

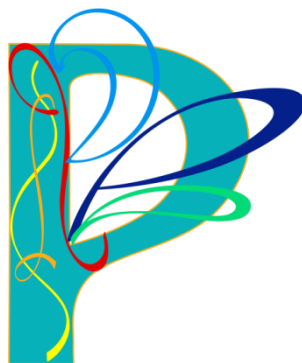
# *Blavatsky hated balls*



From *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, VI pp. 314-15. Frontispiece: Fancy-dress Ball in the Palace of Princess Yelena Kochubei in honour of Emperor Alexander II, 5<sup>th</sup> February 1865, by Mihaly Zichy.

[The following excerpts from letters written by H.P. Blavatsky in the years 1878 and 1879 appeared in the *Bombay Gazette* of October 27<sup>th</sup>, 1884, according to information the accuracy of which could not be ascertained. They were supposed to have been written to a Bombay gentleman. It is more than likely that this party was Hurrychund Chintamon, then President of the Bombay Ārya Samāj.]

**P**EOPLE SAY VERY JUSTLY that I am as rude as a bear and as unfeeling as a hippopotamus . . . I hate dress, finery, and civilized society, I despise a ball room,<sup>1</sup> and how much I despise it will be proved to you by the following fact. When hardly sixteen, I was being forced one day to go to a dancing party, a great ball at the Viceroy's. My protests were not listened to, and my parents told me that they would have me dressed up, or rather according to fashion, undressed for the ball by the servants by force if I did not go willingly. I then deliberately plunged my foot and leg into a kettle of boiling water, and held it there till nearly boiled raw. Of course I scalded it horribly, and remained lame for six months. But I was never forced to go to a ball again. I tell you, that there is nothing of the woman in me. When I was young if a man had dared to speak to me of love, I would have shot him like a dog who bit me. Till nine years of age in my father's regiment the only nurses I knew were artillery soldiers, and then Buddhist Kalmucks, as I already told you.



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<sup>1</sup> [To find out why, see “Blavatsky on Progress and Culture,” also in the same series, last page. — ED. PHIL.]