

The Community of Reincarnated Souls FOR WHICH LYMAN J. GAGE has abandoned the world of FINANCE



LYMAN J. GAGE, Ex-Secretary of the Treasury Under President McKinley, Ex-President of the First National Bank of Chicago, and, Since His Retirement From the Cabinet, Head of the United States Trust Company of New York.

"Loma Land," the Idyllic Home of the Theosophists in Southern California, Where Katherine A. Tingley, High Priestess of Her Cult, Rules Over an Almost Terrestrial Paradise With Czar-like Authority.

ON THE level of a raised promontory which overlooks the Pacific from the southeast, a recently erected building which, from the nature of the uses to which it is to be devoted, should excite the concern and the curiosity of the world. It is dedicated to facilitate inquiries which aim at a revival of the lost mysteries of antiquities, and the individuals who are thus operating comprise the Theosophical societies of all the nations. Sleeping upon the south, upon which is the site of this college, lies the iridescent bay of San Diego, and in the offing the ocean floor breaks upon the sandy slopes of Mexico. Behind, San Diego, Coronado and National City are spread, and away to the east vertebrae of mountains line the horizon, and, northward bounding, are lost in the purple haze. It is a scenery and a place which the high conviction of Mahatmas, with the whole of the earth under the survey of the clairvoyant eye, might have unanimously selected as the theater of their most important work, and, indeed, Mrs. Katherine A. Tingley, high priestess of the faith, confessed, in an aerial survey of the site, perceived prior to the transportation thither of her physical incubus.

subject for all shades of conjecture. In the meantime, it stands as an interesting experiment.

Bertha Damaris Knobe, to whom credit for a number of facts in this story of Loma Land is due, paid a

Dubbed a "Spookery."

Thus, nine years ago, wrote Joan E. Bennett in the National Magazine. And for this community, whose foundation he describes, Lyman J. Gage, ex-Secretary of the Treasury and ex-head of two of the largest banking institutions in the country, has just deserted the world of finance and politics to lead the simple life in "Loma Land." This community in Southern California has been described as a retreat for metaphysical speculation, and dubbed a "spookery" contemptuous allusion to the so-called "psychic phenomena" which attached to Madame Blavatsky, the late high priestess of the Theosophic cult, but, as a matter of fact, the branch of the faith of which Mrs. Tingley is the head, expressly repudiates all these things. Believing that Theosophy has passed the speculative stage, and not espousing spiritualism, it is her avowed purpose to develop a social, educational and religious scheme deducible to a single statement.

A Terrestrial Paradise

Mrs. Tingley is working out her peculiar project on no mean scale. The solitary structure of six years ago is now grown to an imposing array of buildings, with many more planned on paper. There are several hundred residents—as many as the colony can accommodate at present—including many cultured men and women, and, of course, some mediocrities. The more numerous contribute, in addition to the labor of love, partly rolls of greenbacks in support of the institution. Not a salaried person abides on the place. Mrs. Tingley wields autocratic power over the Point Loma colony, and over her followers throughout the world, who are said to number more than 100,000. In every detail of community life, from changing the milk bottle of the newest baby to laying the last shingle on a bungalow, her desire equals a czar's edict. Even over the advisory cabinet of business men she is supreme in authority, being also empowered to appoint her successor. She has the unquestioning devotion, even the adoration, of her apostles. Of course, such subservience of individuality is not likely to appeal to the independent spinal column of the masses of Americans; and whether personal devotion to the idea will survive the passing of Mrs. Tingley is a

The Opal-Domed Homestead and Amethyst-Tipped Aryan Temple, Where the Faithful Abide and the Raja Yoga School Is Conducted.

visit some time since to the California colony of Theosophists in the interest of Munsey's Magazine.

"Physically, at least," she says, "Point Loma is certainly a terrestrial paradise."

"A visitor reaches the place from San Diego. The road skirts a bay curving to the west; then, on climbing upward and finally emerging from a canyon, a striking panorama bursts in the sight. Crowning the promontory are two buildings that suggest the architecture of our dream pictures of the White City. The larger, surmounted by a great dome of opalescent green, is the Homestead—a hostelry with ninety rooms, the chief abode of the faithful. The other, capped with amethyst, is the Aryan Temple, dedicated to those patron saints of Theosophy, Madame Blavatsky and William Q. Judge, and used for the Raja Yoga school.

"Through the Egyptian gateway—guarded by a United States Senator's brother, who sounds the approach on a bugle—one drives to the eminence. An enchanted pause; a full breath of this poppy-scented, champagne-like ozone of southern California, and the eye sweeps the domain of 500 acres that a sovereign might envy. Fertile fields flanked by the palm and eucalyptus are dotted with auxiliary settlements devoted to the silk worm industry, chicken-raising, vegetable gardens, and a convalescent camp. From the west the blue Pacific rolls in peacefully, breaking into white fountains of foam on the rock-ribbed shore; eastward lies the opalescent bay, the rival of Naples, with the continental-like city of San Diego, backed by the snow-crowned Sierra Madre mountains. The stately sentinel on the tip of Point Loma is the Government lighthouse. One of these days a wide boulevard, curving from San Diego to the lighthouse, will make the place more accessible."

Excited Modjeska's Admiration.

Probably the most interesting feature of Loma Land life is the Raja Yoga school. Its curriculum is unusual, consisting largely of music, the drama, art, and athletics, but also including many other things from carpentry to esoteric philosophy. "A second Baireuth" exclaimed Madame Modjeska joyfully, upon seeing three-year-olds

common with gastronomic reformers, who think people are usually overfed. Mrs. Tingley offers a limited menu of nuts, cereals, fruits, and vegetables, alike for adults and children, which the metropolitan epicure would consider next door to starvation.

The Cuban "Lotus Buds."

The life of the older "students," as the Point Loma colonists are styled, is one round of "something doing every minute," from athletic exercise in the early sunshine to the 9 o'clock chimes at night. Each woman, in addition to her regular work, is required to learn the cooking art under the chief of the vegetarian cuisine. Some students abide at the Homestead, others in Japanese-like bungalows which, by cleverly devised screens, may be converted into one large room in the daytime, are separated into compartments at night.

Only twice has Mrs. Tingley appealed to the public for money. During the Spanish-American war she sought

funds for relief work carried on among sick soldiers under the auspices of the Universal Brotherhood League. After the war, with the official approval of President McKinley, she headed a relief expedition to Cuba. Thus she became interested in Cuban children, a number of whom she is educating. Some difficulty was created for Mrs. Tingley at the time she first arranged to introduce these Cuban tots among the number of "lotus buds," as the tots of Loma Land are called. At the request of the Secretary of the Treasury, Commissioner General of Immigration Frank Sargent, by courtesy of whom the accompanying photographs are reproduced, made a special visit to Point Loma, and forwarded a report to Washington which did much to discredit the many absurd rumors against Mrs. Tingley's domain.

It is only natural that the peculiarities of the colony should have given rise to all sorts of theories. Imaginative writers have told, with much wealth of detail, how Mrs. Tingley claims miraculous powers; how she

the year 1885, and after vainly endeavoring to teach the Spiritualists the science of their phenomena she organized with Col. H. S. Olcott, William Q. Judge, and a dozen others, the first Theosophical society of America. In 1891 Mrs. Blavatsky died, but the work of propaganda had in the prior fifteen years become so broadly advanced that her decease not only did not check the spread of the revived faith but excited interest in it which did much to accelerate its progress. Later years occurred a schism within its ranks and Mr. Olcott and Mrs. Annie Besant headed the divergent column. In 1896 there was organized in Boston what was called a "crusade around the world"—a company to travel abroad and organize societies. Those who made this trip were Mrs. Tingley, Mr. Hazrovo, Claude F. Wright and wife, H. T. Patterson, Rev. W. Williams, Mrs. Alice L. Cleather, and Frank M. Pierce. The expenses of the tour aggregated \$50,000 and were borne by Theosophists of the United States.

Seventeen societies were established in foreign parts as a result of this effort. The last and most important settlement made was that of Loma Land, which has just come into the limelight through the acquisition of Lyman J. Gage, theosophy's most interesting neophyte in these United States.

actually require, Mr. Gage took a deep interest in that cult. This interest has grown since Mrs. Gage's death.

Even so far back as 1892, when he was one of the great directing forces of the World's Fair in Chicago, Mr. Gage gave much thought to theosophy. In a personal talk he said at that time that he believed theosophy explained many things that all other religions and even science left in darkness.

He spoke of Mrs. Blavatsky, and while he refused to give her his personal indorsement or confidence, he declared his belief that she was endowed with remarkable powers. From the mysterious abilities he acknowledged in the then foremost theosophist of the West he argued the truth of his beliefs.

Foresaw Death in a Dream

Mr. Gage has always led a most simple and frugal life. His work has always engaged practically his whole time, and he never mingled in social gayeties nor was inclined to those functions at which statesmanship is mixed with feasting and jollification.

In the opinion of Chicago students of things esoteric Mr. Gage is a born psychic. He has more than once received "flashes," more or less distinct, of things that were going to happen to him. It is said that in 1895, while still president of the First National Bank, Mr. Gage, shad, cold man of money, received a flash of inner vision, which changed his life. It was while he was at a banquet at the Auditorium Hotel that the vision came. He saw a scene in a far country in which his brother, a Western mine owner, was the principal figure. He received a distinct impression that his brother was holding a gun and that weapon exploded. He saw his brother lying dead in a lonely country road.

The picture was so vivid that he was disturbed by it, and when a few hours later he received word that his brother had been killed in the same manner as had appeared to him in the dream, he was so impressed that he began to study the theories underlying theosophy.

At that time Thomas Hudson was the great psychic in Chicago. He had written books on the subject and taught the cult in rooms at Thirty-ninth street and Ellis avenue. Mr. Hudson left for the East a few years later and died recently. It was under this man that the banker took up the study.

One of Mr. Gage's first esoteric interests was spiritualism. An intimate friend of the banker told of the delight with which Mr. Gage followed this study before the more modern cult of theosophy was known to the world at large. It was rumored among his friends ten years ago that spiritualism was occupying a great deal of his attention, and attempts were made to dissuade him from it.

It is four years since the Point Loma theosophist colony and its ruler, Katherine Tingley, purple mother of the Universal Brotherhood, has been so conspicuously in the limelight as it is today. Four years ago Mrs. Tingley got all the notoriety and publicity even she could desire in New York when the immigration officials at Ellis Island ordered the deportation of eleven Cuban children, imperious for enrollment in the Raja Yoga school at Point Loma, on the ground that the school was not a fit place for them.

But Mrs. Tingley went out by a personal appeal to Secretary Shaw, who sent Commissioner Sargent out to investigate. His report was to the effect that the school was doing the magnificent work that Gage claims for it, and that the settlement at Point Loma was as near to paradise as any place on earth well could be.

Delighted in Spiritualism

From Baseball to Theosophy

Previous to the conversion of Mr. Gage, A. G. Spalding, the millionaire sporting goods manufacturer, was the star adherent of the cause. He has been a member of the colony for six years. He once pitched Boston and later Chicago into eight National League championships. "Cap" Anson was his particular friend, as both made their professional debut in the same team, the Forest City, of Rockford, Ill.

One of the witnesses described the reception given to Mr. Spalding when he arrived at Point Loma with his bride. All the inmates, children included, assembled near the Spalding residence, rendered Greek songs and tripped through Homeric dances, and other fancy steps, all of which in the dark night was picturesque.

It is, however, a superb tract of land that the theosophists own—1,600 acres, adorned with magnificent buildings. The total value of the tract and the buildings is estimated at \$2,500,000. The theosophists are possessed of other property worth close to \$3,000,000.

The school at Point Loma was built by money raised by Mrs. Tingley's followers all over the country. Mrs. Tingley is the undisputed ruler of the entire institution. After the Chicago convention of 1898, where she was proclaimed the supreme head of the organization for life, with the power to name her successor, a large number of persons who had accepted her as the successor of Judge, denounced her and left the organization. C. A. Griscom, Jr., who had selected the site of the school at Point Loma, and a host of others prominent in the theosophical society, advised Mrs. Tingley's organization and never went back to it. This left her with a free hand and she ruled with a rod of iron.

According to Mrs. Tingley's own theory this is not by any means her first time on earth. Back in 1290 B. C. she and Mrs. Blavatsky were making a pastoral sojourn in Egypt. She reappeared several times in various parts of the Old World, always making the acquaintance of noted adepts.

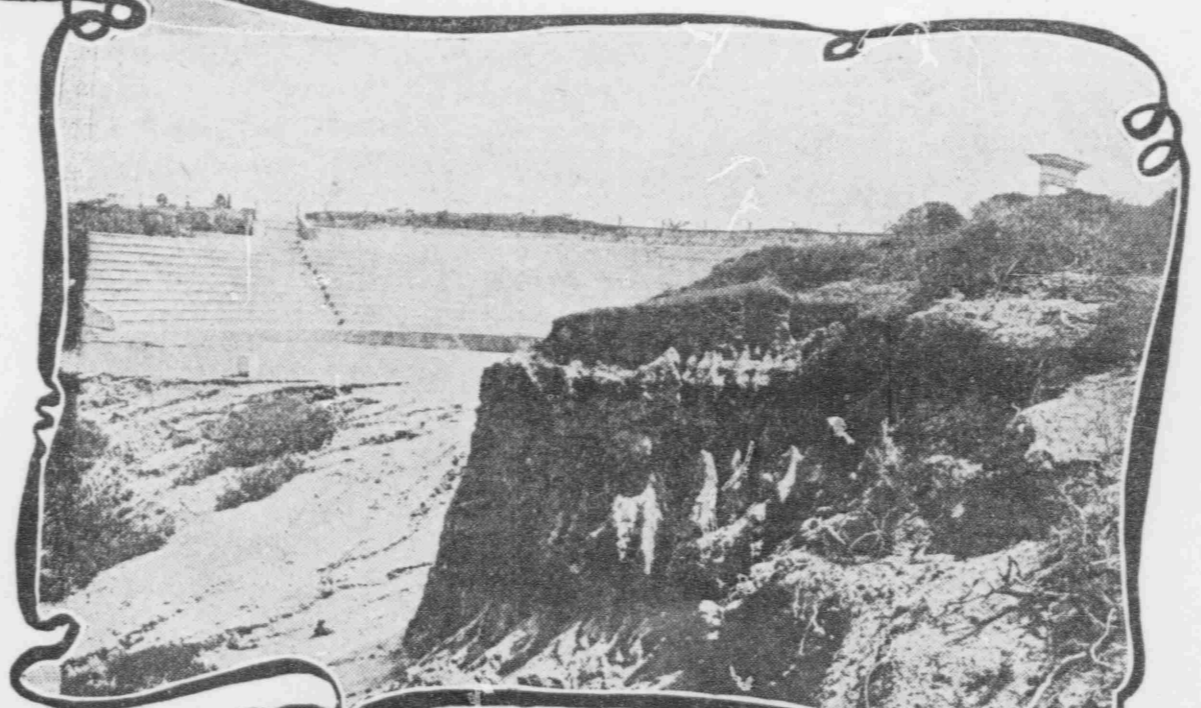


A Group of the "Lotus Buds" Playing in a Field of December Poppies in Loma Land.

sits on a purple plush throne surrounded by "students" who make her spine-breaking salaams; or how she believes that her pet dog, Spot, is the reincarnation of a departed worthy who was her husband in a previous existence. Some more rattlecoated inventions, not long since, were the cause of a libel suit against a California newspaper, in which Mrs. Tingley was successful.

Met Dreamland Friend.

The body of thought pursued in Loma Land is that introduced into the United States in 1875 by Madame Helen P. Blavatsky, a Russian lady born in 1831. Opinions differ regarding the truth of Madame Blavatsky's



The Amphitheater, Where Out-of-Door Dramatic Entertainments Are Given by the "Students."

claims and the estimation placed upon her character. Some maintain that she was a being of sincerest soul, of the most pious probity; while others assert that her long sojourn in India equipped an inherently de-ceptive nature to idealize the feminine phase of the noua fakir. It is related that she was one day walking in London with her father when she met a Hindu with whom she was familiar through having frequently conversed with him in her dreams, but she had never before met him in the flesh. She essayed to recognize him, but he waved her a sign indicating that it was best not to confer at that time. At a subsequent meeting he advised her to repair to Tibet and study the wisdom of the ancients; that she had been selected to become a great leader in religious thought. This, we are told, was an adept, or Mahatma, a man having under control all those strange powers resident in the human soul, the knowledge and conscious functioning of which constitute the profundity of the "Greater Mysteries" which are being explored and taught in the Point Loma College.

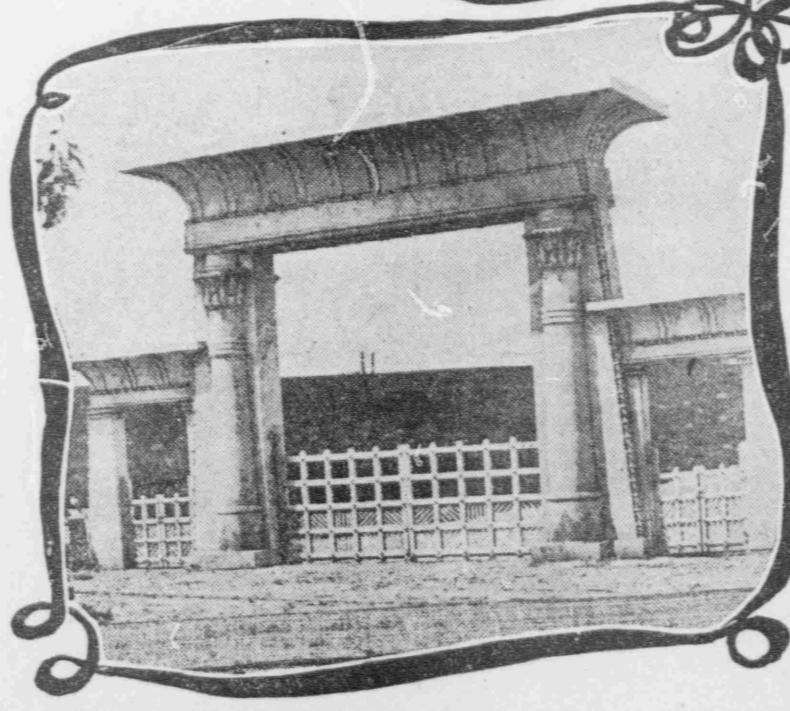
Charged with this science, Madame Blavatsky appeared in New York in

it at the same figure that Mr. Gage paid for it.

It appears, however, that Mr. Gage is not likely to want to sell. He has built a cottage and proposes to make his own home there as well as his grandchildren's. It is said that he will spend his fortune and the remainder of his days spreading the doctrines of theosophy, chief among them being the successive reincarnations of the soul and its continuing responsibility for its deeds in previous incarnations.

It is said that the ex-secretary's son, Eli Gads, of Chicago; his daughter, Mrs. Brainerd, of Denver, and Mrs. E. B. Miller, a niece, are the persons who influenced Mr. Gage to join the cult whose avowed objects are "to form the nucleus of a universal brotherhood of humanity without any distinctions whatever, and to promote the study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences; to investigate the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers of man."

People who know Mr. Gage best say that he has long been headed in that direction. Even before the death of his wife, which occurred while he was Secretary of the Treasury, during the



The Oriental Architecture That Governs the Buildings in Loma Land Is Reflected in This Gateway to the California Home of the Theosophists.