



THE ORGANIZATION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

BY H. P. BLAVATSKY

[The bracketed statement immediately following this was lost for many years, but later restored from a typed copy found at Adyar and included in the August 1931 reprinting of the article in the *Theosophist*.

Here, in this 1886 article, HPB rises to the strong defense of Col. Olcott despite the sordid choices of a recent past: his open refusal to take the Coulombs to Court, and the consequent debacle which ended in her being rushed out of India. It exemplifies the attitude of a true Occultist to Karmic Law and Justice.]¹

[In order to leave no room for equivocation, the members of the T.S. have to be reminded of the origin of the Society in 1875. Sent to the U.S. of America in 1873 for the purpose of organizing a group of workers on a psychic plane, two years later the writer received orders from her Master and Teacher to form the nucleus of a regular Society whose objects were broadly stated as follows:

- (1) Universal Brotherhood;
- (2) No distinction to be made by the members between] * races, creeds, or social positions, but every member had to be judged and dealt by on his personal merits;
- (3) To study the philosophies of the East — those of India chiefly, presenting them gradually to the public in various works that would interpret exoteric religions in the light of esoteric teachings;
- (4) To oppose materialism and theological dogmatism in every possible way, by demonstrating the existence of occult forces unknown to Sci-

ence, in Nature, and the presence of psychic and spiritual powers in Man; trying, at the same time, to enlarge the views of the Spiritualists by showing them that there are other, many other agencies at work in the production of phenomena besides the "Spirits" of the dead. Superstition had to be exposed and avoided; and occult forces, *beneficent and maleficent*- ever surrounding us and manifesting their presence in various ways — demonstrated to the best of our ability.

Such was the programme in its broad features. The two chief Founders were not told what they had to do, how they had to bring about and quicken the growth of the Society and results desired; nor had they any definite ideas given them concerning the outward organisation — all this being left entirely with themselves. Thus, as the undersigned had no capacity for such work as the mechanical formation and administration of a Society, the management of the latter was left in the hands of Col. H. S. Olcott, then and there elected by the primitive founders and

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members — *President for life*. But if the two Founders were not told *what they had to do, they were distinctly instructed about what they should never do, what they had to avoid, and what the Society should never become. Church organisations, Christian and Spiritual sects were shown as the future contrasts to our Society.*¹

To make it clearer:

(1) The Founders had to exercise all their influence to *oppose selfishness of any kind*, by insisting upon sincere, fraternal feelings among the Members — at least outwardly; working for it to bring about a spirit of unity and harmony, the great diversity of creeds notwithstanding; expecting and demanding from the Fellows, a great mutual toleration and charity for each other's shortcomings; mutual help in the research of truths in every domain — moral or physical — and even in daily life.

(2) They had to oppose in the strongest manner anything approaching *dogmatic faith and fanaticism* — belief in the *infallibility* of the Masters, or even in the very existence of our invisible Teachers, having to be checked from the first. On the other hand, as a great respect for the private views and creeds of every member was demanded, any Fellow criticising the faith or belief of another Fellow, hurting his feelings, or showing a reprehensible self-assertion, unasked (mutual friendly advices were a duty unless declined) — such a member incurred expulsion. The greatest spirit of free research untrammelled by anyone or anything, had to be encouraged.

Thus, for the first year the Members of the T. Body, who representing every class in Society as every creed and belief — Christian clergymen, Spiritualists, Freethinkers, Mystics, Masons and Materialists — lived and met under these rules in peace and friendship. There were two or three expulsions for *slander and backbiting*. The rules, however imperfect in their tentative character, were strictly enforced and respected by the members. The original \$5 initiation fee was soon abolished as *inconsistent with the spirit of the Association*: members had enthusiastically promised to support the Parent Society and defray the *expenses of machines for experiments, books*, the fees of the *Recording Secretary*,² etc., etc. This was *Reform No. 1*. Three months after, Mr. H. Newton, the Treasurer, a rich gentleman of New York, showed that no

one had paid anything or helped him to defray the current expenses for the Hall of meetings, stationery, printing, etc., and that he had to carry the burden of those expenses *alone*. He went on for a short time longer, then — *he resigned as Treasurer*. It was the President-Founder, Col. H. S. Olcott, who had to pay henceforth for all. He did so for over 18 months. The "fee" was re-established, before the Founders left for India with the two English delegates — now their mortal enemies; but the money collected was for the Arya Samaj of Aryavarta with which Society the Theosophical became affiliated. It is the President Founder who paid the enormous travelling expenses from America to India, and those of installation in Bombay, and who supported the two delegates out of his own pocket for nearly 18 months. When he had no more money left, nor the Corr. Secretary either — a resolution was passed that the "initiation fee" sums should go towards supporting the Head Quarters.

Owing to the rapid increase of the Society in India, the present *Rules and Statutes* grew out. They are not the outcome of the deliberate thought and whim of the President Founder, but the result of the yearly meetings of the General Council at the Anniversaries. If the members of that G. C. have framed them so as to give a wider authority to the Pres. Founder, it was the result of their absolute confidence in him, in his devotion and love for the Society, and not at all — *as implied* in "A Few Words" — a proof of *his love for power and authority*. Of this, however, later on.

It was never denied that the Organisation of the T.S. was *very imperfect*. *Errare humanum est*. But, if it can be shown that the President has done what he could under the circumstances and in the best way he knew how — no one, least of all a theosophist, can charge him with the sins of the whole community, as now done. From the founders down to the humblest member, the Society is composed of imperfect mortal men — not gods. This was always claimed by its leaders. "He who feels *without sin*, let him cast the first stone." It is the duty of every Member of the Council to offer advice and to bring for the consideration of the whole body any incorrect proceedings. One of the *plaintiffs* is a Councilor. Having never used his privileges as one, in the matter of the complaints now proffered — and thus, having no excuse to give that his just representations were not listened to, he, by

bringing out publicly what he had to state first privately — sins against Rule XII. The whole paper now reads like a defamatory aspersion, being full of untheosophical and unbrotherly insinuations — which the writers thereof could never have had in view.

This Rule XIIth was one of the first and the wisest. It is by neglecting to have it enforced when most needed, that the President-Founder has brought upon himself the present penalty.³ It is his too great indulgence and unwise carelessness that have led to all such charges of abuse of power, love of authority, show, of vanity, etc., etc. Let us see how far it may have been deserved.

As shown for 12 years the Founder has toiled *almost alone* in the interests of the Society and the general good — hence, not his own, and, the only complaint he was heard to utter was, that *he was left no time for self-development and study*. The results of this too just complaint are, that those for whom he toiled, are the first to fling at him the reproach of being ignorant of certain Hindu terms, of using one term for another, for instance, of having applied the word "Jivanmukta" to a Hindu chela, on one occasion! The crime is a terrible one, indeed. . . . We know of "chelas" who being Hindus, are sure never to confuse such well known terms in *their* religion; but who, on the other hand, pursue Jivanmuk-taship and the highest Theosophical Ethics through the royal road of selfish ambition, lies, slander, ingratitude and backbiting. Every road leads to Rome; this is evident; and there is such a thing in Nature as "*Mahatma*"-*Dugpas*. . . . It would be desirable for the cause of Theosophy and truth, however, were all the critics of our President in general, less learned, yet found reaching more to the level of his all-forgiving good nature, his thorough sincerity and unselfishness; as the rest of the members less inclined to lend a willing ear to those, who, like the said "Vicars of Bray" have developed a hatred for the Founders — for reasons unknown.

The above advice is offered to the two Theosophists who have just framed their "Few Words on the Theosophical Organisation."¹ That they are not alone in their complaints (which, trans-

lated from their diplomatic into plain language look a good deal in the present case like a mere "*querelle*⁴ *d'Allemand*") and that the said complaints are in a great measure just, — is frankly admitted. Hence, the writer must be permitted to speak in this, her answer, of Theosophy and theosophists in general, instead of limiting the *Reply* strictly to the complaints uttered. There is not the slightest desire to be personal; yet, there has accumulated of late such a mass of incandescent material in the Society, by that eternal friction of precisely such "selfish personalities," that it is certainly wise to try to smother the sparks in time, by pointing out their true nature.

Demands, and a feeling of necessity for reforms have not originated with the two complainants. They date from several years, and there has never been a question of *avoiding* reforms, but rather a failure of finding such means as would satisfy *all* the theosophists. To the present day, we have yet to find that "wise man" from the East or from the West, who could not only *diagnosicate* the disease in the T. Society, but offer advice and a remedy likewise to cure it. It is easy to write: "It would be out of place to suggest any *specific measures*" (for such reforms, which do seem more difficult to *suggest* than to be vaguely hinted at) — "for no one who has any faith in Brotherhood and in the power of Truth will fail to perceive what is necessary," — concludes the critic. One may, perhaps, have such faith and yet fail to perceive what is *most* necessary. Two heads are better than one; and if any practical reforms have suggested themselves to our severe judges their refusal to give us the benefit of their discovery would be most *unbrotherly*. So far, however, we have received only most impracticable suggestions for reforms whenever these came to be specified. The Founders, and the whole Central Society at the Headquarters, for instance, are invited to demonstrate their theosophical natures by living like "fowls in the air and lilies of the field," which neither sow nor reap, toil not, nor spin and "take no thought for the morrow." This being found hardly practicable, even in India, where a man may go about in the garment of an Angel, but has, nevertheless, to pay rent and taxes, another proposition, then a third one and a fourth — each less practicable than the preceding — were offered . . . the unavoidable rejection of which led finally to the criticism now under review.

After carefully reading "A Few Words, etc.," no very acute intellect is needed to perceive that,

¹ Mohini Chaterjii and Arthur Gebhard had issued a pamphlet of the above title. They were disaffected, especially with Col. Olcott. — Ed., *a.t.*

although no "specific measures" are offered in them, the drift of the whole argument tends but to one conclusion, a kind of syllogism more Hindu than metaphysical. Epitomised, the remarks therein plainly say: "Destroy the bad *results* pointed out by destroying the *causes* that generate them." Such is the apocalyptic meaning of the paper, although both causes and results are made painfully and flagrantly objective and that they may be rendered in this wise: Being shown that the Society is the result and fruition of a bad President; and the latter being the outcome of such an "untheosophically" organized Society — and, its *worse than useless* General Council — "make away with all these *Causes* and the results will disappear"; *i.e.*, the Society will have ceased to exist. Is this the heart-desire of the two *true* and *sincere* Theosophists?

The complaints — "submitted to *those interested in the progress of true Theosophy*" — which seems to mean "theosophy *divorced from the Society*" — may now be noticed in order and answered. They specify the following objections:

I. To the language of the *Rules* with regard to the powers invested in the President-Founder by the General Council. This objection seems very right. The sentence . . . The duties of the Council "shall consist in *advising* the P.F. *in regard to all matters referred to them by him*" may be easily construed as implying that on all matters *not* referred to the Council by the Pres.-Founder . . . its members will hold their tongues. The *Rules* are changed, at any rate they are corrected and altered yearly. This sentence can be taken out. The harm, so far, is not so terrible.

II. It is shown that many members *ex-officio* whose names are found on the list of the General Council *are not known* to the Convention; that they are, very likely, not even interested in the Society "under their special care"; a body they had joined at one time, then probably *forgotten* its existence in the meanwhile to withdraw themselves from the Association. The argument implied is very valid. Why not point it out *officially* to the Members residing at, or visiting the Head Quarters, the impropriety of such a parading of names? Yet, in what respect can this administrative blunder, or carelessness, interfere with, or *impede* "the progress of *true* Theosophy."⁵

III. "The members are appointed by the President-Founder. . . ." it is complained; "the Gen. Council only *advises* on what is submitted to it" . . . and "in the meantime" that P.F. is empowered to *issue "special orders"* and "provisional rules," on behalf of that ("dummy") Council. (Rule IV, p. 20.) Moreover, it is urged that out of a number of 150 members of the G. Council, a quorum of 5 and even 3 members present, may, should it be found necessary *by the President*, decide upon any question of vital importance, etc., etc., etc.

Such an "untheosophical" *display* of authority, is objected to by Messrs. M. M. Chatterji and A. Gebhard on the ground that it leads the Society to *Caesarism*, to "tyranny" and "papal infallibility," etc., etc. However right the two complainants may be in *principle* it is impossible to fail seeing the absurd exaggerations of the epithets used; for, having just been accused on one page of "tyrannical authority," of "centralization of power" and a "papal institution" (p. 9) — on page 11, the President-Founder is shown "issuing *special orders*" from that "centre of Caesarism" — *which no one is bound to obey, unless he so wishes!* "It is well known" remarks the principal writer — "that not only individuals but even Branches have refused to pay this (annual) subscription . . . of . . . two shillings" (p. 11); without any bad effect for themselves, resulting out of it, as appears. Thus, it would seem it is not to a *non-existent* authority that objections should be made, but simply to a vain and useless *display* of power that no one cares for.

The policy of issuing "special orders" with such sorry results is indeed objectionable; only, *not on the ground of a tendency to Caesarism*, but simply because it becomes *highly ridiculous*. The undersigned for one, has many a time objected to it, moved however, more by a spirit of *worldly* pride and an *untheosophical* feeling of self-respect than anything like Yogi humility. It is admitted with regret that the world of scoffers and non-theosophists might, if they heard of it, find in it a capital matter for fun. But the real wonder is, how can certain *European* Theosophists, who have bravely defied the world to make them wince under any amount of ridicule, once they acted in accordance with the dictates of their conscience and duty — make a crime of what is at the worst a *harmless*, even if ridiculous, bit of vanity; a desire of giving importance — not to the Founder, but to his Society *for*

which he is ready to die any day. One kind of ridicule is worth another. The Western theosophist, who for certain magnetic reasons wears his hair long and shows otherwise eccentricity in his dress, will be spared no more than his President, with his "special orders." Only the latter, remaining as kindly disposed and brotherly to the "individual Theosophist and even a Branch" — that snub *him* and his "order," by refusing to pay what others do — shows himself *ten-fold more Theosophical and true to the principle of Brotherhood*, than the former, who traduces and denounces him in such uncharitable terms, instead of kindly warning him of the bad effect produced. Unfortunately, it is not those who speak the loudest of virtue and theosophy, who are the best exemplars of both. Few of them, if any, have tried to cast out the beam from their own eye, before they raised their voices against the mote in the eye of a brother. Furthermore, it seems to have become quite the theosophical rage in these days, to denounce vehemently, yet never to offer to help pulling out *any* such *motes*.

The Society is bitterly criticized for asking every well-to-do theosophist (the poor are exempt from it, from the first) to pay annually two shillings to help defraying the expenses at Headquarters. It is denounced as "untheosophical," "unbrotherly," and the "admission fee" of £1, is declared no better than "a sale of Brotherhood." In this our "Brotherhood" may be shown again on a far higher level than any other association past or present. The Theosophical Society has never shown the ambitious pretension to outshine in *theosophy* and *brotherliness*, the primitive Brotherhood of Jesus and his Apostles,⁶ and that "Organisation," besides *asking* and being occasionally refused, helped itself *without asking*, and as a matter of fact in a *real* community of Brothers. Nevertheless, such actions, that would seem highly untheosophical and prejudicial in our day of culture when nations alone are privileged to pocket each other's property and expect to be honoured for it — do not seem to have been an obstacle in the way of deification and sanctification of the said early "Brotherly" group. Our Society had never certainly any idea of rising superior to the *brotherliness* and *ethics* preached by Christ, but only to those of the *sham* Christianity of the Churches — as originally ordered to by our MASTERS. And if we do no worse than the Gospel Brotherhood did, and far better than any Church, which would

expel any member refusing too long to pay his Church rates, it is really hard to see why our "Organisation" should be ostracized by its own members. At any rate, the pens of the latter ought to show themselves less *acerb*, in these days of trouble when every one seems bent on finding fault with the Society, and few to help it, and that the President-Founder is alone to work and toil with a few devoted theosophists at Adyar to assist him.

IV. "There is no such institution in existence as the Parent Society" — we are told (pp. 2 and 3). "It has disappeared from the Rules and . . . has no *legal* existence" . . . The Society being unchartered, *it has not* — legally; but no more has any Theosophist a legal existence, for the matter of that. Is there one single member throughout the whole globe who would be recognised *by law* or before a Magistrate — *as a theosophist*? Why then do the gentlemen "complainants" call themselves "theosophists" if the latter qualification has no better legal standing than the said "Parent Society" of the Head Quarters itself? But the Parent-body *does* exist, and will, so long as the last man or woman of the primitive group of Theosophist *Founders* is alive. This — as a body; as for its moral characteristics, the Parent-Society means that small nucleus of theosophists who hold sacredly through storm and blows to the *original programme* of the T.S., as established under the direction and orders of those, whom they recognise — and will, to their last breath — as the real originators of the Movement, their *living*, Holy MASTERS AND TEACHERS.⁷

V. The complaints then, that the T.S. "has Laws without sanction," a "legislative body without legality," a "Parent Society without existence," and, worse than all — "a President *above all rules*" — are thus shown only *partially* correct. But even were they all absolutely true, it would be easy to abolish such rules with one stroke of the pen, or to modify them. But now comes the curious part of that severe *philippic* against the T.S. by our eloquent Demosthenes. After six pages (out of twelve) had been filled with the said charges, the writer admits on the 7th, — that they have been so modified! — "The above" we learn (rather late) "was written under *misapprehension* that the 'Rules' bearing date 1885 — were the latest. It has since been found that there is a later version of the Rules dated 1886 which *have modified the older rules on a great many points*." So much the better — Why recall,

in such case, mistakes in the past if these exist no longer? ut the accusers do not see it in this light. They are determined to act as a theosophical Nemesis; and in no way daunted by the discovery, they add that nevertheless "it is *necessary* to examine the earlier rules to ascertain *the underlying principle*, which rules through the present ones as well." This reminds of the fable of "the Wolf and the Lamb." But — you see — "the chief point is, that the Convention *has no power to make any rules*, as such a power is *opposed to the spirit of Theosophy*," . . . etc., etc.

Now this is the most extraordinary argument that could be made. At this rate no Brotherhood, no Association, no Society is possible. More than this; no theosophist, however holy his present life may be, would have the right to call himself one; for were it always found *necessary* to examine *his earlier life*, "to ascertain the *underlying principle*" which rules through the nature of the present man — ten to one, he would be found unfit to be called a theosophist! The experiment would hardly be found pleasant to the majority of those whom association with the T.S. has reformed; and of such there are a good many.

After such virulent and severe denunciations one might expect some good, friendly and theosophically *practical* advice. Not at all, and none is offered, since we have been already told (p. 9) that it would be "out of place to suggest any specific measures, as no one who has any faith in Brotherhood — and in the power of Truth *will fail* to perceive what is necessary." The President-Founder has *no faith* in either "Brotherhood," or "the power of Truth" — apparently. This is made evident by his having *failed* to perceive (a) that the Head Quarters — opened to *all* Theosophists of any race or social position, board and lodging free of charge the whole year round — was an *unbrotherly* Organisation; (b) that "the central office at Adyar for keeping records and concentrating information" with its European and Hindu inmates working *gratuitously* and some helping it with their own money whenever they have it — ought to be carried on, according to the method and principle of George Miller of Bristol, namely, the numerous households and staff of officers at Adyar headed by the Pres.-Founder ought to kneel every morning in prayer for their bread and milk, appealing for their meals to "miracle"; and that finally, and (c) all the good the Society is doing, is no good whatever but "a spiritual wrong," because it

presumes to call a *limited* line of good work — (theosophy) Divine Wisdom."

The undersigned is an ever patient theosophist, who has hitherto laboured under the impression that no amount of subtle scholasticism and tortured casuistry but would find like the Rosetta stone its Champollion — some day. The most acute among theosophists are now invited to make out in A Few Words" — what the writers or writer — is driving at — unless in plain and unvarnished language, it be — Down with the Theosophical Society, President-Founder and its Head-Quarters!" This is the only possible explanation of the twelve pages of denunciations to which a reply is now attempted. What can indeed be made out of the following jumble of contradictory statements:

(a) The President Founder having been shown throughout as a "tyrant," a "would *be* Caesar," "aiming at *papal* power" and a "Venetian Council of Three," and other words to that effect implied in almost every sentence of the paper under review, it is confessed in the same breath that the "London Lodge" of the Theosophical Society has *completely ignored* the *Rules* (of the Pope Caesar) published at Adyar! (p. 4) And yet, the "L.L. of the T.S." still lives and breathes and one has heard of no *anathema* pronounced against it, so far. . . .

(b) Rule XIV stating that the Society has "to deal *only* with scientific and philosophical subjects," hence, "it is quite *evident* {?} that the power and position claimed in the *Rules* for the P't Founder and the Gen. Council and Convention are opposed to the spirit of the declared Objects."

It might have been as well perhaps to quote the entire paragraph in which these words appear,⁸ once that hairs are split about the possibly faulty reaction of the *Rules*? Is it not self-evident, that the words brought forward "only with scientific and philosophical subjects" are inserted as a necessary caution to *true* theosophists, who by dealing with politics *within* any Branch Society might bring disgrace and ruin on the whole body — in India to begin with? Has the Society or has it not over 140 Societies scattered through four parts of the world to take care of? As in the case of "Mahatmas" and "Mahatmaship" — active work of the Theosophical Society is confused — willingly or otherwise, it is not for the writer to decide — with Theosophy. No need of

entering here upon the difference between the jar that contains a liquid and the nature of, or that liquid itself.

"Theosophy teaches *self-culture* . . . and not control," we are told. Theosophy teaches *mutual-culture* before self-culture to *begin* with Union is strength. It is by gathering many theosophists of the same way of thinking into one or more groups, and making them closely united by the same magnetic bond of fraternal unity and sympathy that the objects of *mutual* development and progress in Theosophical thought may be best achieved. "Self-culture" is for isolated *Hatha Yogis*, independent of any Society and having to avoid association with human beings; and this is a *triple distilled* SELFISHNESS. For real moral advancement — there "where two or three are gathered" in the name of the SPIRIT OF TRUTH — there that Spirit or Theosophy *will be in the midst of them*.

To say that theosophy has no need of a Society — a vehicle and centre thereof — is like affirming that the Wisdom of the Ages collected in thousands of volumes, at the British Museum has no need of either the edifice that contains it, nor the works in which it is found. Why not advise the British Gov't on its lack of discrimination and its *worldliness* in not destroying Museum and all its vehicles of Wisdom? Why spend such sums of money and pay so many officers to watch over its treasures, the more so, since many of its guardians may be quite out of keeping with, and opposed to the Spirit of that Wisdom? The Directors of such Museums may or may not be very perfect men, and some of their assistants may have never opened a philosophical work: yet, it is they who take care of the library and preserve it for future generations who are indirectly entitled to their thanks. How much more gratitude is due to those who like our self-sacrificing theosophists at Adyar, devote their lives to, and give their services gratuitously to the good of Humanity!

Diplomas, and Charters are objected to, and chiefly the "admission fee." The latter is a "taxation," and therefore "inconsistent with the principle of Brotherhood". . . . A "forced gift is *unbrotherly*," etc., etc. It would be curious to see where the T.S. would be led to, were the President-Founder to religiously follow the proffered advices. "Initiation" on admission, has been made away with already in Europe, and has *led to that* which will very soon become known; no

use mentioning it at present. Now the "Charters" and Diplomas would follow. Hence no document to show for any group, and no diploma to prove that one is affiliated to the Society. Hence also perfect liberty to any one to either call himself a theosophist, or deny he is one. The "admission fee"? Indeed, it has to be regarded as a terrible and *unbrotherly* "extortion," and a "forced gift," in the face of those thousands of Masonic Lodges, of Clubs, Associations, Societies, Leagues, and even the "Salvation Army." The former, extort yearly *fortunes* from their Members; the latter — throttle in the name of Jesus the masses and appealing to *voluntary* contributions make the converts pay, and pay in their turn every one of their "officers," none of whom will serve the "Army" for nothing.

Yet it would be well, perchance, were our members to follow the example of the Masons in their solidarity of thought and action and at least *outward* Union, notwithstanding that receiving a thousand times more from their members they give them in return still less than we do, whether spiritually or morally. This solitary single guinea expected from every new member is spent in less than one week, as was calculated, on postage and correspondence with theosophists. Or are we to understand that all correspondence with members — now left to "*self-culture*" — is also to cease and has to follow diplomas, Charters and the rest? Then, truly, the Head Quarters and Office had better be closed. A simple *Query* — however: Have the 1£ — the yearly contribution to the L.L. of the T.S., and the further sum of 2/6d. to the Oriental Group been abolished as "acts of unbrotherly extortion," and how long, if so, have they begun to be regarded as "a *sale* of Brotherhood"?

To continue: the charges wind up with the following remarks, so profound, that it requires a deeper head than ours to fathom all that underlies the words contained in them. "Is the T.S. a Brotherhood, or not?" queries the plaintiff — "If the former, is it possible to have any *centre of arbitrary power*?² To hold that there is necessity for such a centre is only a roundabout way of saying that no Brotherhood is possible,¹⁰ but in point of fact *that necessity itself is by no means* proved (!?). There have been no doubt Brotherhoods under high Masters. . . ." [there "have been" and *still are*. H.P.B.] "but in such cases the Masters were never elected for geographical or other considerations (?). The natu-

ral leader of men was always recognised by his embodying the spirit of Humanity. To institute comparisons would be little short of blasphemy. The greatest among men is always the readiest to serve and yet is unconscious of the service. Let us pause before finally tying the millstone of worldliness around the neck of Theosophy. Let us not forget that Theosophy does not grow in our midst *by force and control* but by *sunshine of brotherliness* and the *dew of self-oblivion*. If we do not believe in Brotherhood and Truth let us put ashes on our head and *weep in sack-cloth* and not rejoice in the purple of authority and in the festive garments of pride and worldliness. It is by far better that the name of Theosophy should never be heard, than that it should be used as the Motto of a *papal authority*." . . .

Who, upon reading this, and being ignorant that the above piece of rhetorical flowers of speech is directed against the luckless Pres't Founder — would not have in his "mind's eye" — an Alexander Borgia, a Caligula, or to say the least — General Booth in his latest metamorphosis! When, how, or by doing what, has our good-natured unselfish, ever kind President merited such a Ciceronian tirade? The state of things denounced exists now for almost twelve years, and our accuser knew of it and even took an active part in its organisation, Conventions, Councils, Rules, etc., etc., at Bombay, and at Adyar. This virulent *sortie* is no doubt due to "SELF-CULTURE"? The critic has outgrown the Movement and turned his face from the **original programme**;¹ hence his severity. But where is the *true theosophical charity*, the tolerance and the "*sunshine of brotherliness*" just spoken of, and so insisted upon?

Verily — it is easy to preach the "dew of self-oblivion" when one has nothing to think about except to evolve such finely rounded phrases; were every theosophist at Adyar to have his daily wants and even comforts, his board, lodging and all, attended to by a wealthier theosophist; and were the same "sunshine of brotherliness" to be poured upon him, as it is upon the critic who found for himself an endless brotherly care, a fraternal and self-sacrificing devotion in two other noble-minded members, then —

¹ Emphasis added. Here HPB points to the real problem. Mohini was the moving force and most likely the author of "A Few Words" with Arthur Gebhard under his influence. — ED., A. T.

would there be little need for the President Founder to call upon and humble himself before our theosophists. For, if he has to *beg* for 2 annual shillings — it is, in order that those — Europeans and Hindus — who work night and day at Adyar, giving their services free and receiving little thanks or honour for it, should have at least *one meal a day*. The fresh "dew of self-oblivion" must not be permitted to chill one's heart, and turn into the lethal *mold of forgetfulness* to such an extent as that. The severe critic seems to have lost sight of the fact that for months, during the last crisis, the whole staff of our devoted Adyar officers, from President down to the youngest brother in the office, have lived on 5d. a day each, having reduced their meals to the *minimum*. And it is *this mite*, the proceeds of the "2 shill. contribution," conscientiously paid by some, that is now called *extortion*, a desire to live "in the purple of authority and the festive garments of pride and worldliness"!

Our "Brother" is right. Let us "weep in sack cloth and ashes on our head" if the T.S. has many more such *unbrotherly* criticisms to bear. Truly "it would be far better that the name of Theosophy should never be heard than that it should be used as a motto" — not of *papal authority* which exists nowhere at Adyar outside the critic's imagination — but as a motto of a "self-developed fanaticism." All the great services otherwise rendered to the Society, all the noble work done by the complainant will pale and vanish before such an appearance of cold-heartedness. Surely he cannot desire the *annihilation* of the Society? And if he did it would be useless: the T.S. *cannot be destroyed as a body*. It is not in the power of either Founders or their critics; and neither friend nor enemy can ruin that which is *doomed to exist*, all the blunders of its leaders notwithstanding. That which was generated through and founded by the "High Masters" and under their authority if not their instruction — MUST AND WILL LIVE.² Each of us and all will receive his or her *Karma* in it, but the *vehicle* of Theosophy will stand inde-

² Once a cycle is born — whether it be "egg" or "human" or still grander, it is doomed to life out its cycle. One person's suggestion was that HPB's Master had keynoted or given it birth. More on this can be found in pages 444-45, Vol. II, of *The Secret Doctrine*. — ED., A. T.

structible and undestroyed by the hand of whether man or fiend.

No; "truth does not depend on show of hands"; but in the case of the much abused President-Founder it must depend on the show of *facts*. Thorny and full of pitfalls was the steep path he had to climb up alone and unaided for the first years. Terrible was the opposition outside the Society he had to build — sickening and disheartening the treachery he often encountered within the Head Quarters. Enemies gnashing their teeth in his face around, those whom he regarded as his staunchest friends and co-workers betraying him and the Cause on the slightest provocation. Still, where hundreds in his place would have collapsed and given up the whole undertaking in despair, he, unmoved and unmovable, went on climbing up and toiling as before, unrelenting and undismayed, supported by that one thought and conviction that he was doing his duty. What other inducement has the Founder ever had, but his theosophical pledge and the sense of his duty toward THOSE he had promised to serve to the end of his life? There was but one beacon for him — the hand that had first pointed to him his way up: the hand of the MASTER he loves and reveres so well, and serves so devotedly though occasionally, perhaps, unwisely. As President elected for life, he has nevertheless offered more than once to resign in favour of any one found worthier than him, but was never permitted to do so by the majority — not of "show of hands" but *show of hearts*, literally — as few are more beloved than he is even by most of those, who may criticize occasionally his actions. And this is only natural: for, cleverer in administrative capacities, more learned in philosophy, subtler in casuistry, in metaphysics or daily life policy, there may be many around him; but the whole globe may be searched through and through and no one found stauncher to his friends, truer to his word, or more devoted to real, practical theosophy — than the President-Founder; and these are the chief requisites in a leader of such a movement — one that aims to become a Brotherhood of men. The Society needs no Loyolas; it has to shun anything approaching casuistry; nor ought we to tolerate too subtle casuists. There, where every individual has to work out his own Karma, the judgment of a casuist who takes upon himself the duty of pronouncing upon the state of a brother's soul, or of guiding his conscience, is of no use, and may become positively injurious.

The Founder claims no more rights than every one else in the Society: **the right of private judgment**, which, whenever it is found to disagree with Branches or individuals is quietly set aside and *ignored* — *as shown by the complainants themselves*.

This, then, is the sole crime of the would-be culprit, and no worse than this can be laid at his door. And yet what is the reward of that kind man? He, who has never refused a service, outside what he considers his official duties — to any living being; he who has redeemed dozens of men, young and old, from dissipated, often immoral lives and saved others from terrible scrapes by giving them a safe refuge in the Society; he, who has placed others again, on the pinnacle of Saintship *through their status in that Society*, when otherwise they would have indeed found themselves now in the meshes of "worldliness" and perhaps worse; — he, that true friend of every theosophist, and verily "the readiest to serve and as unconscious of the service" — he is now taken to task for what? — for insignificant blunders, for useless "special orders," a *childish*, rather than untheosophical love of display, out of pure devotion to his Society.

Is, then, *human nature* to be viewed so uncharitably by us, as to call *untheosophical*, worldly and sinful the natural impulse of a mother to dress up her child and parade it to the best advantages? The comparison may be laughed at, but if it is, it will be only by him who would, like the fanatical Christian of old, or the naked, dishevelled Yogi of India — have no more charity for the smallest human weakness. Yet, the simile is quite correct, since the Society is the child, the beloved creation of the Founder; he may be well forgiven for this too exaggerated love for that for which he has suffered and toiled more than all other theosophists put together. He is called "worldly," "ambitious of power" and *untheosophical* for it. Very well; let then any impartial judge compare the life of the Founder with those of most of his critics, and see which was *the most theosophical*, ever since the Society sprang into existence. If no better results have been achieved, it is not the President who ought to be taken to task for it, but the Members themselves, as he has been ever trying to promote its growth, and the majority of the "Fellows" have either done nothing, or created obstacles in the way of its progress through sins of omission as of commission. Better unwise *activity*, than an overdose of too wise *inactivity*,

apathy or indifference which are always the death of an undertaking.

Nevertheless, it is the members who now seek to sit in Solomon's seat; and they tell us that the Society is useless, its President positively mischievous, and that the Head-Quarters ought to be done away with, as "the organisation called Theosophical *presents many feature seriously obstructive to the progress of Theosophy.*" Trees, however, have to be judged by their fruits. It was just shown that no "special orders" issuing from the "Centre of Power" called Adyar, could affect in any way whatever either Branch or individual; and therefore any theosophist bent on "self culture," "self-involution" or any kind of *selfness*, is at liberty to do so; and if, instead of using his rights he will apply his brain-power to criticize other people's actions then it is he who becomes the *obstructionist* and not at all the "Organisation called Theosophical." For, if theosophy is anywhere practised on this globe, it is at Adyar, at the Head-Quarters. Let "those interested in the progress of true theosophy" appealed to by the writers look around them and judge. See the Branch Societies and compare them with the group that works in that "Centre of Power." Admire the "progress of theosophy" at Paris, London and even America. Behold, in the great "Brotherhood," a true *Pandemonium* of which the Spirit of Strife and Hatred himself might be proud! Everywhere — quarreling, fighting for supremacy; backbiting, slandering, scandal-mongering for the last two years; a veritable battlefield, on which several members have so disgraced themselves and their Society by trying to disgrace others, that they have actually become more like hyenas than human beings by digging into the graves of the Past, in the hopes of bringing forward old forgotten slanders and scandals!

At Adyar alone, at the Head-Quarters of the Theosophical Society, the Theosophists are that which they ought to be everywhere else: *true theosophists* and not merely *philosophers* and *Sophists*. In that *centre* alone are now grouped together the few solitary, practically working Members, who labour and toil, quietly and uninterruptedly, while those Brothers for whose sake they are working, sit in the *dolce far niente* of the West and criticize them. Is this "true theosophical and brotherly work," to advise to put down and disestablish the only "centre" where real brotherly, humanitarian work is being accomplished?

"Theosophy first, and organisation after." Golden words, these. But where would Theosophy be heard of now, had not its Society been organised before its spirit and a desire for it had permeated the whole world? And would Vedanta and other Hindu philosophies have been ever taught and studied in England outside the walls of Oxford and Cambridge, had it not been for that organization that fished them like forgotten pearls out of the Ocean of Oblivion and Ignorance and brought them forward before the profane world? Nay, kind Brothers and critics, would the Hindu exponents of that sublime philosophy themselves have ever been known outside the walls of Calcutta, had not the Founders, obedient to the ORDERS received, forced the remarkable learning and philosophy of those exponents upon the recognition of the two most civilized and cultured centres of Europe — London and Paris?

Verily it is easier to *destroy* than to build. The words "untheosophical" and "unbrotherly" are ever ringing in our ears; yet, truly theosophical acts and words are not to be found in too unreasonable a super-abundance among those who use the reproof the oftener. However insignificant, and however *limited the line* of good deeds, the latter will have always more weight than empty and vainglorious talk, and will be *theosophy*, whereas theories without any practical realisation are at best philosophy. Theosophy is an all-embracing Science; many are the ways leading to it, as numerous in fact as its definitions, which began by the sublime, during the day of Ammonius Saccas, and ended by the ridiculous — in Webster's Dictionary. There is no reason why our critics should claim the right for themselves alone to *know* what is theosophy and to define it. There were theosophists and Theosophical Schools for the last 2,000 years, from Plato down to the mediæval Alchemists, who knew the value of the term, it may be supposed. Therefore, when we are told that "The question is not whether the T.S. *is doing good*, but whether it is doing *that kind of good which is entitled to the name of Theosophy*" — we turn round and ask: "And who is to be the judge in this mooted question?" We have heard of one of the greatest Theosophists who ever lived, who assured his audience that whosoever *gave a cup of cold water to a little one* in his [Theosophy's] name, would have a greater reward than all the learned Scribes and Pharisees. "Woe to the world because of offences!"

Belief in the Masters was never made an article of faith in the T.S. But for its Founders, the commands received from Them when it was established have ever been sacred. And this is what one of them wrote in a letter preserved to this day:

"Theosophy must not represent merely a collection of moral verities, a bundle of metaphysical Ethics epitomized in theoretical dissertations. Theosophy must be made practical, and has, therefore, to be disencumbered of useless discussion. . . . It has to find objective expression in an all-embracing code of life thoroughly impregnated with its spirit — the spirit of mutual tolerance, charity and love. Its followers have to set the example of a firmly outlined and as firmly applied morality before they get the right to point out, even in a spirit of kindness, the absence of a like ethic Unity and singleness of purpose in other associations and individuals. As said before — no Theosophist should blame a brother whether within or outside of the association, throw a slur upon his actions or denounce him¹ lest he should himself lose the right of being considered a theosophist. Ever turn away your gaze from the imperfections of your neighbor and centre rather your attention upon your own shortcomings in order to correct them and become wiser. . . . Show not the disparity between claim and action in another man but — whether he be brother or neighbour — rather help him in his arduous walk in life. . . .

"The problem of true theosophy and its great mission is the working out of clear, unequivocal conceptions of ethic ideas and duties which would satisfy most and best the altruistic and right feelings in us; and the modeling of these conceptions for their adaptation into such forms of daily life where they may be applied with most equitableness. . . . Such is the common work in view for all who are willing to act on these principles. It is a laborious task and will require strenuous and persevering exertion, but it must lead you insensibly to progress and leave no room for any selfish aspirations outside the limits traced. . . . Do not indulge in unbrotherly comparisons between the task accomplished by yourself and the work left undone by your neighbor or brother, in the field of Theosophy, as

none is held to weed out a larger plot of ground than his strength and capacity will permit him. . . . Do not be too severe on the merits or demerits of one who seeks admission among your ranks, as the truth about the actual state of the inner man can only be known to, and dealt with justly by KARMA alone. Even the simple presence amidst you of a well-intentioned and sympathizing individual may help you magnetically. . . . You are the Free-workers in the Domain of Truth, and as such, must leave no obstructions on the paths leading to it." . . . {The letter closes with the following lines which have now become quite plain, as they give the key to the whole situation} . . . "The degrees of success or failure are the landmark we shall have to follow as they will constitute the barriers placed with your own hands between yourselves and those whom you have asked to be your teachers. The nearer your approach to the goal contemplated — the shorter the distance between the student and the Master." . . .

A complete answer is thus found in the above lines to the paper framed by the two Theosophists. Those who are now inclined to repudiate the Hand that traced it and feel ready to turn their backs upon the whole Past and the original programme of the T.S. are at liberty to do so. The Theosophical body is neither a Church or a Sect and every individual opinion is entitled to a hearing. A Theosophist may progress and develop, and his views may outgrow those of the Founders, grow larger and broader in every direction, without for all that abandoning the fundamental soil upon which they were born and nurtured. It is only he who changes diametrically his opinions from one day to another and shifts his devotional views from white to black — who can be hardly trusted in his remarks and actions. But surely, this can never be the case of the two Theosophists who have now been answered. . . . Meanwhile, peace and fraternal good will to all.

H. P. BLAVATSKY
Corres. Sec'ty, T.S.
Ostende, Oct. 3rd, 1886
Theosophist, June, 1924

* ¹ These opening words enclosed in brackets were presumably on the first manuscript page by H.P.B.,

which was lost, but they were later restored from a typed copy at Adyar and included in the August 1931 reprinting of the article in the *Theosophist*. — Eds

¹ A liberal Christian member of the T.S. having objected to the study of Oriental religions and doubted whether there was room left for any new Society — a letter answering his objections and preference to Christianity was received and the contents copied for him; after which he denied no longer the advisability of such a Society as the professed Theosophical Association, A few extracts from this early letter will show plainly the nature of the Society as then contemplated, and that we have tried only to follow, and carry out in the best way we could the intentions of the true originators of the Society in those days. The pious gentleman having claimed that he was a *theosophist* and had a right of judgment over other people was told . . .

"You have no right to such a title. You are only a philo-theosophist; as one who has reached to the full comprehension of the *name and nature* of a theosophist will sit in judgment on no man or action. . . . You claim that your religion is the highest and final step toward divine Wisdom on this earth, and that it has introduced into the arteries of the old decaying world new blood and life and verities that had remained unknown to the heathen? If it were so indeed, then your religion would have introduced the highest truths into all the social, civil and international relations of Christendom. Instead of that, as any one can perceive, your social as your private life is not based upon a common moral solidarity but only on constant mutual counteraction and purely mechanical equilibrium of individual powers and interests. . . . If you would be a theosophist you must not do as those around you do who call on a God of Truth and Love and serve the dark Powers of Might, Greed and Luck. We look in the midst of your Christian civilisation and see the same sad signs of old: the realities of your daily lives are diametrically opposed to your religious ideal, but you feel it not; the thought that the very laws that govern your being whether in the domain of politics or social economy clash painfully with the origins of your religion — does not seem to trouble you in the least. But if the nations of the West are so fully convinced that the ideal can never become practical and the practical will never reach the ideal — then, you have to make your choice: either it is your religion that is impracticable, and in that case it is no better than a vain-glorious delusion, or it might find a practical application, but it is you, yourselves, who do not care to apply its ethics to your daily walk in life. . . . Hence, before you invite other nations 'to the King's festival table' from which your guests arise more starved than before, you should, ere you try to bring them to your own way of thinking, look into the repasts they offer to you. . . . Under the dominion and sway of exoteric creeds, the grotesque and tortured shadows of the theosophical realities, there must ever

be the same oppression of the weak and the poor and the same typhonic struggle of the wealthy and the mighty among themselves. . . . *It is esoteric philosophy alone*, the spiritual and psychic blending of man with Nature that, by revealing fundamental truths, can bring that much desired mediate state between the two extremes of human Egotism and divine Altruism and finally lead to the alleviation of human suffering. . . ."

² Mr. Cobb.

³ For years the wise rule by which any member accused of backbiting or slander was expelled from the Society after sufficient evidence — has become obsolete. There have been two or three solitary cases of expulsion for the same in cases of members of no importance. Europeans of position and name were allowed to cover the Society literally with mud and slander their Brothers with perfect impunity. This is the President's *Karma* — and it is just.

⁴ This may be a reference to the legal term, *querela*, for "bill of complaint"; Gebhard being in Germany, the "Allemand" is clear. — Eds THEOSOPHY.

⁵ Furthermore the writer of the complaints in "A Few Words, etc.," is himself a member on the General Council for over two years (see Rules 1885). Why has he not spoken earlier?

⁶ Yet, the Theosophical Brotherhood does seem doomed to outrival the group of Apostles in the number of its denying Peters. its unbelieving Thomases, and even Iscariots occasionally, ready to sell their Brotherhood for less than thirty *sheckels* of silver!

⁷ The members of the T.S. know, and those who do not should be told, that the term 'Mahatma,' now so subtly analysed and controverted, for some mysterious reasons had never been applied to our Masters before our arrival in India. For years they were known as the "Adept-Brothers," the "Masters," etc. It is the Hindus themselves who began applying the term to the two Teachers, This is no place for an etymological disquisition on the fitness or unfitness of the qualification, in the case in hand. As a *state Mahatmaship* is one thing, as a double noun, *Maha-atma* (Great Soul) quite another one. Hindus ought to know the value of metaphysical Sanskrit names used; and it is they the first, who have used it to designate the MASTERS.

⁸ XIV "The Society having to deal only with scientific and philosophical subjects, and having Branches in divergent parts of the world under various forms of Government, does not permit its members such, to interfere with politics, and repudiates any attempt on the part of any one to commit it in favor of or against any political party or measure. Violation of this rule will meet with expulsion."

This rather alters the complexion put on the charge, which seems to conveniently forget that "scientific and philosophical subjects" are not the only declared objects of the Society. Let us not leave room for a doubt that there is more animus underlying the charges than would be strictly theosophical.

⁹ It is the *first time* since the T.S. exists that such an accusation of "*arbitrary power*," is brought forward. Not many will be found of this way of thinking.

¹⁰ No need taking a *roundabout* way, to say that no Brotherhood would ever be possible if many theosophists shared the very original views of the writer.

¹¹ It is in consequence of this letter that Art. XII was adopted in *Rules* and a fear of lacking the charity prescribed, that led so often to neglect its enforcement.



WHAT IS CONFIDENCE IN MASTERS?

How few of the many pilgrims who have to start without chart or compass on the shoreless Ocean of Occultism reach the wished for land? Believe me, faithful friend, that nothing short of full confidence in us, in our good motives if not in our wisdom, in our foresight, if not omniscience—which is not to be found on this earth—can help one to cross over from one's land of dream and fiction to our Truth land, the region of stern reality and fact.

—A Mahatma's Letter

TRUST is the spiritual touch-stone. Lack of it, in the Line which we hold in our lives, spells dust and ashes to all apparently high endeavor. Confidence is the first requisite to success, anywhere and everywhere. Trust in the Law of our own imperishable natures, trust that justice does rule, certainty of our ability to learn, to grow, to perform, to find answers to all problems—these are the qualities for the lack of which students suffer and fall away, to join the swelling ranks of the "disillusioned," and to die a spiritual

death that is more hitter, and more truly "death than merely physical dying ever was or ever could be.

The curse of our age is suspicion. Those who distrust themselves are afraid to trust, anybody. Since the note of the times is the discord of materialism, the common ideal of superior living is to possess vast stores of material wealth. To have "plenty of money" is to be successful in life. Some theosophists feel the same way about it as anybody else, salving their concession to the race ideas with the excuse that then they could do so much for Theosophy. But the experience of human nature discloses the saddening fact that the more of this world's goods one has, the more precious become the possessions and the less able does the possessor seem to be to voluntarily part with them. Men are suspicious of one another, knowing full well in their own hearts what they would do to their neighbor's wealth if the opportunity presented itself. Conditions have actually reached a point where one cannot perform an altruistic service without rousing the certainty in the minds of many that an ulterior purpose is intended. If a Christ should walk the streets today, performing "miracles" and healing the afflicted he would be suspected of doing it for gain—or else it would be said, He is advertising something.

The student of Theosophy who would climb the wall of theory and uncertainty — make a breach in the frowning ramparts of book-knowledge — has not only to stand firmly against the roaring torrent of materialism. He has in fact to make progress against it. He has to do more than to believe in Altruism; he has to become altruistic. He has by herculean efforts, steadfastly persisted in — when body, mind and even Soul itself are so weary over the unequal combat that he would gladly perish in his tracks — to keep doggedly on, even though all his

world, himself included. — believes him to be a fool.

Confidence is the only hard-won quality that will avail under these conditions. This confidence is not to be come by as a result of belief or blind faith. It is the result of reasoned faith, developed by a study and understanding of philosophy, and a rigid adherence to ethical teachings as a mode of life. The Theosophical dilettante will never gain it. The student who has taken up Theosophy as a study," or to make himself or herself a better teacher, doctor, lawyer, artist, better at business, stronger intellectually — or for any of the thousand "side-issues" that the human mind attaches itself to — will never arrive at a position of trust, much less at conscious assurance His knowledge will be just so much "information and belief" to the end of his days, and no more. His confidence in himself will fail him, when power is needed and pretence shall go for nothing.

Conviction of the truth of primary Theosophical ideas is the first requisite for true self-confidence. This may be had first by intellectual study and its fruits — a logical and reasoned comprehension of philosophical rationale. Then follows a testing out of the basis provided. by observation and experience — in the affairs of the world and its inhabitants as the moving picture of events, men, things and methods presents itself to the mind's eye from day to day; and especially a watchfulness and honest analysis of the psychological process of the student himself.

The time will soon come when the student shall find he has checked up the truth of the Theosophical teaching, so far as he is able to confirm it at all, in these ways:

(a) by an intellectual and philosophical synthesis, based on a foundation of self-evident truths;

(b) by application of the teaching to the affairs of daily life, and most of all as one's own intimate, interior experience justifies the idea that psychology is an exact science and that Theosophy includes it;

(c) by realizing the fact that Truth always explains — that, given the complete explanation about anything, we have the Truth, unconflicting with any other Truth. This last is a realization not a form of words. It comes with a compelling force, as if shot or projected into the mind from somewhere outside, although it really comes from inside: Buddhi expresses itself in terms of conviction.

Intellectual appreciation of the necessity of the existence of Masters grows simultaneously in the meditator's *brain* and *heart*. If there is knowledge, there must be Knowers; knowledge does not exist in itself, but is the result of observation and experience; and there must be Beings who have made the observations and recorded the experience. This is as far as intellectual acuteness can take the student of Theosophy, in crossing over from "one's land of dream and fiction to our Truth land, the region of stern reality and fact." For heretofore the effort of nearly all has been towards the acquisition of knowledge for oneself, however much the student believes that his motive has been altruistic. The mind and reasoning powers are satisfied; a philosophy of life that really explains has been secured. Aside from exercise therein mentally, as a swimmer exercises his body healthfully in clear water, no further urge is felt — for an **essential quality has not been developed.**

What is the essential quality which drives a man in spite of himself to pursue that Path, the traveling of which brings "full confidence" in Masters? It is something so rare, yet so commonly named that incredulity is perhaps our first

mental reaction when the word is set down before our eyes: **Gratitude.**

But think about it: This emotion that one sometimes hears and even sees expressed by students of Theosophy when Masters are mentioned is not Gratitude. Neither can it be called intelligent. The same thing inundates the Christian prayer-meeting, the revival, the spiritualistic séance, the patriotic assemblage — wherever people congregate and are "deeply stirred." Occasionally, on Theosophical platforms, the "Masters," or the "Founders" have been spoken of so feelingly that both speaker and audience have thrilled with emotion — but that was not Gratitude.

Gratitude is not any one of the many phases of psychic emotion which go under other names; nor does it usually show itself in words, or expressions of so-called love. **Gratitude is the recognition that at a sacrifice, and without personal motives, something has been done for us** — a recognition so compelling that we can never rest until we, in our turn, on a similar basis, have passed on the divine service. **Gratitude is Buddhi in action, a universal quality, and thus spiritual.** It expresses itself in altruistic service: in work for and as Masters, who are the universal servants in Nature. Gratitude transmuted into effective action is calm, controlled, quiet — and powerful as cosmic electricity. Indeed, it is Fohat "stepped down" and applied to the work in hand; for Fohat is an intelligent force, we may remember, and forces do not exist of themselves.

Thus in those students in whom rational cognition of the necessity of the existence of Masters has been succeeded by gratitude, one sees the active workers for Theosophy, the Companions "all over the world . . . engaged in bringing it forth for wider currency and propagation." To the Western man or woman of the day the mental process expresses itself something

like this: "Somebody had to make the true writings available and keep them in print; somebody had to fit up the Lodge meeting rooms, advertise the work, keep it going — do the studying, speaking, helping, sick or well, in season and out of season; somebody had to find the money needed — and evidently has to keep everlastingly at it. By their sacrifice I found and have been helped to understand the philosophy. I feel compelled to do my part — which means all that I possibly can do — in any and every department of my Lodge activities; and that which presently am unable to do, I will set myself to learning with all my heart and energy." This, if carried out, is an exhibition of gratitude — *is* gratitude. This, too, is "**devotion**"; for like true gratitude, **devotion** is not an emotional affair at all. Nor does this student seek to develop special modes of service which are exclusively "his own, and thus contract an aggravated case of "**the itch for a following.**" He works in the channels provided, which he has seen in his own " case were pure and true — right there in the ranks with his fellows: he works for others, with others.

Confidence in himself arises in the student who thus felt gratitude and transmuted the feeling into action. Confidence in others inevitably follows, for he has constituted himself a worker in the ranks of others who feel and work as he feels and works, animated by the same noblesse oblige, determined as he is determined, intelligently happy as he is intelligently happy. The principles of his nature have impelled him to engage in this glorious, unsought fight, in which only fortune's favored soldiers may engage, so he is happy because he is "natural" in the highest and deepest sense.

As he proceeds, confidence begets confidence: in himself, in his fellows, in humanity, in all Nature. In his thought, Masters are beginning to emerge as *facts* and not merely ideals. They are "inside"

first, and then "outside," and then everywhere, on all sides, in every phase of his changing days and years. "Full confidence" in Them is a matter of growth, a growing realization, confirmed bit by bit through experience, in inner intimate and subtle ways — ways that would present no proof whatever to another; but the feeling that accompanies these veiled inner events does — it is unmistakable. It is clear, unsullied, indescribably convincing.

The student is actually "crossing over" from his land of dream and fiction to Their Truth land. At the same time he is gaining "full confidence" in Them. The processes are one — not two, not separate. They are merely aspects of the same old eternal process, mentioned in the ancient writings (another confirmation of its reality), and called in the present teachings, "building antaskarana." This is the meaning of the phrase. that the student has "to become that Path himself" For how could he "cross over" if there were no "bridge" or "Path"? How could he build it, save with his own materials, since the "Path is within"? How could he find and transmute the materials, save for the fact that as an evolving human being he is in touch through his own instruments with every department of Nature? Thus does an understanding of the scientific teachings of the philosophy merge with the ethical and psychological. The veiled mysticism of the ancients proves true in the actual student-life of the observant and reverent man or woman of today.

"**Full confidence,**" then, is a growth — a growth through service — "without expectation and free from hope." "The region of stern reality and fact" must necessarily be "Truth land," because only the true is unchanging, and only the unchanging is real. To reach it is not to "go" to any place — no change in locus; nor to attract the attention of our fellowmen — nor want to; certainly not to

proclaim ourselves, directly nor indirectly. **It is a different point of view, and intelligent action therefrom. The student life and the personal life are not separate.**



AFTERMATH

I

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT in its inclusive sense means the triple course of evolution pursued by self-conscious Egos from the dawn to the close of a *Manvantara*. "Being is an endless cycle within the one absolute eternity, wherein move numberless inner cycles, finite and conditioned."¹

The Movement in our times is a cycle of 100 years which began in 1875, and is the sixth in a series which began in the last quarter of the fourteenth century. It will be followed by a seventh commencing in 1975.² The present centenary

¹ This series was originally published in *Theosophy Magazine*, Vol. xxiii, issues #3-12, — Jan. thru Oct. 1935. As a result of many requests it is being once more made available. — Ed., A. T.

² This being on the eve of 2006, There is endless controversy about who the Messengers were in 1975, but all becomes plain if one considers it from the view point of the farmer, or to put it more bluntly — from the viewpoint of sevenfold cycles. A Seed of corn at the number-one-stage is simply a latent plan and looks like none of the intervening stages. A seed of cord at the number-seven-stage is a culmination or synthesis of a plan, and looks like none of the intervening stages. In other words, while you can analogize you cannot extrapolate from one to another — that is the linear method of those who climb on rooftops expecting a *specific result* when nature's wisdom presents them with a *synthesis of the preceding six*. It is properly speaking a SUM of a SERIES rather than an extrapolation from the immediately preceding stage. This is, as any rate, one way to view the problem of maturing results inside a sevenfold cycle.

The most sure way to answer the question is to become a "daily meditator, but it is slower and arrives as a conviction or realization from **within-without**. The philosophy will gradually wake up

cycle, and the series to which it belongs, are both included in the "Messianic cycle" of 2,155 years, itself but a phase in a still larger one, and so on throughout the life-period of a whole Race, of a series of Races, and of our entire solar system, of which this earth and its inhabitants comprise but a portion. The whole mass of Egos collectively, in Races, Sub-races, Family-races, nations, etc.; the individual Egos in their various stages—all these represent cycles upon cycles, wheels within wheels, which "down to their smallest ramifications, overlap and are entangled with each other until it is nearly impossible to separate them." The key of cycles, otherwise of Karma and Reincarnation, underlies and pervades the entire teachings of the Wisdom-Religion whose partial representation in our times by H. P. Blavatsky was by her named Theosophy.

All cycles, the most transitory as well as the longest, are repetitions on an ascending and descending scale, and run their course in strict mathematical sequence. Three statements on this subject in *The Secret Doctrine* are of the utmost importance to all theosophical students. They are:

"The reincarnationists and believers in Karma alone dimly perceive that the whole secret of Life is in the unbroken series of its manifestations: whether in, or apart from, the physical

body." (I, 238).

. the first law in nature is uniformity in diversity, and the second—analogy, 'As above, so below.' " (II, 699). "Analogy is the guiding law in Nature,

within one the resources to answer this question in a satisfactory manner — a heart solution. — ED, A.7.

¹ The footnote on first page of this series reads: Corrections, objections, criticisms, questions and comments are invited from all readers on any facts or conclusions stated in this series. This invitation is still extended. — ED., A.7.

the only true Ariadne's-thread that can lead us, through the inextricable paths of her domain, toward her primal and final mysteries." (II,153).

If these generalizations are true, then not only was there neither miracle nor chance in the mission and message of H. P. Blavatsky, but the whole course of the Movement with all its confusions, contradictions, and bewilderingments is nevertheless the orderly development of Karma. That course must have been fully foreseen by the Masters of Wisdom, must have governed Their Messenger in all her conduct, and must correspond to former messages, messengers, and cyclic repetitions of the Movement—and must be understandable by those who conscientiously make use of the keys provided by the teachings and example of H. P. B. in their own efforts to do more than "dimly perceive" the uninterrupted concatenation of causes in the agglomerate of effects heaped up in the events of our cycle as so far in evidence.

Our cycle, like all others, must pass through four phases, each represented by a mixed generation of adult theosophists. Two generations have produced their effects; the third is now engaged both with those transmitted results and with the making of causes on its own account—to be followed in due course by the fourth and final phase and generation. All overlap, otherwise there could not be continuity, diversity, or uniformity in the diversities. All the ramifications of the Movement can be looked at from below up, that is to say, from the personal standpoint; or from the point of view that all those engaged are reincarnating Egos who, in this life, are but renewing and continuing courses individually and collectively pursued in former cycles and former lives on earth.

These two opposite planes of perception, the human or personal, and the impersonal or Egoic, represent the two antagonistic ele-

ments in the Movement as in the man, the exoteric and esoteric aspects of both. "The human being constantly confuses effects with causes, the genuine Occultist never." The contrast, and the way to deal with it, is clearly put in the "Introductory" to *The Secret Doc-trine* (I, xx) :

"The true philosopher, the student of the Esoteric Wisdom, entirely loses sight of personalities, dogmatic beliefs and special religions "

When this attitude of mind is adopted and adhered to, then men, things, methods, policies, actions and events can be studied with profit and what otherwise is merely controversial becomes truly educational. Had theosophists of every degree taken to heart the fundamental distinction between their own human point of view and that represented in H. P. Blavatsky and her Theosophy, the course of the Movement would have been far different. It is just as possible to the student of today to take the impersonal attitude to-ward theosophical Karma made, in the making, and to-be made, as it was in the beginning of the Movement. A few at all times did; a few do now; that their number may increase is the object of this at-tempt to survey the course of the Movement since 1925. It is an effort to face the making of recent theosophical history in the light of Theosophy as recorded by H. P. B.; to benefit by the lessons which may be learned in that way and in no other, and to point out the application of those lessons to the immediate present and the unfolding future.

The course of the Movement from 1875 to 1925 developed the causes set in motion by H. P. B., both by her writings and by her own application of Theosophy in relation to persons and events contacted during her career, the first phase; the second quarter witnessed the understanding and the use made by her immediate disciples and others of the assets and liabilities thus accruing and

added to. Each phase has its own distinguishing features more or less determinative in their influence on the next. The mid-point of any cycle being reached, the opposing influences are at their maximum, and one or other must prevail, in the individual and in any group of individuals, during the remaining half of the term.

The originally latent, then germinal, then ripening, "mental de-posits" brought forward from the past reproduce in their turn, each after its own kind, and must under law continue to do so, until the seeds of the one or the other are destroyed whether in the Ego or in any group of Egos. The Theosophical Movement of our period as of all former ones contains both wheat and tares. The familiar parable on that subject supplies the perfect analogy, though its correspondence with our cycle has been largely missed by theosophists. *They* have made as little application of it to their own problems as did those who heard the words of Jesus to theirs.

H. P. Blavatsky represented a descent from the plane of the Masters to that of men, and her message of Theosophy the seeds of the Wisdom-Religion it was her mission to sow broadcast in the mind of the race. The Theosophical Society represented those Egos drawn by her presence and her message to share in her mission. The Theosophical Society and its objects came from her, not from those who entered it, as did the teachings imparted for their study and application. Her relation from the beginning and through-out was that of a Teacher; the relation of all the members was that of pupils to their teacher: relations wholly self-assumed and voluntary on both sides, the Society a mere meeting-ground. Facts so simple and plain as these were misconceived from the start and were increasingly misunderstood as the Society grew in membership on the one side, and the mission and message unfolded from the other. The conflict between the esoteric

and the exoteric nature of the Movement, between the human and the divine nature of the members, grew apace. From the *very* first the three classes of Egos among the members were naturally attracted to the particular Object of the Society which corresponded to their own affinities brought forward from the past. By far the greater part of the members gave their attention to the Third Object as they conceived that object to mean—the cultivation of "psychic powers". So much for America and Europe. In India it was the Second Object which attracted the interest and efforts of nearly all the members. Rigidly bound by caste and sect, *they* could only misunderstand and misapply in their own way as was being done by the West in its. Few and far between were those Egos whose past Karma was such that they felt strongly the inspiration of the great First Object.

By the middle of the first quarter of the Movement the re-awakened tendencies had produced several violent eruptions; had resulted in strong lines of cleavage within the Society—so much so that H. P. B. declared it had become a "dead failure", one more among the societies "whose pretensions are great but whose names are simply masks— nay, even *shams*." She therefore formed the "Esoteric Section" or "Eastern School of Theosophy" whose members were pledged to Theosophy and to the Three Objects of the Movement. Only about ten per cent of the total membership in the Society entered the "E. S.", nearly all of them in America, the rest in Great Britain. Before the end of the first quarter the opposing views of the real purposes of the Movement had ruptured both the "E. S." and the T. S.

Of the three original leading figures, H. P. B., and her two associates, Col. H. S. Olcott and Wm. Q. Judge—the course of the Movement brought H. P. B. and Judge ever closer together, while Col. Olcott, the "President-Founder", became

more and more the embodiment of the utilitarian aspect of the society, the ally of those who wished to pursue the Second and Third Objects. Both H. P. B. and Judge died before the close of the first quarter, Colonel Olcott surviving them until 1907.

From the death of Judge, in 1896, five years after H. P. B.'s departure, the visible aspects of the Movement rapidly degenerated; tangential tendencies flourished unrestrained; the number of segmentations multiplied; less and less attention was paid to the original teachings and the original impulse imparted by H. P. B. and Judge, while contradictory dogmas and doctrines, warring claims and pretensions, absorbed the attention and energies of leaders and societies alike in their struggles for predominance. In all the numerous societies were members interested in Theosophy and in the theosophical Objects, but their efforts were compromised by their affiliations, unable to make head against the controlling elements. During the years from 1896 to 1925, the lapses and withdrawals of members were enormous, so that at all times there were ever-increasing numbers of Theosophists who saw no other course than to keep silent, or to abstain from connection with any of the sectarian groups. Between 1896 and 1908 the segment ruled by Madam Tingley shrank more than 80 per cent in membership despite the profusion of schemes inspired by her to attract followers. Today, after nearly forty years, the Point Loma following is smaller than the original membership in 1896. The Olcott-Besant fragment of the original society, at its maximum period of still more strenuous proselytizing and continuous spawning of allegedly inspired activities, numbered less than 50,000 members. From 1896 to date more than 100,000 persons have joined the Adyar society. Its official reports from *year* to year show that the average withdrawals have exceeded the

newly acquired followers. Today the total membership is barely 30,000. In all the numerous theosophical and off-shoot bodies, the list of ex-members vastly exceeds the present followings. In all of them there is a continual flux; in none of them is there single-hearted devotion to the teachings, the objects, the policies of H. P. B. and Judge.

In 1909, Robert Crosbie with seven associates, recognizing the universally prevailing sectarianism, began a method of theosophical study and work which might in time afford a basis for the restoration of the Movement to unity and harmony. A Declaration of purposes was drawn up; a name adopted, and public meetings started. No formal bond existed among the Associates of The United Lodge of Theosophists, the sole object being the study and dissemination of Theosophy pure and simple. In 1912, the mid-point of the second quarter of the Movement, the magazine THEOSOPHY was founded to provide a medium for dealing with theosophical philosophy and history free from sectarian affiliations or influences. Slowly the effort spread despite all obstacles and opposition, the impregnable basis of impersonal devotion keeping the work unsullied, an impersonality strictly continued after the death of Mr. Crosbie in 1919. By the close of the second quarter of the Movement in 1925, the issues were once more clear to all who might choose to inquire. Numerous groups of students had arisen in many cities, thousands of individual theosophists the world around were by then informed and active in purely theosophical study and work. The Associates of the United Lodge of Theosophists included in almost equal proportion ex-members of the various organizations and newcomers to Theosophy in this incarnation. The subscribers to the magazine THEOSOPHY included Associates of U. L. T., non-Theosophists, members and ex-members of the many theosophical and mystical bodies. No

distinctions were made, but all in any way interested in Theosophy and the facts of theosophical history were dealt with, irrespective of affiliation or non-affiliation.

So the contrasted elements stood in clear relief in 1925; so they stand today, still more sharply accentuated. All sincere Theosophists deplore the existing evils in the Movement and long for their eradication. They "dimly perceive" that these evils have an originating and sustaining cause which must be counteracted, but so long: as their attention is fixed on effects, how can they, except with "divided mind", study the producing cause or causes? How are they to learn that the *real* and continuing source of the evils in the Movement, as in the world, is precisely this divided mind in the race and in the individual? They cannot learn what is necessary to be learned from any extant system, for all these systems are second-hand. They cannot learn the truth about nature and themselves in any other school than that provided in Theosophy and in the lessons to be learned from self-study and the study of theosophical history.

The Theosophists of today are, in large part, merely repeating the errors of omission and of commission of human nature in general, and as manifested throughout the course of the present cycle of the Movement. We are faced with the same inherent difficulties, the same problems, the same weaknesses, as those drawn into the Movement during its two preceding phases. Material, both of teaching and of history, are available to us that was not accessible to our predecessors, but the real lack then is the real lack now—the disposition to face the facts, to make the necessary effort to gain first-hand knowledge of Theosophy as a basis and standard of discrimination and of judgment—and then the will to act upon those firmly established principles thus self-perceived.

There was no need for anyone to walk waveringly; there is no need now. There was no necessity for the mistaken paths taken by nearly all the leading figures of the past; there is no necessity for our repeating and transmitting them. The tendency to repeat, to follow the already beaten path, is strong in human nature. This tendency is the very Karma of the past, our Skandhas from former lives and if not faced, fought, and overcome, must inevitably reproduce the failures of the past. From the beginning, but a handful recognized the gravity of the issues involved, and that is still the case. Theosophists have succumbed to the influence of the Skandhas instead of resolutely facing them, recognizing them for what they are, destroying them by unity, study, and work. Unity is the practical application of the first Object of the Movement; comparative study the application of the second; work—the will to study, apply, and so come to understand the play of forces in human nature—is the practical application of the third object.

Theosophy, says the Key, has no two beliefs or hypotheses on the same subject" Yet the Movement today is full of conflicting beliefs, hypotheses, doctrines and practices—all labeled Theosophy and Theosophical. It is now time for all sincere students to reconsider the causes of prevailing conditions.



AFTERMATH

III

If the "false prophets" of Theosophy are to be left untouched, the *true* prophets will be very soon — as they have already been — confused with the false . . . and if the false prophets, . . . or even the weak-

minded dupes, are left alone, then the Society threatens to become very soon a fanatical body split into three hundred sects — like Protestantism — each hating the other, and all bent on destroying the truth by monstrous exaggerations and idiotic schemes and shams.

— H. P. B.: *Lucifer*, March, 1889.

WHEN THE ARTICLE, "On Pseudo-Theosophy," from which the above text is taken, was written by HPB, the "false prophets" had already subverted. To offset the internal cause of this visible evil effect on the Movement, HPB had, six months earlier, established the "Esoteric Section," and the opposing currents in the Movement were thereby brought boiling to the surface. Not only what is aid or done, but the circumstances which call forth words and deeds have to be weighed with them. In the same circumstances, or frame-work of Karma, no two men act the same, *because* they do not weigh them in the same scales of motive, of reason, of knowledge, of discrimination.

When HPB wrote "On Pseudo-Theosophy," Mabel Collins had just entered into alliance with Michael Angelo Lane, Professor Coues and others soon to become open enemies; had been dismissed by HPB from the co-editorship of *Lucifer*; and had left the society. Mrs. Annie Besant had just become a "convert" and had taken Mabel Collins' vacant place on *Lucifer*; Colonel Olcott had just been "pacified," so that his defection from HPB and all that she represented in the Movement was thereby post-poned for another seven years; Mr. Sinnett, who had been a "sulking Achilles" for three years, was holding strictly private *séances* with his own select coterie, and already corresponding with C. W. Leadbeater, then in Ceylon, with the object of bringing that prophet-to-be to London as his own particular "psychic." Thus there

had been as complete a house-cleaning as Karma Permitted.

There was nothing new or unique in all this. One has but to study early Christian, early Buddhist, or any other “book of beginnings,” to find the counterparts of what has gone one, of what is and is to be the Karma of the Movement in our own cycle.

Observed in the light of correspondence and analogy, any cycle, long or short, repeats the “seven ages” of every cycle. At any given stage, therefore, what is visibly in evidence can be traced either in retrospect or in prospect to its beginning and end. Where is the “beginning” and the “end” of every cycle of visible effects? Where else but on the plane of *causes* — the hearts and minds of the reincarnating Egos?

The mid-point passed, the descending half of any cycle presents the objective of what in the first half was subjective — and vice versa. Otherwise, neither history nor prophecy were possible as spiritual, but only as psychic, *clairvoyance*. Possessed of neither, the “weak-minded dupes” cannot themselves tell the true from the false prophet, and so are the natural prey of the medium, the “sensitive,” the “strong-minded” fanatic.

The year 1925 was the antipodes of 1875, as the year 1939 will be the antipodes of 1889. Another focus of cyclic “opposition,” seen by a few, unknown to the many, marked the year 1925 as the establishment of the Parent T.S. marked 1875. Within the Movement thus established, the purgation of 1889 is on the descending arc. Meantime, he who runs may now read what, in 1889, was foreseen only by H. P. B. and Judge; what was then only an unheeded prophecy is now an accomplished fact: the once single Theosophical society *has* “split into three hundred sects”; each *does* “hate the others”; all *are* bent in destroying the

truth by monstrous exaggerations and idiotic schemes and shams.”

Some brief remarks by Mr. Judge in 1886 apply as well to the existing situation and outlook, for his remarks were statements of the law of cycles and how to read it. He wrote:

“The desire of the pious shall be accomplished. . . . prophecy . . . is based upon cyclic changes. . . . No matter about dates; they are not to be given; but facts may be.”

Facts are the same for all; there is no partisanship in events. The partisanship in those who misrepresent them. Who among Theosophists are willing to face the facts? And in so facing them, *on which side of the facts are they?*

Up to 1872 Mrs. Besant had been on the Christian side; from then until 1889 she was on the Atheist side; in 1889 she took her stand on the side represented by H. P. B.: in 1895 she succumbed to psychism; in 1925 she personified pseudo-Occultism as in 1889 H. P. B. personified the genuine. Meantime the facts were at all times unchanged, one and the same “unbroken series.” The changes were all in Mrs. Besant. Thus in barely over half a century she had “boxed the compass” in her voyage through human life; for her disclosures in 1925 were but a jumble of Patristic and later Christian “revelations.” In the end she succumbed as the fanatic succumbs — “to that strongest of all psychic anesthetics, ignorance and self-sufficiency,” despite the natural nobility of her character.

It is not possible to draw the curtain over her mis-directed energies for the simple reason that from 1896 to her death she stood before the world, head of the largest of the theosophical societies, as the Successor of H. P. B. Her weakness was the weakness of human nature which every Theosophist, great or small in the

world's eye, has to face, fight, conquer, or to which he must succumb, for it is "a battle without quarter on either side."

It is possible for any Theosophist to learn as much from the career of Mrs. Besant as from that of HPB, if both are studied in the same light — the light of the Theosophy to which both alike professed single-hearted devotion. And this now the more possible, because as persons both are mere memories, no longer living human centers of controversy.

The career of HPB¹ shows no variableness or shadow of turning from her first appearance in the theosophical arena until her death. On the other hand, the theosophical career of Mrs. Besant shows as unmistakably nothing but variableness and turning from 1889 to her death in 1933. If the teachings and example provided by HPB lead the student toward the Masters of Wisdom, then Mrs. Besant's course could only lead away from Them. There is no more possibility of reconciling the two courses than of reconciling the notion of personality with that of individuality. Both HPB and Mrs. Besant traveled the same Path, but they traveled it in exactly opposite directions. As every Theosophist, every man, has to travel the same Path, his choice can only concern itself with its polar directions. He is indeed a "weak-minded dupe" who imagines either that he can avoid choice, or that he can travel in both directions. This longing to effect a compromise between what are fundamentally opposites and thus to have "peace at any price" is the great weakness of human nature. It underlies all human notions of "brotherhood" and "fraternity." Theosophists could learn much by studying the subject of "syncretism" as manifested during the early centuries of

Christianity, its periodic recurrences among the well-meaning but "weak-minded" followers of the Christian sects and sectarians. The same syncretism influences great numbers of well-intentioned but misguided minds among the theosophical sects of today.

November, 1925, was the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Parent theosophical society. After the parting of the ways in 1895, Colonel Olcott and Mrs. Besant continued to claim that their society was *the* Theosophical Society because it continued to have the same "President-Founder." Mrs. Besant continued to claim that she was the Successor of HPB and that the "Esoteric School" she had established and headed was the E. S. T. founded by HPB. Colonel Olcott died in 1907, and thereafter Mrs. Besant remained the undisputed head both of the esoteric and the exoteric line of "succession" thus claimed and accepted.

The "anniversary number" of Mrs. Besant's *Theosophist* for November, 1925, shows in what direction and to what culmination that "succession" had led her, her satellites, and those who had trusted her and her assumed "occultism." The number is given over entirely, not to Theosophy, the Theosophical Movement, the great Objects of the Masters of Wisdom — but to a complete report of the proceedings of the "Star" Congress in Holland. That "Congress," in furtherance of the "Liberal Catholic Church" and the "Krishnamjurti cult," was held at Ommen, Holland, on the anniversary of HPB's birth, August 11, 1925. Verbatim reprints are given of the speeches made before a vast assembly drawn from opening and closing addresses. The various addresses fill 166 large pages of *The Theosophist*. They should be read in their entirety by every Theosophist who has the courage to compare the Theosophy of HPB with the pseudo-theosophy of Mrs. Besant. Only

¹ From the more correct "H. P. B." we have given way to the more abbreviated "HPB" — Ed., A. T.

brief extracts can here be given. In her opening address Mrs. Besant said:

“The whole gist of my message to you, gathered under the oriflamme of the Star, implies that you recognize . . . that in the superhuman kingdoms there are great grades or orders of the superhuman beings. At the head of them all stands that mighty Being, the Nameless One, H. P. B. calls Him, for none can understand either His Name or comprehend His Being. We know that He came with His three Pupils from another world, the planet Venus, . . . that They are the Lords of the Fire, who, since the middle of the Third Root Race have lived in Their chosen dwelling, the White Island of Shamballa, with its city of temples. There They still remain, are still accessible to those whom They summon to Their presence; and this was recognized by . . . that later messenger of the White Lodge, H. P. B. She spoke of the assembly that was held there every seven years, attended by the great Angels of the nations as well as the superhuman Rishis, where the plan of the coming seven years was given to Them by the Head of the Hierarchy. . . . Then you have, apart from Him who is called the King of the World — . . . immediately below him, the three Pupils . . . and the Lord Buddha, of the same rank as They, . . . And then there come three Mighty Ones; the Lord Vaivasvata Manu . . . with all His company . . . And then the mighty Teacher of Angels and of men, whom the Buddhists call the Boddhisattva, whom the Hindus call by a name from which the term World Teacher is taken, . . . Jagat Guru. . . . The third of these wondrous Beings is the Lord the Maha Chohan. The Lord Vaivasvati Manu is the Representative and Ruler of the First Ray, under the Highest; the Boddhisattva, Krishna-Christ as He is sometimes called — Krishna in India, Christ in Christendom; and then the Lord the Maha Chohan, who has under His guidance and control the Five Great Forces . . .

“I want you to have that picture in your minds. Then below Them come the Chohans of the Seven Rays, each taking orders from the One above them, passing on those orders to those below Them. You will notice these grow more numerous as

we come down the great ladders of the superhuman kingdoms. . . .

“I take it for granted that most of you are acquainted, as I have just briefly sketched for you, with these great facts of the occult life in the literature of the T. S., for gradually, step by step, more and more has been told of them. . . .

“Keep then, I pray you, that rough outline in your minds, . . . And now I have to give you, by command of the King, . . . His message, and some of the messages of the Lord Maitreya and His great Brothers. . . . what I am saying, as to matter of announcement, is definitely at the command of the King whom I serve. . . .

“His taking possession of His chosen vehicle . . . will be soon. Then He will choose, as before, His twelve apostles and their chief, the Lord Himself. He has already chosen them, but I have only the command to mention seven who have reached the stage of Arhatship, . . .”

Christian as well as Oriental religions have, in their various stages of degeneracy, yielded the record of countless man and women who have fallen victim to **religious mania**. Within the past century India has had its Rama Krishna, Africa has witnessed “el Mahdi,” Asia Minor its “Bahai” frenzy, England has produced her Thomas Lake Harris, Russia her Rasputin, and America had furnished an abundant crop — William Miller of “second Advent” fame; the Noyes “Oneida Community”; Joseph Smith and his “Book of Mormon”; Mary Baker G. Eddy with her “Science and Health and (skeleton) Key to the Scriptures” — a whole host of “revealers” during the wave of Spiritualism. Each centennial cycle within the “messianic” cycle supplies its own crop of these spiritual tares. All religious and theological history reeks with the records of megalomaniac individuals who are “inspired by the Most High. At present time the so-called “Oxford Group Movement” is spreading with great rapidity, its prime inducement being

“direct personal communication with God” in all the affairs of life, as one might commune with this most intimate friend. The facts of these vagaries, these “varieties of religious experience,” are known to every informed man, but neither psychology of religion nor of science explains or can account for these aberrations.

It was this well-known and ever-present danger confronting all who would “rush in where angels fear to tread” that moved H. P. Blavatsky to arm with all her energy against the like foolhardiness on the part of Theosophists infected with “itch for occult preferment.” Her admonitions were disregarded in many cases, of which Mrs. Besant is the most notable because the most ruinous example. In true Occultism alone is to be found the rationale of the countless forms of religious dementia, because in true Occultism alone is to be found the law of mental and moral sanity.

Arhatship, in Occultism, is the perfection of triple evolution in the individual Ego. Who are the “seven who have reached arhatship,” according to Mrs. Besant’s Ommen “revelation,” and whom she has the “command to mention”?

“The first two, my brother Charles Leadbeater and myself, . . . C. Jinarajadasa, . . . George Arundale, . . . Oscar Kollerstrom, . . . Rukmini Arundale, . . .

“I left one out and must leave out another. Naturally, our Krishnaji was one, but he is to be the vehicle of the Lord. And the other is one who is very dear to all of us, as to the whole Brotherhood: Bishop James Wedgwood. He had borne his crucifixion before the seal of Arhatship was set upon him by his King. . . .

“Those are the first seven of the twelve whom He has chosen, with Himself as the thirteenth. ‘Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye do well, for so I am.’ . . .

“Now the wonder may come into your mind: H. P. B. was the only one who was really announced as the Messenger of the Master. Since then the world has grown a good deal,¹ and it is possible that while the few may be repelled, many thousands will be attracted to the Christ. . . . Whatever the effect, since He has said it, it is done.”

Is all this the zenith or the nadir of Theosophy and Occultism? Is this *Arhatship* or the insanity of egotism? Is this the culmination of the Theosophical Movement, or its total obscuration?

Mrs. Besant went on to affirm that, “besides the School of which I am the Outer Head,” the “Lord” had especially wanted three lines of activity in preparation for “His coming” — the “Liberal Catholic Church;” a “Co-Masonry;” and the “World University.”

Following Mrs. Besant, the “arhats” present — Kollerstrom, Arundale, Wedgwood, “Shrimati” Rukmini Arundale — made their mirific² appearances and blessed the assembled auditors with their respective ancillary revelations. “Arhat” George Arundale, in the fullness of his inspiration, made an additional revelation which he desired to be remembered. As memory, even among the *illuminati*, is not always to be relied upon any more than revelation, and as “arhat” Arundale is now[1935] the President of the Adyar society, it seems no more than just to repeat his revelation:

“I think if I was asked to point out one or two, or three or four, or half a dozen young people who in the future will be among the statesmen, the greatest statesmen of the world, I should certainly number our Nitya among them, perchance among the first of them. And I want you to remember

¹ Evidently, as one needs a strong constitution to digest this *emotional slop!* It is an excellent example of WHAT TO AVOID! and is reprinted here for that reason alone. — ED., A. T.

² An obsolete word for “simply marvelous,” or “bordering on the unbelievable.” — ED., A. T.

what I am saying to-day, because I venture to think it is in the nature of a prophecy: I think, that as the years pass, not only shall we see our Krishnaji leading the life to which he is so supremely dedicated, but we shall also see at his right hand his great brother recognized throughout the world as one of its greatest statesman-leaders.”

Alas, for the treatment accorded by Karma to the Ommen prophets. “Nitya,” the brother of “Krishnaji,” repudiated the prophecy by dying three months after. And “Krishnaji,” despite the “command” of “the Lord,” the “arhatship” and prophecies of Mrs. Besant, Leadbeater, *et al.*, later on repudiated successively the “Liberal Catholic Church,” the role of “Messiah” assigned him, the “Order of the Star,” “Co-Masonry,” the “theosophical society” the “theosophy,” the “King of the World,” and the other “decorations” bestowed upon him by all this prophetic largess.

But all this was, on August 11, 1925, securely hidden in the actual future which the false prophets were so glibly foretelling. In her closing address Mrs. Besant admonished her awed disciples thus:

“Therefore go out into the world and act as though you knew the Christ, as if he walked among you; act as though you were sure that He sent His messenger to proclaim the Coming, . . . Act as though it were true. . . “

Perhaps in these remarks may be found the clue to Mrs. Besant’s own bewildered and tortuous path. It is the world-old method of “Quietism,”¹ or religious “asceticism,” of self-hypnotisation. “Affirmation” and

¹ *Quietism, of which the Master said:* “They are of the Universal Brotherhood but in name, and gravitate at best towards *Quietism* — that utter paralysis of the Soul. They are intensely selfish in their aspirations and will get but the reward of their selfishness.” (The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett. Letter 28, p. 210.

“denial,” in one guise or another, is the “passive Yoga” of religious psychism.

At all events, the Ommen prophecies were breathed in by her followers with intoxicated faith, and so the stage was set for a second “Adyar manifestation” at the “Jubilee Convention” of the theosophical society of Adyar, to be held at the end of December, 1925, in celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of the Parent organization.

In preparation for that event, “arhats” Besant and Jinarajadasa, signing as President and Vice-President of the Adyar T.S. published in the December, 1925, *Theosophist*, a Statement to “the Members of the General Council,” advocating the establishment of a “World Religion” of which they proposed to make the T.S. “an integral part.” The Statement recites:

“The time has arrived, in consequence of the approaching Coming of the World Teacher, when a special effort to prepare His way should be made. . . .

A splendid opportunity is offered to the Theosophical Society to take its place as the corner-stone of the religions of the future, as a Master once predicted. We, the President and Vice-President of the Theosophical Society, earnestly beg you, the members of its General Council, not to reject it, but to take your rightful place in this movement towards the Unity of Religions.”

The “only official” in this “world religion” was to be a “Recorder.” The Right Rev. G. S. Arundale, M.A., LL.B., (Cantab.), D.L. (Nat. Univ. India) S. Michael’s Foundation, Huizen,” was the “arhat” chosen for that office.

The report of the “Jubilee Convention” is to be found in the *Theosophist* for February, 1926. In “On the Watch-tower” Mrs. Besant comments:

“It will be very long, I think, before we shall see such another Convention in

Adyar as that of our Golden Jubilee of 1925. . . . At the end of its first half century, it [the T. S.] had so faithfully fulfilled its task that it was possible for its True Founders . . . to stand, with its President [herself], before the Ruler of our world and receive the work for the next half-century, comprised in three institutions, destined to become world-wide: The World Religion, the World University, the World Government [by the restoration of the Mysteries, . . .].”

Readers of *The Theosophical Movement* will observe that in all this Mrs. Besant **was repeating the course taken by Madam Tingley** in 1896 with her “Crusade” and her “School for the Revival of the Lost Mysteries of Antiquity.” Mrs. Besant’s “Coming Christ” was, in like manner, her own repetition of a “revelation” made two years earlier than her first announcement of “Krishnaji,” by “Blue Star” to *her* faithful followers in “The Temples of the People” at Halcyon, California. Mrs. Besant’s Ommen “revelations” regarding “the King of the World” and all the accompanying litter of “Angels and super-human Kingdoms,” are her adaptations of **countless precedents in every religion**. Just as Mrs. Besant converted the writings of H.P.B. into their antithesis, so did she and Leadbeater “lift” from antecedent “seers” their rococo “new dispensation.” Apparently, so far as their literature discloses, not a solitary leader of the Adyar society ever took the trouble to “check up” anything whatever uttered by these false prophets.

Leadbeater came from Australia to the Adyar Jubilee accompanied by a contingent of fifty devotees; an immense company of delegates and faithful members gathered; Krishnaji and others of the “arhats” were worshipfully present. “Arhat” Arundale read to the assemblage a “Message of the Master.” This “message” was published in the January, 1926, *Theosophist*. It should be compared with any of the original

authentic Messages from the Master of H.P.B. The opening sentence of the “message” read by “arhat” Arundale should have told anyone who was its real author — Leadbeater. It bears his familiar hall-mark, “your great President,” and continues in his tell-tale style throughout. The “Statement” drawn up by Mrs. Besant and Jinarajadasa of “The Basis Truths of Religion” was duly passed by the obedient General Council.

All the proceedings of the “Jubilee Convention” were conducted in the manner of a religious “revival,” One of the contributors to the February *Theosophist*, John Cordes, General Secretary for Austria, gives this report:

“Verily a fair background to the Glad Tidings of the founding of a World Religion and its Mysteries, later to be supported by a World University to be! The World Religion links already now officially four great Movements: the Theosophical Society, the Order of the Star in the East, the Bharata Samaja and the Liberal Catholic Church . . .

“The Convention witnessed the opening of, and daily worship in a Hindu Temple, A Buddhist Shrine, and beautiful daily celebrations of Mass and Benediction of the Liberal Catholic Church within a temporary shed on the Compound, which is furthermore to be presently enriched by a Star Headquarters Building, a Synagogue, a Mosque and a Zoroastrian Shrine, foundation-stones for which were laid some with due Masonic rites, during these busy weeks.

“Besides all these activities the Co-Masonic Temple saw specially busy evenings, as evidently the Mysteries are soon to be given to a world, prepared and athirst for them once again. To get up in time for Puja at 6:30 a.m. in the Hindu Temple, conducted by Krishnaji as the officiating priest, or for the Morning Prayers conducted at the Headquarters Hall at 7 a.m. uttered by Hindu, Parsi, Jain, Hebrew, Buddhist, Christian, Muslim and Sikh, and closed with

our Great President's Benediction, and thence to the Holy Eucharist at 7:45 a.m. (possibly performed by Bishop Leadbeater in person), gives the whole day an imprint of world-vastness for which even a divinely inspired psalmist's lyre would be inadequate."

Over against all this medley of religious mummeries may fittingly be placed a statement by H. P. Blavatsky in *Isis Unveiled*, I, 307:

"The god of every exoteric religion, including Christianity, notwithstanding its pretensions to mystery, is an idol, a fiction, and cannot be anything else."

The *chef d'oeuvre* of the entire proceedings, however, was the "Adyar manifestation" occasioned by "Krishnaji's" announcement of his great "mission." We reproduce from Mrs. Besant's own account as contained in the February, 1926, *Theosophist*:

"Last summer, in Holland, I mentioned to a large audience (in a Camp held by members of an Order only those are admitted who believe in the Coming of the World Teacher) that J. Krishnamurti was the chosen vehicle. . . . Modern psychology recognizes . . . cases of the influence of one mind over another through higher cases of inspiration — such as those of prophets — to complete temporary changes of 'personality.' I believe, with many of the early Christians, that the World Teacher, named by them the Christ, assumed, at the stage of the Gospel story called the Baptism, the body of a disciple, Jesus, to carry on His earthly work at that time. A similar event is to take place among us. . . .

Mr. Krishnamurti was lecturing, on December 28, to a very large audience under the Banyan Tree. He was concluding his lecture, speaking of the World Teacher, with the words: 'He comes to lead us all to that perfection where there is eternal happiness: He comes to lead and He comes to those who have not understood, who have suf-

fered, who are unhappy, who are unenlightened. He comes to those who want, who desires, who long, and—

"There was a slight start, and a Voice of penetrating sweetness rang out through his lips:

"I come to those who want sympathy, who want happiness, who are longing to be released, who are longing to find happiness in all things. I come to reform, and not to tear down: not to destroy, but to build.'

. . . .

"That the World-Teacher spoke through the then speaker I believe. Since 1909 . . . I have known that he was chosen as the vehicle, and I expect an ever-increasing tenancy of the selected body by Him for whom it has been prepared."

To this "consummation," then, had come the "Successorship" of Annie Besant. To this thaumaturgic utterance of her "World Teacher" had come the Theosophy of H.P.B. and her Masters, as interpreted by Mrs. Besant; with these "monstrous exaggerations and idiotic schemes and shams" had been dressed the teachings of *The Secret Doctrine* on Cosmogogenesis and Anthropogenesis, under the sooth-saying of Mr. Leadbeater and Oracle Annie Besant.

The quotation with which this chapter is headed shows something of H.P.B.'s prevision of Karma. Did she have any prescience as to Annie Besant's then future elliptical Theosophical orbit? Well, writing in in *Lucifer* for August, five months after "On Pseudo-Theosophy" was published, and only six months after Mrs. Besant had been "converted" from Atheism to Theosophy, H.P.B. took occasion to contrast Mrs. Besant's past with her potential future:

"Suffice it to say, that at the very summit of her atheism Mrs. Besant has always been a Theosophist *in action* and

in heart. . . . But it is quite correct to say . . . she is now beginning to know of the doctrine. But this doctrine, let us hope, will never lead her to make again “her communion at a Christian altar,” **in other words to renounce the whole and the absolute for the part and the finite.**¹



[As few Theosophists actually know the history of the Movement, there will be another **Special Issue:** “WHEAT & TARES #2 to make more clear the medley of strange events that caused the Founder of the Modern Theosophical Movement to need a **Defense Fund against slanders and lies passed to the public as reliable testimony.** The root causes go deep, and Brother Algeo is simply a continuation of an **Attitude toward Madame Blavatsky, her writings, and the Masters.** The “Heart doctrine” comes not like the thief through “locked doors” and forced entry.]



HPB DEFENSE FUND REPORT

\$10,000.00 FUND RAISING EFFORT FOR PUBLISHING AN AUTHENTIC VOLUME I OF HPB’s Letters.

¹ Emphasis added.

Cumulative gifts as of December 15, 2005

ER	500.00
Anonymous	50.00
DLJ	50.00
EPB	200.00
MRJ	50.00
DLJ	100.00
RD	250.00
Anonymous	50.00
PHX	500.00
Anonymous	20.00
Anonymous	20.00
Anonymous	500.00
RD	500.00
GR	1,248.00
CR	50.00
EPB	300.00
Anonymous	20.00
James & Sally Colbert	50.00
Anonymous	100.00
Anonymous	25.00
APGr	500.00
DB	50.00
Friends in India	100.00
Pacific Rim Theosophist	10.00
GB	30.00
Anonymous	25.00
GLS	500.00
KS	500.00
Anonymous	200.00
Anonymous	200.00
A.B.	50.00
Nati	20.00
TOTAL AS OF December 15, 2005	6,974.17²

The HPB Defense Fund is specifically dedicated to the publication of an authentic Volume I of Madame Blavatsky’s letters. The proposed volume will have the fraudulent letters in the current Adyar edition removed and also take note of other authors who follow the practice of mixing lies side by side with truth as if they were *equally relevant*. It is our intent to equip the student and inquirer with eyes to *discriminate* the authentic from the fraudulent, the clean from the corrupt.

A good companion volume for a historical overview of the life of Madame Blavatsky. Is already in print: *The Extraordinary Life and Influence of Helena Blavatsky.* (600+ pages). This volume is by far the most readable and best documented work available. — ED., A.T.³

“She has no need of any man’s praise; but even she has need of Justice.”
William Q. Judge



² Total is slightly larger due to “accrued interest.”

³ It is offered at a discount to subscribers: \$20 for the hardback version; \$15 for the softback; and is also available online at www.theosociety.org/pasadena/tup/-onl.htm

Succession and “Successors”

If our own observation and experience have shown that H. P. Blavatsky’s ideas about apostolic succession are correct we are fully justified in refusing allegiance to any exponent of Theosophy who claims right to successorship on any grounds whatsoever. Nevertheless, Theosophists believe in continuity¹ — the kind of Succession taught by the Buddha. Of him it is related that as bodily death approached he addressed his disciple Ananda in these words,

“It may be, Ananda, that some of you will think ‘The word of the Teacher is a thing of the past; we have no Teacher.’ *But that, Ananda, is not the correct view. The Doctrine and Discipline, Ananda, which I have taught and enjoined upon you is to be your Teacher when I am gone.*”

We need never be deceived by the claims of “Successors” if we keep the above words in mind. To those who have intuition in any degree, the Buddha’s statement is axiomatic, and to all unprejudiced thinkers it is at least logical. As there is succession of the teachings there is also an explanation of the fact of Teachers — but not if we consider them as successors. Unless we are prepared to prove that Jesus was a reincarnation of Krishna, we have no right to speak of him as Krishna’s successor, even though the identity of their teachings demonstrates *its* succession. Unless we can show that Buddha reincarnated in HPB, we should not speak of her as his successor, though the succession of his *teachings* in the philosophy of Theosophy is plain to all who will see.

The recognition of this latter fact will lead to the recognition of true

teachers when they appear. Every so-called “Successor” in the history of the theosophical movement has either altered the teachings or diverted the minds of his followers from them. Not so the real teachers, who prove themselves by the identity of the truths they preach. Said Jesus, “I come not to destroy the law but to fulfill it.” Here we have the criterion; the subject is of sufficient importance to Theosophists and enquirers to make *knowing* worth while in view of claims made and yet to be made.

¹ With the *Heart Doctrine*, it is inner growth and neither “peering about” nor “power struggles” determine such matters. — ED., A.T.