

*Madame Blavatsky on the
Christian missionaries in India
who carry, under their black
gowns and white ties, a bladder
full of gall instead of a heart.*



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Thou shalt not raise a false report: put not thine hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous WITNESS.¹

The *Indian Witness*² is our old Methodist friend — the *Lucknow Witness*³ — in disguise. Why the godly creature should have cast off its skin, is a problem to be set aside with the other ways of Providence quite as mysterious and puzzling to the God-fearing Christian as they are to the infidel Theosophist. Whether it suddenly felt the need of proving its ubiquity as one of the “Witnesses” to the God of Abraham and Jacob, and so volunteered its inestimable services; or, that it was *subpoenæd*, and, with the “people’s dollar” in its pocket, had to enlarge its field of operation, in order to give evidence on a broader scale; or, again, that it found Bengal a fitter locality — from a climatic [77] point of view — to threaten the obstinate heathen with damnation, are all delicate points which we need not raise at present, nor lose our time to discuss. However it may be, it has quietly shifted its headquarters from provincial modest Lucknow, and we find it in the very centre of religious fermentation — the proud capital of Bengal — Calcutta. Our prying, psalm-croaking well-wisher and colleague was right. Its choice was certainly judicious, as it has now before its prophetic and inspired eye a far broader horizon, a far wider scope for religious reflection and critical observation than it could ever hope for in Mussulman Oudh. All the specialists agree in saying that the “City of Palaces” is the best manured spot with the theological guano of stray birds of prey of every feather, in all India. Hence, it is the most fertile land for missionary “plant” and for raising reformers and “Christian witnesses” on it, of every colour and species. Calcutta, as we all know, is the very hotbed of brilliant

¹ *Exodus*, xxiii, i

² [Monthly Methodist Newspaper. Official Organ of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Southern Asia. Calcutta: Methodist Pub. House, 1882]

³ [Weekly Methodist Newspaper established in 1872, and subsequently renamed *Indian Weekly*.]

oratory and world-famous preachers, from the mellifluous Babu Keshub Chunder Sen — preaching Christ and Durga — down to the mealy-mouthed dissenters on the editorial staff of our Wesleyan contemporary, gushing over the departure and virtues of another “Christian Witness,” as they call Major-General Crofton, whosoever that gallant warrior may be Anyhow, the *Lucknow-Indian Witness*, having placed itself in an excellent position, from whence to spy and encourage the variegated specimens of converted preachers running amuck for their heathen brothers’ scalps, we had fondly hoped that, as an eyewitness, it might have now amended its evil ways; that it had become a trifle more truthful in its denunciations of the iniquities perpetrated by all the *non-Christian* sects and societies; and less exaggerated in the evidence brought to bear upon the moral beauty and sanctity of every stray Christian lecturer. Alas, we were once more disappointed! The *Indian Witness* is as false and untruthful, as slandering and gushing as was its Lucknow Sosia — no mean compliment, by the way, to the latter. Acting on a different policy than the missionary papers generally do, we mean to substantiate our charges. [78]

In its issues of February 25th and March 4th, we find ourselves, very unexpectedly, receiving high honours, and a prominent place in the editorial paragraphs of that organ of deep Methodist thought. Its meek editors chuckle with suppressed delight; and their large, apostolic hearts seem overflowing with Christian love and charity — the very essence of Christism — as they couple our humble names with that of the “great” Lecturer, and still greater libeller and caviller, Mr. Joe Cook, of the backbiting Army of the Lord. It is no doubt, from that most trustworthy personage, that the no less trustworthy Methodist journal got the following bits of reliable information? Says the *Indian Witness* in its issue of March 4th:

Defections from the ranks of infidelity are becoming somewhat frequent of late. Colonel Olcott recently named D.M. *Bennett*, Colonel *Ingersoll*, and Mr. *Bradlaugh*, as the three most worthy “martyrs” of the age, and now the American papers tell us that Ingersoll *begins to show signs of receding from his extreme positions*. He no longer denies the existence of the soul after death, although he uses an “if” in speaking on the subject. Intimate friends say this is only one of many indications of a change that has been coming over him recently; meanwhile, Mr. *Frothingham*, the strongest, and perhaps the most influential, of the avowed disbelievers in America has confessed that his system of infidelity has proved a failure, while Mr. Abbott, a well-known leader of the extreme school, has just written a letter, saying that he had withdrawn from the Free Religious Association, because he could not induce the body with which he acted to say a single word in repudiation of the identical charges which Mr. *Joseph Cook* brought against Bennett and his friends in Bombay. (?) The same charges had been made by Mr. Cook in America, and Mr. Abbott, himself an avowed infidel, was the only man in the Association who was willing to wash his hands of the accusation. *Truly, our Theosophists seem ready to open a cage of very unclean birds in our Indian cities.*

We have italicized the five glaring misstatements composing the five sentences, contained in about two dozen of lines. They are all represented as facts, but, as the reader will see, consist of three skilful misrepresentations, of one clumsy falsehood,

and of one calumny of the kind so be loved by, and so constantly resorted to, in the missionary organs, devoted to proving the superiority of the Christian morality over that of the *false* religions of the Hindu systems. We will enumerate the misstatements. [79]

1 Colonel Olcott has *never* either published or named Mr. D.M. Bennett, Colonel Ingersoll, and Mr. Bradlaugh as “the three most worthy martyrs of the age.” Our President having nothing to do with the Western materialistic Free-thought, and being well acquainted with the lives of the three gentlemen above named, has respect and sympathy for them personally, but none whatever for their extreme views. Knowing, therefore,

(a) Colonel Ingersoll, as a very happy, prosperous man, successful throughout his lecturing career, always coming out triumphant from his squabbles with the bigots who attack him, and one who probably never had one hour’s “martyrdom” in his life; and

(b) Mr. Bradlaugh as rather the reverse of a martyr, inasmuch as he certainly gives more trouble to his persecutors than they can ever give to him — he could not have uttered such an absurdity. What he said and maintains is, that those three gentlemen had done more to upset dogmatic Christianity in England and America, and to arrest its progress even here, than any other three men living.

And hence, that they had to suffer for it in their reputations torn to pieces by vile calumny and the efforts of untruthful and unprincipled Christian zealots.

A martyred truth-seeker.

As for Mr. Bennett, though this sentiment has never found room in Colonel Olcott’s public utterances, for there was no need for it, yet the editor of the *Truth-Seeker*¹ may justly be regarded by all those who know him personally as a “martyr,” and the victim of a gigantic and the most shameful conspiracy ever resorted to, in order to get rid of a dangerous opponent. We, who know something of his private life, and believe in the impartial judgment of some of our best friends in America, who knew him for years, maintain that he was made a martyr to, and has suffered for, that cause of freedom for which every right-minded man in America will stand up and will die for, if necessary. We certainly do not include in the latter category the majority of American clergymen and missionaries, nor yet the fools and bigots who become their blind tools.



¹ [Cf. De Robigne Mortimer Bennett (1818–1882):

Truth seeker tracts upon a variety of subjects, by different authors. New York: D.M. Bennett, Liberal and Scientific Publishing House, 1881.

A truth seeker in Europe: A series of letters written home during a ten weeks' visit. New York: D.M. Bennett, Liberal and Scientific Publishing House, 1881.

A truth seeker around the world: A series of letters written while making a tour of the globe. New York: D.M. Bennett, Liberal and Scientific Publishing House, 1882.]

And knowing so much, notwithstanding, and to the face of Mr. Joseph Cook, and his pharisaical supporters, we proclaim [80] Mr. Bennett¹ a kind, truthful, quiet, right-minded man, imperfect and liable to err, as every other mortal, but, at the same time scrupulously honest, and as incapable of spreading false reports even against his bitterest enemies, as the latter are incapable of doing anything else. Impenetrable as they are to any decent feeling of justice, forgiveness or charity, most of them carry, under their black gowns and white ties, a bladder full of gall instead of a heart.

2 Colonel Ingersoll has not shown the slightest sign of recanting, or of “receding from his extreme positions.” To our knowledge, and having heard him lecture years back, he has never *denied* the principle of immortality, but had only questioned the possibility for any man of obtaining any certainty to that effect. Is it his latest pamphlet, “What shall I DO to be saved?” or his sharp rejoinder to Judge Jere S. Black, on the subject of the Christian religion² that shows any such sign of “receding”?

3 The news spread by other American false WITNESSES to the effect that Mr. Frothingham “has confessed that his system of infidelity has proved a failure,” is denied by that eminent gentleman himself, in the papers. This is what the Reverend M.J. Savage, the personal friend of Mr. Frothingham, said in his Discourse delivered

. . . upon authority from Mr. Frothingham himself, to explain more fully the latter gentleman’s present position, and remove certain misconceptions of that position made by the press, *especially by the evangelical religious press of the country.*

The latter, of course, being as prompt as ever to catch at a straw, and to spread *false* reports in order to maintain its reputation for disseminating the *truth* of God. If the *Indian Witness* is eager to know the *exact* position of Mr. Frothingham, the most intellectual and broad-minded of those Freethinkers who are called the “Free Religionists,” it may learn it now.

In a letter republished in the Boston *Banner of Light*, January 7th, 1882, and other papers, Mr. Fred. L.H. Willis informs us that: [81]

From Mr. Savage’s explanation of Mr. Frothingham’s position, if we may so term it, we learn that the representative of the press who interviewed the latter gentleman and elicited from him the statements that have called forth such wide spread comments, instead of taking notes of what was said, trusted to his memory, and consequently misstated . . . some of Mr. Frothingham’s positions.

For example: Mr. F. does not think that “unbridled freethought leads to a dreary negation called materialism.” “On the contrary,” says Mr. Savage, “he holds that no science worthy the name of a science can possibly tend that way.”

¹ [As definitely stated, both by Master M. and the Tibetan Brother known as Djual Khool, D.M. Bennett was at the time one of the “agents” used (unknown to himself) “to carry out the scheme for the enfranchisement of Western thought from superstitious creeds.” The high esteem for him on the part of the Adept-Brothers may be seen by consulting Letters XXXVII and XLIII of *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, and Col. Olcott’s *Old Diary Leaves*, Series II, pp. 328 et seq. — Boris de Zirkoff.

Consult “Blavatsky on the Travelling Truthseeker” and “Tributes to De Robigne Mortimer Bennett,” in our Theosophy and Theosophists Series. — ED. PHIL.]

² See November number of the *North American Review*.

*Nor does he believe that revealed religion is stronger today than it was twenty years ago, as has been so triumphantly asserted.*¹

He would limit thought in no direction. *He would go back to no past church statement or creed. He believes that the work of the iconoclast is not yet finished, and denies that he has any disposition to recall one word that he has spoken or published.*

That settles the question. If this is “confessing that the system of infidelity (in the sense of the sectarians and dogmatists) has proved a failure,” then we can expect the *Indian Witness* to say one of these days that we have confessed to the *missionary papers* as to the most truthful organs in the world. But what is Mr. Frothingham’s real position? Mr. Savage tells us that in so many words:

“For many years,” says Mr. Frothingham to his friends, “I have been inclined to try to prove that everything comes out of the earth below, that religion is purely earthly in its origin, something made by man in his effort to perfect himself, and I have not taken account enough of the working in the world of a divine power — a power above man working on and through him to lift and lead.”

I hope that new light will break out, *not of God’s words in the sense of a book, but of God’s universe through new manifestations, through natural methods in the human soul.*

This is the expression of *pure theosophy*, and the very essence of it. Therefore, Mr. Frothingham is merging with every day more into Spiritualism and Theosophy; and rejecting the Bible, which he contemptuously styles a “book,” he “would go back,” he says “to no past church statement or creed.” How does this tally with the *Indian Witness*’ truthful statements?

Falsehoods elevated to Truths.

4 We never knew a Mr. Abbott, nor do we know of any Mr. Abott, who knows us, least of all one, who would feel [82] obliged to come out as our champion. Nor has our Society, nor have we ourselves anything to do, or in common with the “Free Religious Association.” Therefore, the statement given out that a Mr. Abott withdraws from that Society, because *he could not induce that body to repudiate “the identical charges which Mr. Cook brought against Bennett and his friends in Bombay”* is a deliberate and impudent falsehood, whoever may be its author. For all we know, its first part (regarding Mr. Bennett) may be true; nevertheless, it is utterly false in its concluding words. To begin with, no one had (not even ourselves), nor was any one expected to repudiate any *charge brought against us* by J. Cook, since with the exception of the insane and ridiculous charge against the “THEOSOPHISTS” — *i.e.*, Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky — having come to India to learn sorcery and then to teach it in their turn, “to the mediums already exposed” — no charge was ever preferred. There was plenty of direct and vulgar abuse, and, perhaps; hazy hints and suggestions which made people laugh more at the lecturer than at *what* he had said, and that is

¹ By Mr. Cook for one.

all. But so far neither the noisy Cook, nor its servile admirer — the *Indian Witness* — have ever substantiated any charge worthy of being noticed.

“*Truly our Theosophists seem ready to open a cage of very unclean birds in our Indian cities*” is the concluding strike of the little Methodist viper. We do not know of any *uncleaner* birds in India than the crows and vultures, of the genus *maleficus* of the *Theologus* family; unless it be the American bustard, which began to emigrate here in masses of late. All such feed on the heathen refuse, and boast of it as of a dainty dish. As for the Theosophists, their “cage” has never yet contained an unclean bird, but it found itself immediately expelled and pecked out of the society as every other element that pollutes it. Let the *Indian Witness* read our *Rules* and *Statutes* carefully before it ventures on any more such calumnies as the one quoted; and let its editors beware of what they say, lest they find themselves one day compelled by law, to publish a full retraction and an apology to the Theosophists: as even were the editors of the [83] *Dnyanodaya*¹ and of the *Calcutta Statesman*. Of course, in offering this salutary advice we bear in mind the wise proverb of Solomon, the King of the 700 wives and the 300 concubines, that saith:

An ungodly WITNESS scorneth judgment; and the mouth of the wicked devoureth iniquity.²

Yet, we derive some hope and consolation from the verse that directly follows, since it promises that:

Judgments *are* prepared for scorners and stripes for the back of fools.



¹ [A Marathi periodical published by the American Marathi Mission, a Protestant missionary group]

² *Proverbs* xxix, 28

Suggested reading for students.



She being dead, yet speaketh.

- BLAVATSKY ABOUT TO UNVEIL ISIS
- BLAVATSKY AGAINST ECCLESIASTICAL CHRISTIANITY
- BLAVATSKY AGAINST SPIRITUALISM
- BLAVATSKY CUTS DOWN TO SIZE A CARPING CRITIC OF HETERODOXY
- BLAVATSKY DEFENDS ISIS UNVEILED
- BLAVATSKY ENLIGHTENS THE SCEPTICS OF HER MOTHERLAND
- BLAVATSKY EXPELS A FRIEND OF COMMUNISTS
- BLAVATSKY HATED BALLS
- BLAVATSKY ON A CASE OF OBSESSION
- BLAVATSKY ON A HEAVY CURSE
- BLAVATSKY ON ANIMAL SOULS
- BLAVATSKY ON BULGARIAN SUN WORSHIP
- BLAVATSKY ON CHRISTMAS AND THE CHRISTMAS TREE
- BLAVATSKY ON ELEMENTALS AND ELEMENTARIES
- BLAVATSKY ON FOETICIDE BEING A CRIME AGAINST NATURE
- BLAVATSKY ON HINDU WIDOW-BURNING
- BLAVATSKY ON JESUITRY IN MASONRY
- BLAVATSKY ON MARRIAGE, DIVORCE, AND CELIBACY
- BLAVATSKY ON NEBO OF BIRS-NIMRUD
- BLAVATSKY ON OCCULT ALPHABETS AND NUMERALS
- BLAVATSKY ON OCCULT VIBRATIONS
- BLAVATSKY ON OLD AGE
- BLAVATSKY ON OLD DOCTRINES VINDICATED BY NEW PROPHETS
- BLAVATSKY ON PLATO'S TIMÆUS
- BLAVATSKY ON PROGRESS AND CULTURE
- BLAVATSKY ON RELIGIOUS DEFORMITIES

BLAVATSKY SPEAKS SERIES
SUGGESTED READING FOR STUDENTS

- BLAVATSKY ON RITUALISM IN CHURCH AND MASONRY
- BLAVATSKY ON SHAMBHALA, THE HAPPY LAND
- BLAVATSKY ON SPINOZA AND WESTERN PHILOSOPHERS
- BLAVATSKY ON SUNDAY DEVOTION TO PLEASURE
- BLAVATSKY ON TEACHINGS OF ELIPHAS LEVI
- BLAVATSKY ON THE BOOGEYMEN OF SCIENCE
- BLAVATSKY ON THE BOOK OF ENOCH
- BLAVATSKY ON THE DOOMED DESTINY OF THE ROMANOVs
- BLAVATSKY ON THE ELUCIDATION OF LONG-STANDING ENIGMAS
- BLAVATSKY ON THE HARMONICS OF SMELL
- BLAVATSKY ON THE HIDDEN ESOTERICISM OF THE BIBLE
- BLAVATSKY ON THE HISTORY AND TRIBULATIONS OF THE ZOHAR
- BLAVATSKY ON THE INTROVERSION OF MENTAL VISION
- BLAVATSKY ON THE KEY TO SPIRITUAL PROGRESS
- BLAVATSKY ON THE KNIGHTED OXFORD SANSKRITIST WHO COULD SPEAK NO SANSKRIT
- BLAVATSKY ON THE LETTERS OF LAVATER
- BLAVATSKY ON THE LUMINOUS CIRCLE
- BLAVATSKY ON THE MODERN NEGATORS OF ANCIENT SCIENCE
- BLAVATSKY ON THE MONSOON
- BLAVATSKY ON THE NEW YEAR AND FALSE NOSES
- BLAVATSKY ON THE NEW YEAR'S MORROW
- BLAVATSKY ON THE QABBALAH BY ISAAC MYER
- BLAVATSKY ON THE QUENCHLESS LAMPS OF ALCHEMY
- BLAVATSKY ON THE RATIONALE OF FASTS
- BLAVATSKY ON THE ROOTS OF ZOROASTRIANISM
- BLAVATSKY ON THE SECRET DOCTRINE
- BLAVATSKY ON THE TEACHINGS OF ELIPHAS LEVI
- BLAVATSKY ON THE VISHISHTADVAITA PHILOSOPHY
- BLAVATSKY ON THEOSOPHY AND ASCETICISM
- BLAVATSKY ON WHETHER THE RISHIS EXIST TODAY
- BLAVATSKY REBUTS UNSPIRITUAL CONCEPTIONS ABOUT GOD
- BLAVATSKY'S LAST WORDS
- BLAVATSKY'S OPEN LETTER TO HER CORRESPONDENTS

BLAVATSKY SPEAKS SERIES
SUGGESTED READING FOR STUDENTS

- GEMS FROM THE EAST
- INDUCTIVE REASONING LEADS TO FAKE DEDUCTIONS
- MADAME BLAVATSKY ENLIGHTENS THE SCEPTICS OF HER MOTHERLAND
- MADAME BLAVATSKY ON THE PHILOSOPHICAL MIND OF THE CHINESE
- OBITUARY TO MIKHAIL NIKIFOROVICH KATKOV
- OBITUARY TO PUNDIT DAYANAND SARASWATI
- OPEN LETTER TO THE AMERICAN SECTION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
- OPEN LETTER TO THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY
- OPEN LETTERS TO THE AMERICAN CONVENTION
- PAGES FROM ISIS UNVEILED
- PAGES FROM THE CAVES AND JUNGLES OF HINDOSTAN
- PAGES FROM THE SECRET DOCTRINE 1 - ABRIDGED
- PAGES FROM THE SECRET DOCTRINE 2 - FULL TEXT
- PANTHEISTIC THEOSOPHY IS IRRECONCILABLE WITH ROMAN CATHOLICISM
- ROSICRUCIANISM WAS AN OFFSHOOT OF ORIENTAL OCCULTISM
- ROSICRUCIANS EMERGED AS AN ANTIDOTE TO THE MATERIAL SIDE OF ALCHEMY
- THE HERMETIC FIRE OF THE MIND IS THE KEY TO THE OCCULT SCIENCES
- THE REAL MEANING OF THE FIRST LINE OF GENESIS
- THE SECRET DOCTRINE (1888) VOL. 1 OF 2 ON COSMOGENESIS
- THE SECRET DOCTRINE (1888) VOL. 2 OF 2 ON ANTHROPOGENESIS
- THOTH IS THE EQUIVALENT OF HERMES AND MOSES
- UNPOPULAR PHILOSOPHER ON CRITICISM AND AUTHORITIES
- UNPOPULAR PHILOSOPHER ON THE EIGHTH WONDER
- UNPOPULAR PHILOSOPHER ON THE MORNING STAR
- WE ARE MORE OFTEN VICTIMS OF WORDS RATHER THAN OF FACTS
- WITHOUT THE REVIVAL OF ARYAN PHILOSOPHY, THE WEST WILL FALL TO EVEN GROSSER MATERIALISM

