

Rude Materialism Menaces the "Purple Mother"



Raja Yoga Academy, Point Loma.



The Late A. G. Spalding, Whose Will is Attacked in Court

Head of Theosophist Colony in America Sued by Heirs of Spalding Estate Because of Fortune Willed Her.



dim, blue mountains of old Mexico and across the bay, on its sloping plain, lies the city of San Diego, with the most famous beach in the world—Coronado—croaking round the harbor is the soft sunshine.

This is Point Loma city, fashioned after a dream, where a theory, visionary as it is ideal, is being worked out and where the law of living is ancient as the Sanscrit tablets upon which it first was written. The city is walled round and guarded, isolated by distance, cut off by creed from the world and those who live in the world. And yet a passion of the earth earthy has penetrated the passionless loneliness of the place and the shadow of litigation lies upon the gates.

Absolute autocrat of the city is Mrs. Katherine Tingley, the "Purple Mother." For her it is to choose the members of her colony; she may discipline, dismiss at



Mrs. Annie Besant.

otherwise become a heritage; protest in the way of legal contest involving the peering and prying and setting the mark of interrogation above the beauty of the city.

Sixteen years ago it was that so far as his friends of the political and sporting worlds knew him, Albert Goodwill Spalding dropped out of sight. After a spectacular career, running over the best part of a half century, Spalding's sudden retirement caused wide comment.

He had started out as a clerk and delivery boy, playing baseball at spare moments; then his talent for baseball attracted the attention of Henry Chadwick, known as "father" of baseball, and he installed Spalding as pitcher of the Boston club of the old National Professional Association in 1871. He pitched the club to a championship for four successive years and then went to Chicago as captain and manager of the National League club. He founded the firm of A. G. Spalding & Brothers with little capital but confidence in 1876 and in a dozen years the firm had become first in the country in manufacture of sporting goods, and was worth \$3,000,000.

Years later—in 1910—Spalding entered the race for United States senator in the first election held under the new primary law of California, and won out over two strong opponents. But that was after he turned up as a resident of Point Loma, under the rule of the "Purple Mother."

Three years after he had become one with the "Universal Brotherhood," Spalding attracted attention by defending the "Raja Yoga Theosophist Colony," as it is called when the Gerry Society opposed plans for the education of eleven children brought from Cuba to the colony.

Spalding was married the second time to Mrs. Elizabeth Churchill Mayer, of Point Loma, in 1900. It was to her that he left much of his estate of \$500,000 worth of stocks and bonds and \$100,000 worth of real property in and about San Diego when he died last September. A son, Keith Spalding, of Chicago, inherited \$100,000 and a like sum was willed to Durand Churchill, a stepson. Albert Goodwill Spalding, Jr., who is contesting the will, following similar action instituted by Keith Spalding some time ago, alleges that Mrs. Tingley and Mrs. Spalding knew for some time before Spalding's death that he was likely to die, and purposely refrained from communicating with the son.

Just what will be the answer of the "Purple Mother" to the suit is not yet guessed. However, it is altogether unlikely that she will relinquish the possibility of sharing a \$600,000 estate without a fight.

The last spectacular suit of a similar character against Mrs. Tingley was brought by George L. Patterson, of Newcastle, Pa., six years ago, when he endeavored to break the will of his mother, Mrs. Harriet Patterson Thurston. Mrs. Tingley was named as residuary legatee of an estate valued at \$350,000 and the



Mrs. Catherine Tingley.

court held that cause for action was insufficient. Mrs. Thurston was the wife of Clark Thurston, member of the cabinet of twelve maintained by Mrs. Tingley.

Mrs. Tingley has been called the leader of theosophy in America. She has been said to be the rival of Mrs. Annie Besant, and successor to Madame Blavatsky. But she styles herself a messenger who has reduced theosophy to a practical working basis and who is demonstrating the possibility of living the ideal life.

Theosophy originated with Madame H. P. Blavatsky, a Russian woman of high family and great attainments in scholarship. She made no claim to having originated a new philosophy, but rather to having gathered bits of wisdom from all religions to comprise a "divine science." It is an "evolution-philosophy" of Spencer and of Darwin carried out to its logical and ultimate expression.

It teaches "karma," law of relentless justice, by which every wrong committed must at some time be offset by a corresponding punishment and recompense, thus preserving eternal balance. It also teaches reincarnation of souls; progress from existence to existence, from each of which is believed the breadth of wisdom which inclines the possessor toward good until ultimate perfection and Nirvana—absorption by the divine—is attained.

The spirit begins at the lowest form of life—the mineral—and progresses on to plant life; thence to lower animal such as mollusk and fish, and through to higher animal forms, as the spirit becomes worthy, the simian of course being the highest of that cycle. Lower forms of humans, such as the Bushmen of Africa, represent the first step in the fifth or highest cycle, and with pride do adherents of the faith point out famous musicians, authors and others of mental attainment, as representing development.

Theosophists do not believe in a personal God, but in "an all-pervading supreme spirit," the "ever unknowable" who appears throughout the universe as a "majestic and unchanging law." Christ they regard as one of the greatest of great teachers, divine only with the same divinity which is in all men. They deny fatalism, insisting that every man has a right to choose good or ill.

The "Raja Yoga" colony was organized by Mrs. Tingley with the idea of carry-

ing out theosophical precepts, chief of which is that of universal brotherhood. The place is operated something on the order of a huge institution. Children, dressed in gingham slips and sandals, live together in a group house where they are fed, according to weights and measures, by graduate nurses. Their parents see them once or twice every few days and they are taught by expert educationalists, members of the colony. Everybody works there and everybody works without pay. Men who used to be bankers off the roads; women whose social activities interested two continents wash dishes in the kitchens. All for love of it, say they, for is it not thus that the universal brotherhood is worked out?

And the residents there are not everyone and anyone. The lawyer of the institution, a southern gentleman, diversifies his legal work by superintending the vegetable garden. His wife is chief cook in the kitchen. An English artist, one of the oldest living members of the Royal Academy of Great Britain, trains rose vines. Among prominent members of the brotherhood have been William C. Temple, wealthy lumberman, of Pittsburg, his wife and daughter; Clark Thurston, former president of the American Screw Company; F. M. Pierce, of the Pierce Engineering Company, of New York; W. Ross White, prominent Georgia manufacturer; W. F. Hanson, Georgia inventor of cotton weaving; R. Machele, English artist, Hon. Nan Herbert, sister of the former British minister to the United States. Ex-Secretary Lyman J. Gage took up his residence at Point Loma and became deeply interested in the work there.

Mrs. Tingley was born in Newburyport, Mass., sixty-four years ago. For years she has been engaged in philanthropic work of various sorts. At one time she conducted a mission on the east side of New York city; at the close of the Spanish war she organized a relief corps and established an emergency hospital for sick soldiers at Montauk Point. Later she conducted an expedition for relief work among the poor of Cuba. She has been described as a stout woman of medium height, with dark, restless eager eyes, decided step, imperative voice and a particularly youthful appearance. And not only is she to be absolute autocrat of the brotherhood through her life, but she has the privilege of nominating her successor.

The "Purple Mother" is still striving endlessly for the "ideal existence" in her dream city of the Pacific. The city is isolated by situation, circumstance, creed; cut off from the outside world. But what is to be the effect of the law's mundane fingers, pushing and prying through the isolation?

ONCE again mundane law has reached out and pushed prying fingers into the dream city of the Pacific coast. Once again the white light of publicity is streaming through the city's picture streets, searching out corners, peering into secret places. Again the figure of the city's autocrat rises against glaring criticism, like a shadow on a screen.

Above blue water and under blue sky lies Point Loma, just across the bay from San Diego. Its massive, Greek-lined buildings rise above trees at the center of the high promontory, surmounted by curious glass domes which by daylight shine in

the sun and by night always are illuminated. To the west salt breezes rush in from far and far across rolling wastes, hinting of the orient; the bay on the east is still and the color of liquid sapphire. Running down over the hill back of the city is a long, dusty roadway five miles to the northward around the harbor end.

There is another dusty roadway from the harbor to a gate beyond which blooms a garden. The gate suggests an Egyptian temple; the garden is lovely with the beauty of southern California. Beyond is long, dusty roadway five miles to the northward around the harbor end. Far to the south rise the

will. The schools, workshops, nurseries, households, even the dress of her subjects are ordered by her. And in her own name, under her undisputed control is every piece of property at Point Loma; every foot of land, every cent realized from the sale of shop products, everything invested, donated, belongs to the "Purple Mother" for the colony.

And it so happens that persons interested in the peculiar philosophy of the "Purple Mother" and in her "Universal Brotherhood" are dying now and again and willing her all their money. Which action is usually calling forth protest from those to whom the money would