

Blavatsky defends Blavatsky



Note by Boris de Zirkoff

From *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (MADAME BLAVATSKY AND THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY) VI, pp. 281-84.

The original manuscript of this Letter, in H.P. Blavatsky's handwriting, is preserved in the Archives of The Theosophical Society, Adyar. Though addressed to *Light*, London, the Letter was never published in that Journal, as appears from a careful analysis of the issues for 1884–1885. Madame Blavatsky must have postponed its publication, after she withdrew her resignation from Office "at the urgent request and solicitation of Society friends," as she pointed out in her final letter of resignation dated at Adyar, March 21st, 1885.¹ The present Letter was published for the first time in *The Theosophist*, August 1931. The title of it is H.P. Blavatsky's own.



¹ See *The Theosophist*, Vol. VI, No 8, *Supplement* to May, 1885, p. 195.

Madame Blavatsky's resignation from the Theosophical Society

To the Editor of *Light*.

Sir:

Will you kindly permit me to notify my friends and foes through your columns, that yesterday, September 27th, I FORMALLY RESIGNED OFFICE in the Theosophical Society?

No one could regret more than I do, to give this pain to my devoted colleagues and friends. But I do it from a deep sense of duty to the Society, before whose interests all private consideration must give way.

For some time past — to be exact, since the very day when I overstepped the *legal* boundaries and gave out the secret of my whole life, namely what I knew about Occultism and its Custodians — I seem to have awakened against Theosophy all the fiends of the nether world, now domiciled on our earth. Persecution, suspicion — opposition, from simple cavilling at words, to the expression of the most malignant hatred — are dogging our steps wherever we direct them.

Had I to face them alone, *i.e.*, in my personality and private capacity I might have bowed my head in full humility, from a feeling that this was only my *Karma*: I have thrown the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven in their crudest and (owing to my personal inability) undigested form to be trodden upon, and *have* to bear my penalty. [282] But it is not I alone who am the sufferer. In my proud desire to benefit my fellowmen, and my vain endeavours to do what I sincerely thought (and still think) was good, I have brought unwittingly suspicion, almost opprobrium upon the Society itself. Thus, a sort of indignity has been put upon hundreds of most respectable, most pure-minded men and women, whose sole mistake was not to have separated sufficiently, the abstract principle from the concrete personalities; a mistake which led, in a way, to hero-worship. It is since my arrival in Europe that I have begun to realize that so long as my name is attached to the Theosophical Society, the latter can never prosper, can never pursue its studies and execute its mission in the right way. If I would save the healthy body, I must lop away from it the limb that is pronounced by my charitable judges incurably diseased. Between *être* and *paraître*,¹ the world ever chooses the latter expedient; I cannot. Therefore, I am surely doomed to be misrepresented as long as I live. What right have I to drag our Society into and under such false lights?

¹ [The paradox of *being* as opposed to *appearing to be*, in other words, the changeless real versus the ever-changing unreal. Cf. “. . . the mass of mankind accept what seems as what is; nay, are often touched more nearly by appearances than by realities.” Niccolo Machiavelli, *Discourses on the First Decade of Titus Livius*, Bk. I, Ch. 25. Translated from the Italian by Ninian Hill Thomson in 1883. — ED. PHIL.]

Though I have not yet the means of knowing what is in the supposed “letters” of mine (telegraphed about to *The Times* by its Calcutta correspondent) as published by a missionary *Christian* magazine since this journal has not yet reached Europe — I know, nevertheless, that no such correspondence between myself and the wicked treacherous woman just expelled from the Society, ever took place. Such alleged letters of mine are surely impudent forgeries. The theory of the supposed “muslin” Mahatmas is the creation of a man and wife whom Col. Olcott and I saved in 1879 from starvation in the streets of Bombay; who have since found a ready home with us, and brotherly affection for five long years; and who, as Mr. St. George Lane Fox (just returned from Adyar where he lived for eight months) can tell you — have repaid us with the blackest ingratitude and the most villainous treachery, for which misdeeds and many others they were expelled from the Society by the Board of Control, in May last. The “muslin” Mahatmas and the “letters” are their revenge — a soap-bubble for the [283] wise, a heavy sledge-hammer with which the prejudiced and the unfair will vainly try to knock out the last breath from the Theosophical Movement. It is now found, moreover, that it was they, who had tried, during the whole five years they lived with us, to make me suspected as a “Russian Spy” and the Theosophical Society as a “dangerous *political* Movement.”

Nevertheless, and notwithstanding the apparent absurdity of this new charge, the scandal created is sure to be very great. It will take months to prove the alleged correspondence a forgery, and the publication itself a libel gotten up during our absence, by those meek men of God — the missionaries; it will require but one day to connect our names and the Society in your columns with a new and ridiculous scandal. Therefore, since the Society is now firmly established and since it suffers only through its connection with myself — the *chief*, if not the *only* target for the poisonous shots of our many enemies I have come to my present resolution.

Henceforth I cease to hold the official position of Corresponding Secretary in our Society, and I am even willing that it should be forgotten, if possible, that I was ever one of its two active founders. I break — for a long time, at any rate — every connection with the Headquarters, with the Parent Society, as a body, and with its two hundred Branches. *I shall not return to Adyar, before I have vindicated the Society of every villainous aspersion upon its character*, and had the purity of its motives better recognized. To begin, I have placed my official resignation in the hands of the President-Founder for submission to the General Council of December, at Adyar. In order, however, that the kind neighbours should have no ground for inventing a new calumny, I say here beforehand, that I shall not leave Europe until this new infamous *imbroglio* — the joint production of missionary hatred and the revenge of two expelled members — is proved to be false, as it shall be by Col. Olcott who returns home by the first steamer. The Society, if it derives no further benefits, will certainly suffer no additional troubles from me. [284]

Thus, from this day, Mr. Editor, you may open your columns unsparingly to any kind and variety of abuse against the personality known as H.P. Blavatsky. I have retired into private life, and will mind it very little. It was the honour of the Society that I had in view, whenever I was moved to answer misrepresentations of its Corresponding Secretary. I am now prepared to receive personal vilification with a calm worthy

of that of Mr. Bright or Gladstone. I only hope that it may be remembered, that whatever I appear, or may be in reality, my mistakes and shortcomings are *mine* and have nothing to do with the Theosophical Society.

Very soon, I hope, I will retire to a locality where no one is likely to meet me and no ordinary mail can reach me. After a time, when it is shown that my absence notwithstanding, the occasional manifestations of power by the Mahatmas, and their communication, whether personal or by correspondence with some of the elect members, are going on as before; that phenomena, in short, are taking place in the same way as they always have; and that nothing is virtually changed by my withdrawal; then only will our opponents perceive, that whatever the real nature of our Mahatmas, whether made of flesh and bones, or of “bladders and muslin” — they are certainly not the creation of your very obedient servant,

H.P. BLAVATSKY

ELBERFELD,
September 28th, 1884.

