

*Who should be invited to
theosophical meetings?*



Should an invitation be extended to the rich and famous?

From *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (THE FACTS BROUGHT BEFORE MASTERS) XII pp. 59-63.
Frontispiece: Betty, by James Durden, Keswick Museum and Art Gallery.

Facts brought before Masters.¹

The party on Monday last, consisted of between 47 or 50 Theosophists. Each had been asked to bring friends. The Countess and I.C.O. invited most of them, and of these I find two-thirds of the guests interested in Theosophy and one-half of them having accepted tickets for “Thursday” meetings. All our home-Theosophists spoke Theosophy, each trying to interest his group. I am told they worked admirably and Thursday next will show the results. Yet, as A.B. seemed dead against the thing, I got determined to get from the right quarters the opinion of Masters. I found I was right and there was nothing in the Mondays that could be brought against the T.S. or ourselves. It is the Countess and I.C.O. who bear the expenses, and as they do it for Theosophy they work in accordance with the programme.

Answers to some questions concerning this.

Uncertain about the correctness of my own impressions I addressed the following queries and received the replies as stated.

Was I wrong in encouraging the proposed monthly receptions with the view of interesting some society men and women in the T.S. movement?

Not in the least. The time is short, and as the Sage says: “No effort is ever lost. Every cause must produce its effects. The result may vary according to the circumstances which form a part of the cause, but *it is always wiser to work and force the current of events than to wait for time.*” Unless sought for, no man or woman of the better classes and education will come to you at this stage of opposition and struggle; and by not coming they will never learn the truth about earnest Theosophists and their meritorious efforts to win the day and unveil truth.

¹ [The original Manuscript of this statement in H.P. Blavatsky’s own handwriting is in the Archives of the former Point Loma Theosophical Society. It is unsigned and undated and was apparently sent to W.Q. Judge. It must have been written when the Blavatsky Lodge in London was beginning to grow and expand rather rapidly, which would be in 1888–1889. Confronted with diametrically opposing views from various types of people, Blavatsky must have felt the urge to ask these questions.

Countess Constance Wachtmeister was at the time managing the Theosophical Publishing Society and was the head of the Library and the Propaganda Fund. The initials I.C.O. stand for Mrs. Isabel Cooper-Oakley. Annie Besant was against the idea of inviting all these fashionable people to such functions as are discussed here.

This Manuscript was originally published in *The Theosophical Forum*, Covina, California, Vol. XXVI, January 1948. — *Boris de Zirkoff.*]

Is it likely that the Theosophists who give these parties as those who help them should be regarded as frivolous?

If their motive is not frivolous, what should it matter, if they are? Let them fix their eye on the goal before them and never lose sight of it — and thus shall they be justified.

Is it untheosophical to ask into the house persons of the world, rich and well-to-do people, who have their carriages and who dress fashionably?

To question the right of such or any other people to participate in the “Movement,” is in itself untheosophical. If Theosophists realize that every man is a component and integral part of universal brotherhood and of Humanity, then, whoever he may be, he is entitled to a trial, at least. That which affects one, will act and react on all. The motto of the Headquarters of the T.S. should be — “rigid justice to all.” If it is right to care for the poor and those who suffer, it is as right to care for the rich and all those who will unavoidably be brought to far greater sufferings, unless warned and shown the true cause of all such Karmic sorrows. The poorer a man, the more sad his life, the nearer he is to the end of his punitive Karma; the richer his neighbour, the more is full of pleasures his life, the nearer he is — unless he acts in the right path — [to] his Karmic doom. Help the poor, but pity the ignorant rich.

How much truth is there that the Monday party filled the house with Elementals, with the spooks of frivolity, *etc.*?

You said yourself and very correctly that the Thursday meetings crowd was as bad, as most of the visitors come moved more by morbid curiosity than sympathy, by more latent prejudice and ill-feeling than interest in your work. Every crowd has its emanations; every gathering — and the larger it is, the more potent its occult excretions — its spook-creating effluvia. The gatherings at the “Club” are as bad; the crowds in Lecture Halls, still worse. The motive, however, for facing them in each case being meritorious and pure, no harm will be allowed to come to those who bear the “Elementals” with the holy object of doing ultimate good.

Am I wrong in thinking that our Theosophists in doing as they did, have really made a sacrifice? That they have put their personalities to discomfort and taken upon themselves trouble, expenditure of money, loss of time, *etc.*, for the sake, merely, of helping the Movement, and spread of our ideas?

No; you are not wrong. It was no pleasure for most of them, but simply duty.

They are not to be blamed then for such gatherings? I mean for trying to make these receptions attractive; for dressing and having music, *etc.*?

I do not see why they should be blamed. Every Theosophist does what he can and ought to do it on the lines he can work upon and knows how. One carries his energies among one group of people, works for one class of men. Another tries to do the same among those he sympathizes with the most. Every man is an embodiment of different ideas, and while he lives and moves on this plane, has to work through and with the help of his physical body, which is the necessary instrument that enables him to come in contact with matter and to control it, to mix with other people and influence them. Why should they not dress these bodies? The personality should be

neither exalted nor neglected. The T.S. may be compared to a human body. Each organ performs a different function, apart from others, yet all work for the body and help one another. Why expect the brain to digest your food and the muscles of your legs to think out ideas? Why should the heart say to the tongue — “Move not, your jabbering disturbs me,” if the tongue performs its duty allotted to it by Nature and for the benefit of the whole body? The *Self* is the Master of the body and it is his duty not to allow his mental equilibrium to be disturbed by anything that may befall his physical body, or to refuse its use under any circumstances, if that use be of any benefit to his neighbour. But it is also his duty to guide his heart-emotions and not let these emotions guide him. Tell those who surround you that they are each of them a Self different from the “Self” of his Brother or Sister, and that whatever the body of one may be led to do for the benefit of all and in an absolute Spirit of unselfishness — is meritorious . . .

When it was declared that should the Master Himself give the orders to remain in the house or participate in these “frivolities” the Master’s orders would not be obeyed, what should I have said?

Nothing. The party who declared it being the only responsible one for the statement.

Just so; but what I want *You* to state is the Occult aspect of such attitude, the Nidāna aroused, so that I may repeat your own words. Was this remark right? or wrong? and if so — why?

Everyone has a right to act according to his own conscience; but it is the nature of such act of conscience that decides whether it will be right or wrong. Suppose a “pledge-order” came to do something base and criminal — for instance sell one’s son or daughter, or rob in a legal way one’s neighbour. Then no pledge could avail. The “order” would be something going entirely against a universally recognized law, a principle. But in the case in hand the situation is quite different: here the “Order” would concern something that was only a personal prejudice based on party-spirit. The pledged party cannot go against such an innocent thing as a social gathering in the name of Theosophy, but does so, opposing her co-students and colleagues on grounds entirely selfish and personal, a sin in itself. Were then, such an order ever given (which luckily for all concerned it never will) and the pledged person refused to obey it, though knowing that since it was given there must be something serious involved in it, then — you know, what the effects of it would be.

I know, but then the “party” does not know it.

Then she ought to. A *direct* “order” is a rare thing indeed and a most serious one. You have no right to let any one of them remain in ignorance.