

L. Frank Baum and Theosophy - Part II.

by John Algeo - USA

After the arrival in India of the two Founders of the Theosophical Society, that land became the center of Theosophical activity and has remained so ever since, at least in the sentiments of Theosophists around the world. In fact, other countries have developed more innovative methods of disseminating Theosophy than the traditional lecture-discussion format that characterizes the meetings of most Theosophical Lodges. However, the ambience of the Theosophical Society is intimately linked with India, in no small measure because of the activities of the two Founders in that land.

In 1879 Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott went on a tour in the north of India and were warmly welcomed everywhere. In Allahabad they stayed with Mr. and Mrs. A. P. Sinnett, both of whom joined the Society. Mr. Sinnett was editor of *The Pioneer*, then India's foremost English-language newspaper, and he had willingly offered to publish any interesting facts about their work. The connection of the Society with British India through Sinnett was an important one in several ways, not least because of Sinnett's interest in the Theosophical Masters, which led to his correspondence with them, resulting first in his books *The Occult World* (1881) and *Esoteric Buddhism* (1883), as well much later in a central work of Theosophy: *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett from the Mahatmas M. and K.H* (1923).

Finding their postal correspondence becoming too heavy, Blavatsky and Olcott founded *The Theosophist* magazine, the first issue of which appeared on 1 October 1879. In November of 1879, a meeting was held to celebrate the Society's fourth anniversary, at which three hundred guests were present. During that same year Blavatsky began to outline a book that was advertised as "*The Secret Doctrine*, a new version of *Isis Unveiled*." Work on that new volume, however, was not to proceed until considerably later, and its publication did not occur until 1888.