

*Who can mend
the broken Society?*



A theosophical fable by Franz Hartmann

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[In *The Letters of H.P. Blavatsky to A.P. Sinnett*, p. 158, this “fable” is attributed to Dr. Franz Hartmann. See Compiler’s Note overleaf.]

ONCE UPON A TIME, in a country far across the Indian ocean, there was a society of people who wanted to hear and investigate the music of the spheres. They called their society “Harmony,” but there was very little harmony among them; on the contrary, they quarrelled a great deal amongst each other, for, their society was made up of men and women of different nationalities, different characters and different opinions. But to make up for this deficiency, they had in their possession a musical instrument, upon which — if it was properly tuned — the music of the spheres could be heard. This instrument however was almost constantly out of tune, and the winds from the four corners of the earth would then blow into it and it would give forth on such occasions very discordant sounds. To attune it, it was necessary that a great Genius from the upper spheres should descend and put it in order, so that the music of the spheres could be heard.

It was indeed a very queer instrument, and what is still more remarkable about it, is the fact, which will hardly be believed by *sensible* people, that if a person whose mind was very inharmonious, would come near it, it would begin to make a very disagreeable noise.

The safe-keeping of that instrument was entrusted to the president of that society, and that president was so proud of its mysterious qualities, that he wanted to show it to everybody, and asked everybody to come and listen to the harmony of the spheres.

Now there was a society of non-musical but learned men in a country not far from here, and the president of the harmonial society went to them and told them about his mysterious instrument. They however did not believe him and said that there was no such thing as a “music of the spheres.” The intrepid president however insisted that there was, and he promised, that if they would send someone to look at that instrument, he would show them how it was constructed, and he would ask the great Genius of the upper spheres to come and play a tune — for their instruction and edification.

Consequently the learned men of the West put their heads together and consulted with each other, and the result was that they selected a smart boy and asked him to go across the big water to look at the great Genius from the upper spheres, and to

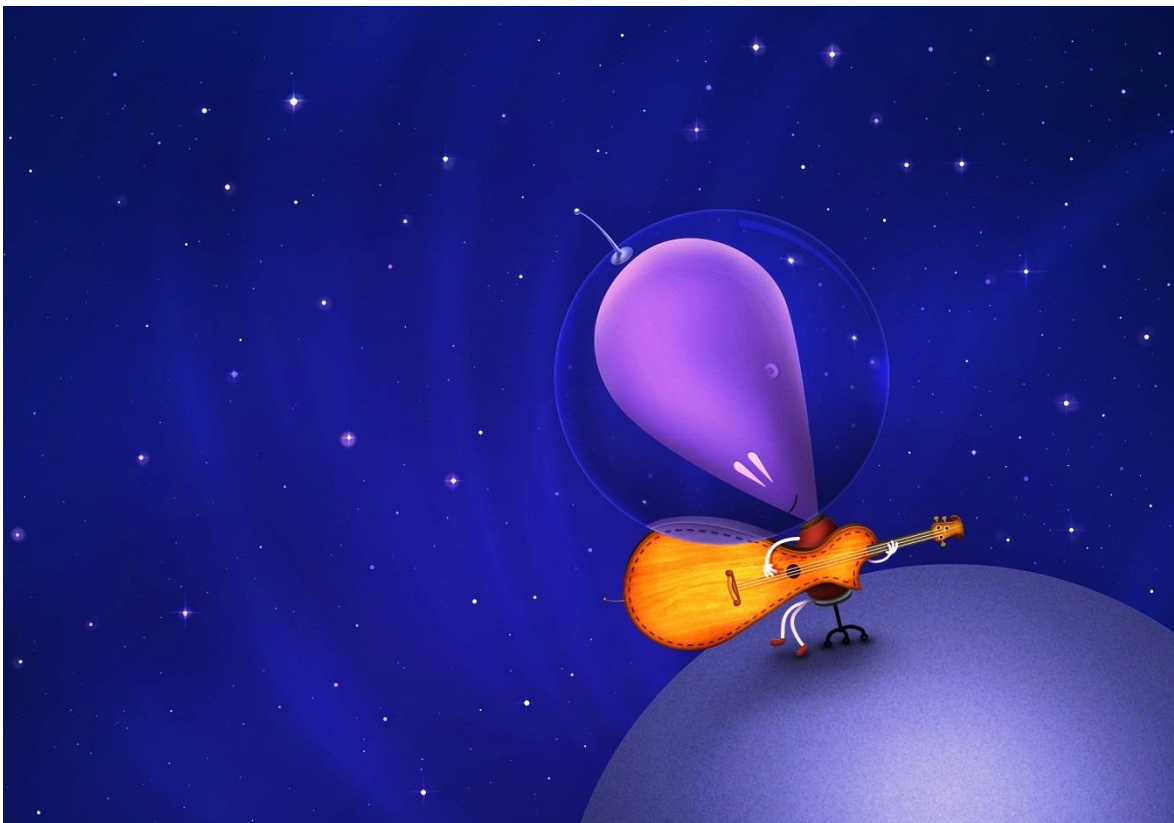
report the result of his observations to those whose heads had grown to be grey in the acquisition of scientific opinions.

The smart boy went and looked at the instrument, but when he came there it gave forth only discordant sounds, because his own soul was not in harmony with it, and the more he worked with it, the more discordant did it become. The president then took out his book of incantations and tried all kinds of conjurations to force the Genius from the upper spheres to come and play a tune for the smart boy, but the Genius would not come.

So the smart boy took his travelling bag and went home again and told his fathers in learning, that he did not see the great Genius and did not hear the music of the spheres, and the learned men stuck their heads together a second time and consulted with each other, and the result was that they said the smart boy was wise and that the president of the harmonial society was — mistaken.

Now, when the members of the harmonial society heard that important decision, they became very much distressed and they went and destroyed the instrument, because they said that if they could not have an instrument upon which the music of the spheres could be heard at all times, they would rather have no instrument at all. Consequently the society dissolved and the members went their way, some of them attempted to attune their own souls to the harmony of the spheres, others believed that the great Genius had never existed; but the keeper of the instrument sat down and wept bitterly.

H.



Answer, continuation, and conclusion of the fable by Madame Blavatsky

Introductory note by Boris de Zirkoff¹

[In *The Letters of H.P. Blavatsky to A.P. Sinnett*, in Letter No. LXII, p. 158, H.P.B. wrote: “You will read Hartmann’s ‘Theosophical Fable’ and our answer to it sent to you with a few more explanations.”

Hartmann’s article, it would seem, is an allegorical description of the situation in the Theosophical Society in 1885-86, called forth by various false accusations against H.P. Blavatsky.

The MS. of H.P. Blavatsky’s “answer” is a fragment in her own handwriting, now in the Archives of the Theosophical Society at Adyar. It was originally published in *The Theosophist* of May, 1962. Blavatsky’s words are not only a comment but a continuation and conclusion of the “Fable,” giving a vivid picture of the problems of the Society as seen by its “Broken Instrument.” This is what she says:]

. . . “the keeper of the instrument sat down and wept bitterly. . . .” So would the “Instrument” were it not so broken as to be unfit to emit even a sound. . . .

The fable is deeply significant and very profound. It is to the very point and the author of it *was inspired* — the mangled remains of the “Instrument” answer for it, though *its* endorsements are now of little, if any use. The “Theosophical Fable” ought to be published in the *Theosophist*; and if it is not it will only speak the more against the obduracy of the ex-“keeper” of the “instrument,” and his unwillingness to confess publicly his great sin — for believing in human justice, in human benevolence, fairness and the gentlemanly feelings of “a Society of non-musical but learned men.” And the “fable” ought to be read by every Theosophist, every member of the *never* “Harmonical Society” and meditated upon. For, besides the individual Karma of every member and the collective Karma of the “Harmonical Society” whose practice differed so widely from its rules and purposes — there is the great sin of its leading members and chiefs. They have *desecrated* the name (and names) of the “Genius of the Spheres,” and the Genii descend no more. The present trouble has arisen in consequence of such desecration. The Mahā-Chohan of the Genii has foretold it four years ago. The chief President was warned repeatedly in the beginning by the voice of his “instrument”; it protested in vain, and finally it was swept along itself with the current of enthusiasm, and added its own voice to proclaiming things holy in public, and throwing pearls before swine, and casting that which was sacred to the dogs: the swine are now treading upon the pearls and the dogs are rending the givers. The light that shone in the Darkness which comprehended it not — is now out: Darkness has put its heavy extinguisher upon it.

This would have never happened had the light been sacredly preserved in its own birth-place and sphere — India. But the veneration of her sons for that light was laughed down to scorn; it was called “hero-worship,” mocked and finally represented as a screen to hide unholy practices. The names of the Genii are now dragged into publicity and figure in full in the *Report*. None of the *Presidents* would listen to the sage advice to keep their knowledge of the Genii secret; and the holy names were prostituted publicly by every scoffer. KARMA.

¹ Compiler and Editor of *H.P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*.

There now remains but one thing to be done, if the “Harmonical” Society would be kept alive.

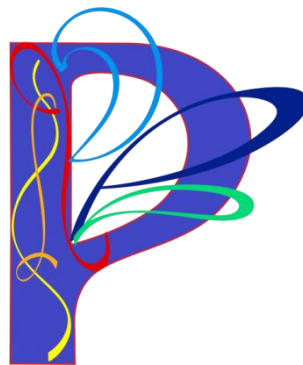
Let its President do as the ex-Corresponding Secretary *has* done: depose himself before he is deposed by others, — and the Society will die a week later. But let the Society — now dishonoured because there never was real harmony in it but rather personal and individual selfishness — unite together at last and wait patiently and prepare thro’ *active* work for the advent of a *Paraclete* who may yet be drawn to, and sent to them before the end of the cycle in (1897).

The present “instrument” could never have been destroyed by any “learned” Society. It is the *unlearned* in things occult and spiritual, among the members of the Harmonical Society, who are now breaking it to atoms themselves; those for whom the old instrument has played itself to death, and that was the first to draw their attention and open their ears to the “music of the spheres” however poorly it may have rendered the heavenly melody itself. And now it lies broken into fragments shattered more every day by the kicks of those for whom it sang and laboured. . . .

But the “Genius of the Spheres” means to pick up the mangled pieces of the instrument once more and glue them together *as He alone can*. No violin is played better upon, none emits more musical sounds than that one which was broken and mended. The Paganini of the broken *Stradivarius* is still alive and He will play upon it again but only for those few who will “attune their souls indeed to the music of the Spheres.” The instrument will belong to these and have no “Keeper.” How many such few will remain? Time will soon tell.

[The following is H.P. Blavatsky’s note to A.P. Sinnett, at the bottom of page 2 of the original MS.]

(Had no time to copy. Send this answer but better to H. His dear sister writes such a loving good letter swearing she “will attune her soul to the music of the Spheres.” If I were you: I *would* publish his fable in the *Theosophist*.)¹



¹ *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, VII pp. 53-54c