gentleman" [Chakravarti] as a Master, and refuted the Martyn letter. It showed not only "strange confusion and inaccuracy of thought", but plain untruths. She denied cutting of contact with the Masters, declaring that it was only "physical brain intercourse", not "the superphysical line of communication". Mr Martyn's letter contained a number "infamous accusations", none of which she believed, but the only one of which she specifically refuted was the claim that police in several countries were after Wedgwood. The Jesuits, she added, have often resorted to allegations of immorality against those they have regarded as heretics, and even HPB suffered in that way.

She concluded her letter with an impassioned denunciation of "The venom, the hatred, the coarseness, the low vulgarity obvious in the attacks, and in such papers as Dawn...", which, she suggested, "show very clearly their origin and inspiration". She sought the support of those who had elected her for another term as President of the TS to work for "the reconstruction of the Society", so that they would not be ashamed "to face the Lord when He shall come".
The "Farrer Confession" was followed by the resignation of Wedgwood from the TS, Co-Masonry, the Liberal Catholic Church and various associated bodies. He had been challenged by some English Theosophists to either sue some of the authors of the various charges against him, or to resign. In a letter of March 7th, 1922, to Mrs Besant, he resigned:

I am writing to tell you that I have decided, after some weeks of careful consideration, to sever my connection with the Theosophical Society, the Co-Masonic Order and the Liberal Catholic Church, and to retire into private life. I am heartily weary of the campaign of slander and malicious intrigue, which has now persisted for some years and is growing more unscrupulous and personal. It does incalculable harm to the Theosophical Movement as a whole, and has the effect of frustrating work among those classes of the community that one specially wishes to reach.

[37]

Mrs Besant refused to accept his resignation from the TS. It took almost a year for his resignation as Presiding Bishop of the LCC to become effective. He was succeeded by
Leadbeater who officially took office at the end of March, 1923. [38]

The excitement was maintained with a response by T.H. Martyn to Mrs Besant's answer to his letter. This was printed in *Dawn*, the magazine of the T.S. Loyalty League in Sydney, a group of members of the Sydney Lodge, opposed to Leadbeater, the LCC and such things. [39] Martyn repeated most of the material in his original letter, and noted that he had endeavoured to prevent that letter from being made public. He quoted the "Farrer Confession", and rejected strongly Mrs Besant's assertion that one must either accept her and Leadbeater, or stop pretending to be a loyal Theosophist. He felt that her words, thrilling as they were, "savor of nervous overstrain". [40]

The documents continued to appear": next, "the Gauntlett Statement". Rupert Gauntlett had been one of the first two Liberal Catholic Bishops, and one of Wedgwood's consecrators. On June 23rd, 1922, he issued a statement on oath regarding "the Farrer Confession" and Wedgwood's resignation. Gauntlett stated that he had spoken with Mrs Besant during 1918 when the matter of Farrer's verbal confession had been discussed. Gauntlett felt obliged to resign from the Church because, although he did not know the accusations to be true, he was reluctant to be associated
with persons against whom such charges could be made. Mrs Besant urged him not to resign, but to help in "cleaning the church from such scandals".

I asked her whether there was any real ground for Mr Farrer's statement in so far as it incriminated others, and Mrs Besant then said that she had no doubt as to its truth, and that in any case, within her personal knowledge, Mr Wedgwood's behaviour when at Adyar was such that she refused ever to have him there again. [41]

Gauntlett remained in the Church, and on March 22nd, 1922, saw Wedgwood in London to discuss "the Farrer Confession". Wedgwood told him, as senior bishop in the Church, that he wished to resign as from March 23rd. Gauntlett asked him not to do so on the ground that it would imply his guilt of the charges against him. He suggested a libel action against Farrer, but Wedgwood would not agree. Gauntlett then stated that if Wedgwood's resignation was tendered, then he (Gauntlett) would accept it only "on the distinct understanding that guilt was implied by his resignation". The resignation was nonetheless tendered. [42]

Not long after "the Gauntlett Statement", "the Wilkinson Circular" appeared. This was an open letter to
officials of all TS lodges in England written by Alfred Wilkinson, President of the Nottingham Lodge. The circular referred to a move by Nottingham Lodge to have the National Committee of the TS in England take action to investigate and denounce the rampant immorality in the TS, which was centred, so he said, on Wedgwood and Leadbeater. Wilkinson was concerned at the obvious contradiction in recent public statements, and the continuing resurgence of old scandals. He noted:

Four priests of the L.C. Church have been practically expelled for the practice of Sodomy, and no defence being offered, one naturally assumes guilt; and indeed there is much also to support this assumption. The only one whose case demands the consideration of the Society is Mr Wedgwood, and that because of the fact that he has been pronounced by Mr Leadbeater to be an Initiate. We must candidly face the question whether Initiateship and the moral ruin of young boys by the practice mentioned are compatible.

[43]

From the distance of Sydney, Leadbeater was observing these alarming developments, probably aware that, sooner or later,
they would extend to the Antipodes.

After visiting India at the end of 1921 for the annual TS Convention, Krishna and Nitya and a party of other Theosophists sailed for Sydney for the 1922 TS convention there, arriving on April 12th. They were accompanied by Jinarajadasa. Leadbeater and a large party of his disciples met them; for Krishna and Nitya it was the first time since July, 1912, that they had seen Leadbeater. Krishna wrote to Lady Emily:

C.W.L. is just the same, he is much whiter in hair, just as jovial & beaming with happiness. He was very glad to see us. He took my arm and held on to it and introduced me to all with a "voila" in his tone. I was very glad to see him too. [44]

Leadbeater was living at "Crendon", the home of Mr and Mrs Gustav Källerström, and was at the centre of a small community of Theosophists' children, all boys between fourteen and twenty-one. [45]

Krishna and Nitya stayed not far away at "Malahide", the home of John Mackay and his wife. Nitya, in a letter to Ruspoli, gave his impressions of Leadbeater:
You know he is really marvellous old man; he is absolutely unchanged, except that he has grown milder, and less cruel to old ladies; he goes out of his way now to talk to all the old ugly women... Yet occasionally he lets fly and he is the old C.W.L. of Adyar. But just as in Adyar he takes everything for granted, never a question of doubt, never a question that anyone else can doubt; he is always sure that everything is as real to everybody as it is to him. [46]

The main difference that Krishna and Nitya noticed in Leadbeater was his interest in the LCC, and they were shocked to discover what a major part this now played in the lives of his disciples. Krishna felt cynical and critical, and although he tried desperately not to show it, he was completely out of sympathy with church ceremonial. His first letter to Lady Emily from Sydney described his first church service:

Sunday Morning [April 18] I went to the L.C.C. Church [in Regent Street, Redfern] & C.W.L. was the acting priest. He did it all very well, but
you know I am not a ceremonialist & I do not appreciate all the paraphenalia and all those prayers & bobbing up, and down, the robes, etc.; but I am not going to attack it, some people like it so what right have I to attack or disapprove of it? The church lasted 2 1/2 hours & I was so bored that I was nearly fasting. I am afraid I rather showed it. I must be careful or else they will misunderstand me, & there will be trouble. They are like cats and dogs over this church affair. They are fools anyway. Their over-zealousness & the lack of tact is the cause of all the trouble here. [47]

Krishna's comments about "all the trouble here" referred to the growing controversy within the Sydney Lodge over the role of the LCC and Leadbeater in the life of the TS. What Mary Lutyens refers to as "Leadbeater's church party" was strongly opposed by the General Secretary of the time, T.H.Martyn, whose personal wealth had for some time supported the Lodge.

Martyn was campaigning for a "Back to Blavatsky" movement within the TS - and to him this meant Theosophy without the personality cults, the handing out of Initiations, the occult pronouncements of Leadbeater and
others, the OSE, the Coming, and the LCC. [48] To support his efforts, Martyn had formed the TS Loyalty League in Sydney, meaning loyalty to Blavatsky and true Theosophy rather than to those who, in his opinion, were attempting to supplant her and it. He was, naturally, opposed in this by Leadbeater's followers, and conflict was simmering for some time before it finally exploded into open warfare at the Australian TS Convention which began in Sydney on Good Friday, 1922.

There was a series of allegations and arguments. Jinarajadasa, representing Mrs Besant who hoped to attend but been unable to do so, presided, and was viewed by the dissidents as an agent of Leadbeater, a sort of Theosophical trouble-shooter. Much of the heated discussions centred on Leadbeater; his enemies were especially indignant when, as he left each session, he turned to the left and the right, making the sign of the cross in benediction to his disciples, who rose as he passed.

A resolution of confidence in Mrs Besant and Leadbeater, proposed by Senator Matthew Reid, provoked a four hour discussion in which all the old charges were resurrected and debated. [49] Krishna, who became involved in the debate, wrote:
There was a huge uproar on the part of the Loyalty League. A man got up, frightfully coarse & vulgar & said that he had no confidence in C.W.L. as he was an immoral man & began to rake up all the lies about C.W.L. Raja who was the chairman said all this had nothing to do with it etc. Then there were those who spoke for C.W.L. and those against him. He was there all the time. The storm of accusation & defending went on for about 2 1/2 hours. Martyn spoke & said C.W.L. could not be trusted because he was associated with Wedgewood [sic]. Then Fritz Kunz, Nitya and I finally spoke. We thundered at them. I said I knew C.W.L. better than most of them & so I could speak with some authority. I declared he was one of the purest & one of the greatest men I had ever met. His clairvoyance may be doubted but not his purity. As to his style Bishop, a man can call himself what he liked etc. Finally I said that being Theosophists we behaved worse than the ordinary man & that we all lost our gentlemanliness when we were attacking etc. Martyn went out immediately after the vote was taken. For 85 & against 15. Only delegates voted. [50]
by Martyn, John Prentice of the Hobart Lodge, and Mr Barnes of the Sydney Lodge. [51] Martyn declared that Leadbeater associated with a "homosexualist of a depraved and criminal type" (i.e. Wedgwood). Leadbeater, although not addressing the meeting, let it be known that in 1908 a committee "including eminent judges and barristers" had cleared him of the 1906 charges. [52] This was simply untrue: the 1908 "committee" was in fact a majority of the British Executive of the TS (including Wedgwood, Hodgson-Smith, Maude Sharp, Esther Bright and Herbert Whyte) who had circularized the British members with a statement to the effect that they had seen the evidence of the 1906 hearing and later documents, and considered the evidence, and gave as "their deliberate opinion that there is nothing to show that in what he did Mr Leadbeater was not actuated by the highest and purest motives and nothing to warrant the insinuations of personal misconduct which have been so freely made". [53] There were no judges or barristers, eminent or otherwise, amongst the signatories to the circular. It was, however, to appear in future references as "the 1908 committee".

Two days after the stormy meeting, Krishna and Nitya dined with the Martyns, trying their best to reconcile Martyn to Leadbeater, but without success. It seems likely that Martyn avoided being too specific with Krishna and Nitya as to what he knew of Wedgwood or Leadbeater, and
Krishna, who hardly knew Wedgwood, requested Lady Emily to find out the nature of the charges against him in England.

[54]

In Sydney it had become known that E.L. Grieg, Secretary of the Sydney Lodge, had employed a private detective to follow Wedgwood the last time he had been in Sydney. The detective reported that Wedgwood had visited eighteen public toilets in a period of two hours, and, when questioned about this, explained to the police that he had been searching for a friend whom he had known in a previous life, but who had now "gone wrong" and needed rescuing.

[55]

Rather ironically, the February issue of *Theosophy in Australia* had included an article on "the Sex Question", beginning

This question has received a certain amount of prominence recently among our members, and certain practices have been more or less freely discussed.

[56]

This was certainly an understatement.

Throughout 1922, Sydney newspapers had been
finding good copy in sex and Theosophists, especially the Daily Telegraph which ran a series on the alleged activities of Leadbeater and those associated with him. Some members of the TS accused Martyn of inspiring this attack, and of making material available to the newspaper; he denied this. However, much imagination was shown by Sydney newspapers in headlines such as "Where Leadbeater Bishes", "Leadbeater: A Swish Bish with the Boys", "The Mahatamas", and "Dandy Coloured Coons" (in reference to Krishna and Nitya). [57] It seemed that the newspapers had access to some hidden supply of Theosophical information, perhaps from the editor of The O.E. Library Critic, or Mrs Tingley and friends at Point Loma.

Mrs Besant issued an appeal to the lodges in Australia which was published in Theosophy in Australia, and produced a series of answers from both sides of the argument.

As P.T.S. [President of the Theosophical Society] I appeal to you to put an end, so far as in you lies, to the persecution fo Bishop Leadbeater, and the attempts made by a small section of the Sydney Lodge, the leaders of the so-called Loyalty League to work against me...until they force me to resign. The shameful campaign on my colleague has
been worked up in order to cover the attack on myself, which has become overt through the influence of Mr T.H.Martyn on the *Daily Telegraph*. [58]

She briefly examined the events of 1905 and onwards insofar as they concerned Leadbeater, and referred to the allegations of "certain crimes" made by a "certain person" — i.e. Farrer.

Following the press allegations, the police undertook another investigation of Leadbeater and his activities. The results of their investigation have had not been published until the author's *The Elder Brother. A Biography of C.W. Leadbeater* in 1982. Other authors have referred to the general terms of the conclusions of the enquiry, and to the evidence collected by the police. However, in the Archives of New South Wales there exists a file containing complete documentation of the police enquiry. [59]

The interest of the police in Leadbeater was originally aroused in 1917 by Joseph Fussell, but their investigations then found no evidence to sustain charges. [60] From May to June, 1922, the police undertook a very thorough investigation of Leadbeater. Statements were taken,
from the Martyns, Mrs Köllerström, nine of Leadbeater's pupils, a domestic servant of the Martyn's, as well as from Jinarajadasa, Krishna and Nitya. As in 1917, Leadbeater was said to be too ill to be examined by the police.

The bulk of the evidence was inconclusive and unconvincing. It revealed a man with distinctly eccentric views on sex, but one to whom his pupils were so dedicated that they were prepared to say nothing detrimental. Indeed, the statements of some of his pupils read as though they were learnt in advance, and well-rehearsed.

Martyn took virtually the opposite approach, for, as a later commentator noted:

Martyn and his allies soon came to look upon the Liberal Catholic Church as no more than the front for a gang of pedarasts. [61]

Martyn told the police that he had joined the TS in 1891, and had first met Leadbeater in 1905. He met him again in 1914, and when the tutor who conducted the informal school at the Martyn's left for war service in 1915, Leadbeater had taken over, and lived with the Martyns until 1917, when he moved to live with the Köllerströms. Martyn recounted only one event which might have provided evidence of questionable
conduct on Leadbeater's part. He recalled arriving home late one evening, and passing Leadbeater's room where the door was open:

Mr Leadbeater was standing by his bed in his nightshirt, he turned down the clothes preparatory to getting in. Oscar Köllerström was in the bed without any clothes on and lying across the bed. Mr Leadbeater caught hold of his right shoulder and turned him over and switched off the light preparatory, I presume to getting in. [62]

If he had considered this evidence of sexual misconduct, Martyn had taken no action at the time. But he later discovered that his wife had witnessed a similar event while he had been away on business.

In her statement, Mrs Martyn recalled:

I saw Oscar [Köllerström] in a state of nudity in the bed with Mr Leadbeater and Heyting also naked. He walked out of the room naked to his bed which was on the verandah...and I saw Mr Leadbeater getting into the bed where Oscar was and the light extinguished. I stood at the door not knowing what
to do. I was very perturbed. I was in the house by myself. [63]

However, Mrs Martyn took no further action, and didn't mention the event until the police investigation some five years later.

Martyn informed the police that Leadbeater always took a hot bath in the morning, and invariably had a boy in the bath with him, usually Oscar. Martyn told the police that he had come to some definite conclusions about Leadbeater:

I have reluctantly come to the conclusion that Mr Leadbeater has as a motive and apart from any philanthropic purpose the gratification of a perverted sex impulse....That his relations with some boys (probably not all the boys around him) has been for his personal sex gratification. For a long time I have thought it necessary to regard him as addicted to one particular form of male vice [sodomy]. [64]

And Martyn added information about Leadbeater colleague and fellow Liberal Catholic Bishop, Wedgwood, describing his alleged immorality and claiming that he had stated that he
travelled in episcopal att. "to avoid conscription".

The evidence of T.H.Martyn and his wife was the only material the police received directly suggesting that Leadbeater was sexually involved with his boys. Certainly none of the pupils' accounts suggested anything improper, although the versions of Leadbeater's sexual attitudes suggested more than a slight degree of eccentricity. A domestic employed by the Martyns stated that she heard Leadbeater regularly talking in disparaging terms about women, instructing the boys to have nothing to do with them. All the boys related that Leadbeater had warned them to avoid sexual contact with women. Oscar Köllerström told the police that Leadbeater "told us to keep clear of unpleasant practices". When asked what Leadbeater meant by "unpleasant practices", he replied: "He told us, he mentioned to us to keep clear of women, and not to have anything to do with them". [65] Oscar denied ever having shared a bath with Leadbeater.

Leadbeater's aversion to women had become apparent during his many lecturing tours for the TS. When he took up residence at the Martyn's, for example, he insisted that Mr and Mrs Martyn occupy separate bedrooms during his visit, and this had happened in other homes in which he had been a guest. He separated a number of couples by telling,
them to give up sexual intercourse, and his aversion eventually reached a stage where he refused to shake hands with a woman, or stay alone in a room with one, though Mrs Besant was an exception in all these eccentricities.

However, late in his life, Leadbeater mellowed, was prepared to treat women — even old women to whom he had an especially aversion — more as human beings, and finally took some female pupils. He said his original refusal to do so was based on the fact that one "could always tell what reaction a boy would have to certain methods, but no-one could predict what a girl would do." [66]

From the evidence of the police enquiry, with Leadbeater's pupils all denying any sexual irregularity, one must either assume that they were all lying (or at least that some of them were) or that all the evidence which had been accumulated by Leadbeater's enemies was a fabric of lies. The only boy who gave a hint of something suspicious was one who had been flown from Chinchilla in Queensland at the expense of the Loyalty League to give evidence. He said he had left the LCC because he had a feeling that "something was wrong" and "undue familiarity" occurred between Leadbeater and some of his pupils. As far as the case against Leadbeater was concerned, it was a waste of the money spent on his travelling expenses.
But, although the archival file of statements and depositions contains nothing of great significance, there exists a document which does. Given to the Executive of the Sydney lodge after its members had inspected the report furnished to the Minister for Justice, the *Precis of the Leadbeater Enquiry*, written by E.L. Grieg, begins with an account of the frequency with which a boy, called "A", slept with Leadbeater. It included the following statement:

One boy explains that Leadbeater encouraged him first to bathe and then to lie down on his [Leadbeater's] bed in his bathing wrapper on an afternoon preceding a T.S. meeting at night. He was to rest in order to be fresh for the meeting. Leadbeater lay on the bed with a book in his left hand, and the boy lay on the other side. Without any words Leadbeater with his right hand caught hold of the boy's person and proceeded to masturbate him. This boy had not arrived at the age of puberty. He explains that he had a feeling that it was not right and slipped off the bed. He avoided giving any further opportunity of the same kind, though there were other rest afternoons. No date could be fixed by the boy, but it seems probably the incident happened during the first
few months of Leadbeater's residence in Sydney 1915-1916. [67]

The Precis noted that the majority of witnesses amongst the boys said that they masturbated regularly, as did two old Leadbeater boys. "The Precis also noted that almost all the witnesses in favour of Leadbeater had returned to the police seeking to amend or alter their evidence.

"The Head of the Criminal Investigation Department, who had led the enquiry, finally made his submission to the Inspector General of Police:

I am of the opinion that there are good grounds for believing that [Leadbeater] is a sex pervert. [68]

And the Inspector general, prior to passing the report to the Crown Solicitor, added the comment:

The evidence in the possession of the Police does not appear to call for any independent action against Leadbeater at present but sufficient is disclosed in the accompanying papers to justify his conduct, being kept under observation. [69]"
The Crown Solicitor concluded:

There is not much doubt that Leadbeater has in the past practised, and probably still does advise Masturbation, but save as above there is no evidence available. [69]

And he felt that there was "not enough evidence available here to obtain a conviction on any charge".

The general opinion of the police seems to have been that, whilst there could be little doubt that there was a sexual relationship between Leadbeater and at least some of his boys, it would have been virtually impossible to prove the matter in court, given the unquestioning loyalty and devotion of the boys for their teacher, and their belief that whatever he did was motivated by spiritual or occult principles.

Mrs Besant arrived in Sydney on April 22nd, but even her mediation could not calm the troubled waters, and eventually she led the formation of a new group of Theosophists, the Blavatsky Lodge, which took some 300 members, mainly members of the ES, from the Sydney Lodge. Sydney Lodge, which had over 900 members and was the largest lodge in the world, eventually took its remaining 600
members and broke with the Adyar TS to follow T.H.Martyn in the formation of the Independent Theosophical Society. They took with them the fine headquarters of the TS in Sydney, the King's Hall in Hunter Street. [70]

Nitya wrote to Ruspoli describing the events around Mrs Besant's arrival:

A.B. received a very friendly welcome when she arrived, all the papers boosted her, so of course Martyn's accusations were a tremendous bombshell and all the papers took it up. They dragged in everything, H.P.B., C.W.L., Alcyone, the Star, the Church, the Masters, everything was dragged up, and for about a fortnight we had huge columns in the papers. Everybody wrote, A.B. answered letters, C.W.L. in his usual way paid very little attention to it. A.B.'s lectures were packed and her sermons in the church attracted about 1500 every time. We got a huge advertisement without spending a penny. [71]

The newspapers certainly had a field-day, with headlines revealing "Theosophical split. Stormy meeting last night. 'Liberal Catholic Church'. Strong antagonism manifested", "'Bishop' Leadbeater. What his disciples say of him", and
"The Leadbeater Case".

On May 17th, Mrs Besant held a meeting at which she attempted to resolve the problem, and some 700 people crowded into the King's Hall. The meeting quickly reduced itself into the inevitable accusations and defences over the issues regarding Leadbeater, the sexual charges, and the LCC. Senator Reid presided, carefully applying "the gag" whenever he felt things were getting out of hand. The result of the meeting was the division of the TS in Sydney. And, after a mission of some twenty-four days, including thirty-four meetings and public engagements, Mrs Besant departed, followed by Krishna and Nitya.

The newspapers continued to cover the TS feud. Letters from various people, for and against Leadbeater, filled the correspondence columns. Gustav Küllerström declared Leadbeater to be "a man of stainless purity and of the highest moral nature", claiming that "Before a court at Madras some 17 years ago, a judge could find no fault with the man". This was an unusual interpretation of Mr Justice Bakewell's condemnation of Leadbeater. [72] "The Farrer Confession" was brought up, and Mrs Besant's declaration that it had been withdrawn was investigated by the Sydney press, and found to be untrue. The history of the LCC and the morals of its bishops came in for examination, from the
unfrocking of Willoughby for "gross immorality" to the charges against Wedgwood. Leadbeater's pupils all wrote dutiful letters of support for their teacher.

A reporter who attended a Liberal Catholic service at St Alban's wrote a highly romanticized version of its Sunday Eucharist, complete with "Perfumed candles and costly robes", "Oriental luxury and elaborate ceremonial". During Mrs Besant's visit it was possible to hear her preach at St Alban's, or address the Public Questions Society of the University of Sydney, although its president had resigned rather than allow one who "supported immorality" to be the guest of his Society. [73]

In the EST Bulletin for May, 1922, Leadbeater, as head of the ES in Australia, launched an enthusiastic attack on those who opposed the motion of support for him and Mrs Besant at the Sydney convention. Of the fourteen rebels, he noted, seven were German or Austrian. Given his own writings on the power being exerted through Germans by the "Lords of the Dark face" and other Black Powers in the world — a legacy, he said, of the failure of the Allies to complete defeat Germany in the War — the implications were obvious. But Dawn, ever vigilant of supposedly secret ES papers, published the allegations and refuted them. It noted that of the fourteen, ten had been born in either Britain or
Australia, as had their parents. One was from Italy, one from Hungary, and only two were from Germany. [74]

The Trustees of the Sydney Lodge evicted the ES from the Sydney TS headquarters building which they owned on the ground of the racist allegations published by Leadbeater. The Lodge Executive also passed a resolution objecting to those references. Thereafter, at least initially, the ES met in the Co-Masonic Temple next to St Alban’s church. Leadbeater published a number of messages alleged to have been received from the Masters in the ES journal, The Disciple, including an instruction that all ES members must support the LCC. [75]

On May 24th, 1922, Jinanarajadasa was taken to The King of the World for his Third Initiation, jointly presented by Mrs Besant and Leadbeater, both of them physically in Sydney. The King spoke of the role of the Southern Hemisphere and Sydney, and warned of the dangers of opposition from the "Brothers of the Shadow" and the "masmic winds of slander and vituperation" they would inspire. Master M spoke of the need for a special Centre in the South to make use of the etheric currents which run from pole to pole: "a physical Centre south of the Line which can be employed as a power-station charged directly from Shamballa, to shield forces of various kinds on lower levels."
can radiate from it without interfering constantly with the equitorial current". Dr Rocke and Dr van der Leeuw were to work at this proposed Southern Centre. [76]

In his report of Mrs Besant's visit to Sydney, and the conflict involved, Jinarajaradasa commented in _The Disciple_

The presence of the OH in Sydney led to the gathering into a climax of the forces which had been hindering the Masters' work for some time. [77]

The same issue published figures of those who had left the ES in Australia during the previous month: 27 were dropped for "neglect of duty", 8 resigned, and 18 had their papers recalled, a way of pushing them out. A total of 53 ES members thus departed. But the local _EST Bulletin_ contained more cheerful news from Leadbeater: the Lord would probably be coming in 1928. [78] And, in the following issue, he assured his readers that "Sydney is and will be the chief centre through which the Masters' forces will be distributed. [79]

While Sydney was both the centre of present conflict and future promise, the ripples extended out far
beyond Australia. In July, 1922, B.P. Wadia, an eminent Indian member of the TS, for many years manager of the TPH at Adyar, and co-worker with Mrs Besant for Home Rule for India, resigned from the TS. He also prepared a booklet giving his reasons for resigning, and attacking the current administration of the Society. Although he did not name names, Leadbeater's influence was clearly the focus of his attack:

I have come to the conclusion that the T.S. has strayed away from the "Original Programme" inspired by the "Original Impulses" whereby the Masters brought it into existence through the help of Their Messenger, H.P. Blavatsky. It is no more a Society of seekers of the Wisdom, but an organization where many believe in the few, and blind following has come to prevail; where shams pass for realities, and the credulity of superstition gains encouragement; and where the noble ideals of Theosophical Ethics are exploited and dragged into the mire of psychism and immorality. [80]

Wadia regretted that

H.P. B.'s warning about "false prophets of
Theosophy" and their "monstrous exaggerations and
idiotic schemes and shams" has gone unheeded. A
hierarchy of "initiates" has been set up within the
T.S. and blind following and ludicrous worship of
personalities has been rampant. [81]

The next attack came from an old pupil of HPB,
Alice Leighton Cleather. [82] She had been a member of the
TS for four years when Mrs Besant joined it, and they had
both been members of HPB's Inner Group. Mrs Cleather
declared

(a) That under Mrs Besant's guidance the T.S. has
long ceased to represent H.P. Blavatsky's teaching
or the thought of its Founders.
(b) That it is now completely dominated by the
deluded, impure and poisonous ideas of an
acknowledged sex pervert, to whom this unhappy and
misguided woman believes and openly declares
herself to be bound by indissoluble and age-long
ties.
(c) That in adopting and conniving at the
promulgation of the teachings of this man, and
allowing him virtually to control her Society, Mrs
Besant most impiously gives out that she is acting
under the orders of the Trans-Himalayan Masters of
Wisdom and H.P. Blavatsky's directions. [83]

Mrs Cleather defended HPB against what she saw as the perversion and misdirection of her original Theosophy in three books, one of which was specifically concerned with the "Great Betrayal" of true Theosophy by Mrs Besant under Leadbeater's influence. [84]

Mrs Cleather, who had been one of HPB's pupils, was most outraged by Mrs Besant's claims that Leadbeater had also been one of HPB's pupils. In her "Whom Will ye Serve?" challenge, Mrs Besant had declared Leadbeater to have been one of H.P.B.'s nearest and most trusted pupils whom she had led to his Master of many lives, and in whom she had awakened the powers since so splendidly used in the service of the Society that he might become a great Teacher. [85]

Mrs Cleather called on Mrs Besant "to produce anything in writing by H.P.B. to warrant this audacious assertion". She noted that Leadbeater was never a member of HPB's Inner Group, or even of her Lodge in London. One might also wonder how HPB came to be the one who awakened Leadbeater's psychic powers when he himself declared it was the work of the Master, D.K. assisted by Subba Row. [86]
Mrs Cleather finally accused Mrs Besant of "tampering with" and "corrupting" The Secret Doctrine in the version of it known as the "Adyar Edition", published by the TPH at Adyar. She concluded by declaring the "sinister activities of 'this ill-omened partnership'" [i.e. Leadbeater and Mrs Besant] to be the cause of the whole "tragic and dreadful history", only parts of which she had been able to examine. "Leadbeaterism" was, she said, leading Mrs Besant and the TS to destruction.

The next attack came from J.P. Prentice, an eminent Theosophist who circulated an "Open Letter to Mr J.L. Davidge of Adelaide" in which he questioned the genuineness of Leadbeater's psychic powers, asking whether they had ever contributed one new fact of relevance to the world's knowledge, or ever been put to any test. Prentice categorized Leadbeater's "psychic progress" into four phases. First, there was the "Invisible Helpers" stage, with boys being trained for work on the inner planes during sleep. Where, wondered Prentice, were all those promising boy pupils now? Then came the "Round Table" period, when Leadbeater identified all his boys in Sydney as having been Knights of the Round Table in past incarnations. With the advent of the LCC all the boys were found to have been Christian saints in their past lives: St Francis of Assisi,
who had been King Arthur, was now living with Leadbeater in Sydney, in the company of St Anthony of Padua and St Bernard of Clairvaux. Then came the World Teacher period, and the Lives, with the Vehicle initially proclaimed to be Hubert van Hook, and later as Krishnamurti. And, finally, and currently, the "Ceremonial Period", with the LCC, Masonry, and other such interests. Prentice drifted between seeing Leadbeater's work as a dangerous fraud, or dismissing it as a silly fantasy. [87]

When Leadbeater's followers saw a little booklet from the pen of his former secretary and amanuensis, Johan van Manen, they looked forward to another defence of Leadbeater. If that is what it was intended to be, and the style makes it difficult to decide, it goes about the defence strangely. It would seem that van Manen was also disillusioned with Leadbeater. He suggested that the Martyn letter was "written in an admirable tone" and asked questions which should be, but had not been, answered. There should be a full enquiry once and for all. He commented that although he had known Leadbeater "so long and so intimately" he had no evidence of immorality, but "his actions have again and again given rise to suspicion and sinister inferences". And, concluded van Manen, "What is incomprehensible is his mutism". [88]
To his close pupils, however, this silence in the face of attack represented heroic and saintly virtue, such as was required of a man of his high occult status. It also indicated a strange attitude of superiority, as indicated by an anecdote from the period of the Sydney "troubles" when Leadbeater attended a Convention meeting:

People arose excitedly and pointing the finger at Bishop Leadbeater called him all manner of dreadful names...Bishop Leadbeater remained, as usual, completely unmoved. On the way home afterwards, his hostess, who was a generous but excitable lady, could not contain herself. "Oh sir!" she exclaimed, "how could you sit there and let them call you such names?" "What?" he replied, "What names? To tell you the truth I never heard anything they said. I was much too interested in watching what was happening to their solar plexuses. Such a remarkable display on the part of our Dark Brothers I do not remember having seen before." [89]

In occult circles outside the TS, the well-known writer Dion Fortune [i.e. Violet Firth], formerly a member of the TS, was conducting a veiled campaign against Leadbeater and his colleagues.
In her writings she attacked a mysterious group of male occultists who were using homosexual techniques to build up "a reservoir of dark astral power". She never named them, but by quotations from The O.E. Library Critic it was clear that she meant Leadbeater, Wedgwood and their disciples. She seemed to imply that Leadbeater was both a pederast and a psychic vampire, who combined these activities to the advancement of Black Magic. [90]

Aleister Crowley, who had quite a friendly relationship with Dion Fortune, although the latter would never have admitted it publicly, seemed convinced by her arguments. He believed that Leadbeater was the "hired tool" of Mrs Besant, a pederastic Black Magician who was destroying both occultism and Masonry, and the original Theosophy of HPB, for which Crowley professed great admiration. [91]

As the year drew to a close, and Leadbeater remained placid in the face of the many and varied attacks upon him, his disciples began looking for a permanent centre for his life and work. They discovered a house known locally as "Bakewell's Folly", although the name on the gate was "Garroch", overlooking Sydney Harbour in the fashionable suburb of Clifton Gardens, virtually an extension of Mosman. Clifton Garden's had it origins in 1832 when an American
whaler, Captain Cliffe, purchased an estate out of government gardens at Chowder Bay, and built a home called "Cliffeton" which later led to the name "Clifton Gardens". In the latter half of the nineteenth century the area developed into a fashionable suburb with many large homes in the best traditions of Federation architecture.

"Bakewell's Folly" was huge and rambling, and distinctly strange. It had been built between 1909 and 1913 by an English tile manufacturer named Bakewell, who planned it to be an eight room cottage for his family. But Bakewell, appropriately, had dreams and visions, and would frequently arrive on the building site in the morning to trace out with a walking stick additional rooms on his cottage as seen in the dreams of the previous night. So the house grew into a fifty-two room mansion, including thirty-two bedrooms, five bathrooms, and numerous other rooms. The interior, as a result of the unorthodox architectural planning, was inconvenient: tiny rooms were entered by enormous corridors, and large rooms were located at the end of narrow passageways. All the rooms seemed either too large or too small for anything in particular. The whole house had also been structured to accommodate as many tiles as physically possible - tiles on the roof, glazed tiles on the walls, mosaic tiles on the verandah.[92]
Bakewell's family came out from England, saw the house, and went back to England, leaving the rambling, inconvenient house on the market. It attracted little interest, except as a curiosity, until Mr van Gelder, one of Leadbeater's disciples, saw it, liked it, and took Leadbeater to see it. He was also impressed, and a three year lease was acquired in August, 1922. [93] Money for the purchase was eventually raised through gifts from three members of the ES, and a loan from the Krotona Institute of Theosophy in California. [94] Initially two or three families moved in to what was re-named "The Manor", together with a number of Leadbeater's pupils.

As the year drew to a close, the Sydney press found other topics for attention, and the occult life at "The Manor" began quietly and without great interest from the newspapers. However, crowds of curious Sydney people did troop out to Mosman on Sundays in the hope of seeing the "swish Bish" and some of his boys, or something exciting and occult. They peered through the hedge into the straggling garden, and one imagines they went away disappointed.