

Obituary to Mikhail Nikiforovich Katkov



The German and Austrian riff-raff seethe with happiness, for there is no one now who can crush their lying brains under his heel.

From *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, [LETTER TO THE MOSCOW HERALD] XIII pp. 359-61.

London, August 14th 1887

[Dear Editor,]

I have no idea into whose hands this letter may fall, or who will read it. But whoever he may be, he surely will be a *Russian*, and everyone who is truly Russian will understand that it has been written not merely for the sake of propriety, but under the weight of a sincere and heavy grief over the death that has shocked us all.

For four days I have been in a daze. For seven years I have written for the *Moscow Herald* and the *Russian Messenger*, and never had but kindness and gentle condescension for my ungrammatical Letters from India, and never will I forget it. To me the *Herald* as well as the *Journal* are indissolubly connected with the image of the deeply revered Michael Nikiforovich. These, however, are my personal feelings which are of no interest to anyone else. How much importance even in my own estimation do they have in comparison to the loss which Russia has suffered in his death! He is no Russian, and no patriot, who in these trying days does not recognize this death as an irreparable loss for our long-suffering fatherland; and that no other similar true sentinel of its national interests lives now, and possibly there will be none for a long time to come. That is why those Berlin and Austrian riff-raff rejoice and seethe with happiness — for there is no one now who can crush their lying brains under his heel.

What a misfortune seems to pursue Russia! Skobelev and I.S. Aksakov — all her most faithful servants are being [360] taken from her; and now the greatest of patriots, the *only* publicist before whose name both Germany and England trembled, the defender of Russia, Michael Nikiforovich, suddenly dies! Is it a curse? It is almost as if some dark forces were weaving an invisible network around the native land, and there is no one now to cut its meshes by a mighty and truthful word. For anyone who, like myself, has long lost all hope ever to see my native land again, but who has not lost any of his warm love for it — quite to the contrary — such a one will understand how all this love was for me mirrored by, and cantered in, during the last two years, in the *Moscow Herald* Editorials of the one who has passed away. I devoured them, and in view of the dishonest and downright *mean* coalition of European publicists against Russia, the only hope lay in these Editorials. And now there is no one to uncover their intrigues, and to point out so unerringly their falsehoods, as only the late Michael Nikiforovich knew how to do. Forever shut is the watchful eye which safeguarded both the honour and the interests of Russia.

Even the Englishmen are envious of Russia.

Even the Englishmen are envious of Russia. I enclose an excerpt from the staid and conservative *St. James Gazette*, wherein the Editor defends the memory of the great patriot and wishes one like him for England.

This is what the *St. James Gazette* of August 3rd 1887, has to say:

Some declarations about Mr. Katkov which appeared in the German and English press are very unfair . . . They attack him for his jingoism, (?) with which he tried to push away Germany on the West, and England on the East. Of course Katkov was a dangerous man, but only for those who seemed to be, or really were, the enemies of his Fatherland. The Germans might not regret the death of a man who helped to Russify the Baltic provinces. The English might feel better for the disappearance from the scene of the man, one of whose latest plans was the rousing of rebellion against them of India, with the help of Ireland's revolutionaries and Indians (Sikhs). But what of it? We must admit that Katkov was a true patriot, who put first, [361] before everything else, the interests of his Fatherland (as he understood them) and does not allow any compromises to other nations to interfere with them. We know that personally he was not against England, but when England and Russia were in a fight for supremacy, he had no hesitancy to defeat and humiliate England, *i.e.* he did what should be done by a Russian. A few more Katkovs would be very useful to us.¹

In deep and sincere sorrow I repeat — everlasting and perpetual memory of the late Michael Nikiforovich Katkov,² and may the Heavenly Powers send similar men to Russia in the future.

HELENA BLAVATSKY
("Radda-Bai")



¹ [We are indebted to Melitza Y. Cowling for translation of the Russian quotation from the *St. James Gazette*. — Boris de Zirkoff.]

² [Mikhail Nikiforovich Katkov, 1818–1887, conservative Russian journalist, influential during the reign of tsar Alexander III. He was a proponent of Russian nationalism, an important figure in the creation of a feeling of national identity and purpose. After the Crimean War of 1856, and the Polish insurrection of 1863, Katkov abandoned his liberal Anglophile views, and rejected the early reforms of tsar Alexander II. Instead, he promoted a strong Russian state supported by an enthusiastic Russian people with a unified national outlook. His ideas were based on Western ideas, as opposed to Slavophile ideas. His literary magazine *Russkii Vestnik* (The Russian Messenger) and newspaper *Moskovskie Vedomosti* (Moscow News) were successful and influential media for promoting his views.]

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 an Intro- and retrospective dream”
- “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 Timaeus”
- “Blavatsky on Progress and Culture”

- “Blavatsky on Religious deformities”
- “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”
- “Inductive reasoning leads to fake deductions”
- “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”
- “Gems from the East”
- “Madame Blavatsky enlightens the sceptics of her Motherland”
- “Madame Blavatsky on the philosophical mind of the Chinese”
- “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”
- “Panttheistic 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 Cosmogogenesis”
- “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”

