

*Prometheus, the Light-bringer,
hurled down to the bowels
of the earth.*



Abstract and train of thoughts

Part 1. Annie Besant, one of the most intellectual women of this age, publicly announced her failure to find truth in the current wave of scientific materialism.

Annie Besant, having entered upon the royal highway of true Freethought, she now stands on a secure spot, wherein every collateral path lies in the sunlight of Truth in Nature, and where no personal preconception, no partisan fanaticism, is ever permitted to overshadow it. 9

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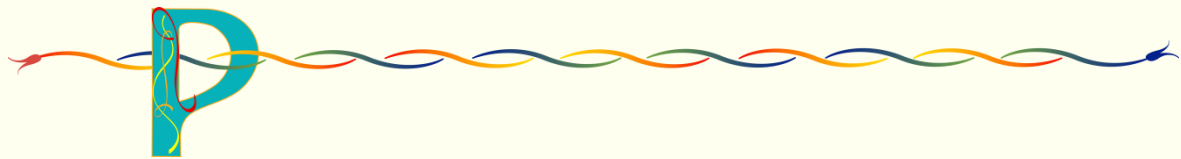
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Part 1. Annie Besant, one of the most intellectual women of this age, publicly announced her failure to find truth in the current wave of scientific materialism.

First published in *Lucifer*, (MONTHLY REPORT), Vol. V (25), September 1889, pp. 69-77. Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, ("GOING TO AND FRO IN THE EARTH") XI pp. 401-12 (Monthly Report).

In the days when Satan was the great Angel of Judgment, one of the Sons of God, ere yet he was fallen from heaven, it was his duty to report in the heavenly courts on the doings of earth-born men. This function we shall discharge here month by month, touching on the events of the month that are of interest to Theosophists, so that our readers may have a permanent record of matters that bear on our movement. We begin our first record by saying to our beloved enemies:

Lie not one to another.

— *Colossians* iii, 9

A wicked man who reproaches a *virtuous* one, is like one who looks up and spits at the sky; the spittle soils not the sky, but comes back and defiles his own person. So again he is like one who flings dirt at another when the wind is contrary, the dirt does but return on him who throws it. The virtuous man cannot be hurt, the misery that the other would inflict comes back on himself.

— *Sutra of Forty-two Sections*

The earnest recommendation of the Apostle of the Gentiles seems to fall flat on our Christian friends of the clerical persuasion, and *suppressio veri, suggestio falsi*¹ appears to have become the motto of their public organs.

And yet all things differ in this world, even clerical papers. While a few of the type of the *Church Reformer* jubilate and almost glorify Theosophy for the pleasure of crowing victory over the discomfiture of Secularists; others, [402] pre-eminent among them the *Methodist Times*, jump at the opportunity to exhume dried up mud for use against Theosophy and its leaders. This they do, we are told, with the object of opening the eyes of those who may have remained hitherto blind, and to refresh the public memory. But here again the Christian *modus operandi* varies in process and intention. When the God and MASTER of the Christians wanted to restore sight to the blind man "he spat" on the parched soil of a street in Jerusalem, "made clay of the spittle and anointed the eyes" of the patient, thus restoring his sight. The editor of the *Methodist Times* proceeds on other lines. He spits also, but it is only his venom, into the now fossilized mud of the *Report* of the S.P.R.² He opens with it no one's eyes, but relieves his Christian heart of some of its heavy weight of narrow sectarian bigotry and hatred for the freethinking Annie Besant, at the expense of the no less-hated H.P. Blavatsky. So empty is his own mind of any original conception that, in order to *crush*, as he fondly hopes, the latter individual, the man of God actually uses as weapons the arguments and expressions *ad literatim* of his mortal enemy —

¹ [Suppression of truth (tantamounts to) suggestion of untruth.]

² [Society for Psychological Research]

G.W. Foote, the editor of the *Freethinker* — and in his rapture conveniently forgets the quotation marks. The “notorious Infidel,” as Mr. Foote is generally called by the orthodox “Faithful,” having written in his pamphlet¹ that Mdme. Blavatsky was now presumably Mrs. Besant’s “guide, philosopher and friend,” the reverend editor of the *Methodist Times* forthwith proceeds to repeat the lucky expression and to build thereupon an editorial which he calls “Mrs. Besant’s New Teacher, Madame Blavatsky, and her Indian Record.” This “record” in the *Methodist Times* consists of two kinds of fibs; of false hypotheses emanated from the prolific brain of a young Australian *gentleman*, a kind of “Jack-the-medium-killer,” who served the Psychical Researchers in the triple and quadruple capacity of detective, counsel for prosecution, judge and jury; and of equally false hallucinations of the said “Editor, Missionaries & Co.” Thus while he carefully repeats the stale and long exploded speculations of the *Report*, he [403] adds to them such undeniably false statements as this:

So complete was this evidence [of fraud, if you please] . . . that this remarkable [theosophical] movement collapsed as speedily as it has risen, *and today the number of men in all India willing to sign themselves F.T.S.*² *might almost be counted on the fingers of one hand.*

If the correctness of Mdme Blavatsky’s “Record” is to be judged by this *item* in it, then is she fully vindicated. With the five newly-formed branches at Ceylon there are now in India 144 Theosophical Societies,³ *i.e.*, many thousands of “Fellows” added to those of 1884.⁴ Not half-a-dozen of F.T.S.’s resigned in consequence of the “Report,” “Mr. Sinnett, Dewan Bahadur Ragunath Rao, the Rai Bahadurs, and Ananda Charlu,” etc., all whose names are so carefully enumerated by the editor, are still F.T.S.’s, still members of our Society, and as alive as ever. On the other hand, new members have steadily increased in number, and the T.S.⁵ is now assuming gigantic proportions — if we consider the incessant opposition, persecution, slanders and deadly warfare against the Theosophical Society.

Thus, one finds that what the *Methodist Times* quotes from other people’s writings is false; and the little that it adds as variations — is untrue. But even the latter sensational news about the collapse of the T.S. in India is a very stale invention. It appeared several months ago in the same *Methodist Times* when they had to defend themselves and their missionaries in India from the but too truthful accusations that Mr. Caine, M.P., brought against them.⁶

But now comes the comical side of the situation. The good Christian editor quotes from the “Hodgson Report” a sentence which makes of Madame Blavatsky “an ac-

¹ *Mrs. Besant’s Theosophy.*

² [Fellow of the Theosophical Society]

³ “The hundred and forty and four . . . which were redeemed from the earth,” and its missionaries, verily! (*Revelation* xiv, 1-3)

⁴ See the official records of the T.S. and the *Supplement to The Theosophist* for January, 1889.

⁵ [Theosophical Society]

⁶ See our *Reply* in the March *Lucifer* of 1889, p. 83. “Thou shalt not bear false witness . . . ”

complished forger of *other people's* handwriting.”¹ This looks ominous as it stands. It might have led the writer of it four [404] years ago to the dock of slanderers, wherein he would have to make good his calumny before jury and public, and it contains a libel gross enough to place the reverend editor of the *Methodist Times* in the same predicament now. But when one analyses the “terrible indictment,” what does one find? Why, that those “other people,” whose handwriting Madame Blavatsky is accused of having forged, are not *people at all*, according to the “Report.” They are not even *materialized spooks*, or astral forms, but simply “fictitious personages,” and “*supposed*” astral forms. How in the world, then, can one be accused of forging a *non-existing* handwriting? — the handwriting of *something which does not exist*, and *has, therefore, no hand to write with?* This is something that passes our comprehension.

Reverend satirists! Don't you think that for the family honour of your caste you should invent something new, some fresh slander and accusation a little less stale and improbable? The famous *Report*, upon the willows of which you hang your Æolian harps, made to groan by every passing wind — cannot be all true on strictly logical grounds. For, the wicked “Jezebel” of the T.S. has either invented the “Mahatmas,” in which case she had also to invent their *supposed* handwritings, and thus committed no forgery, or *she has not*, and in the latter case the *Report* falls to pieces. If she has fabricated these “Beings,” and written letters in their names, then she did not forge “other people's handwriting.” As you have to catch a hare before you can make a soup of it, so a “handwriting” has *to exist as well as the hand* to which it belongs before it can be imitated. One may fabricate a *bogus* letter, but then it is not the handwriting of “other people.” At best, if true — *which it is not* — she would have followed the pious example of numerous Church fathers and ecclesiastics of the “divine miracle” kind throughout these eighteen centuries.

Fantastic proofs of Mdme. B.'s fabricating genius have been, so far, furnished but by one man with the help of revengeful missionaries. Proofs of the fabrication of the Gospels and Christian dogmas are advanced on all sides. Does the latter shake your robust faith, O Methodists? Have the *nine reasons* of Bishop Lardner, adduced by him to show [405] that the only and solitary proof that Christ was an actual living man, known in his day to people outside his followers' fancy, was a clumsy forgery by Eusebius — who *did* forge the handwriting of Josephus — have *they* weakened your faith in Jesus?

And here comes the *suppressio veri* and *suggestio falsi*.² The *Methodist Times* is careful to quote from the *Report* of the S.P.R. that the “communications from a being named Koot Hoomi . . . are undoubtedly written by Mdme. Blavatsky,” and they (the S.P.R.) give the emphatic testimony to this effect of Mr. Netherclift, “the well-known expert in handwriting,” who, by the by, was at first of a different opinion. But they are as careful to conceal the as “emphatic testimony” TO THE CONTRARY, *given under oath*, by Ernst Schütze, “an expert in handwriting,” as well known in Berlin as Mr.

¹ [In 1986, H.P. Blavatsky was exonerated by Dr. Vernon Harrison, Ph.D., Member of the Society for Psychological Research, London, England. For an in-depth analysis consult <https://www.theosociety.org/pasadena/hpb-spr/hpbspr-h.htm> — ED. PHIL.]

² [Suppression of truth is suggestion of an untruth.]

Netherclift is in London. And the latter having made his examination (first from two letters, respectively written by Mdme. B. and “Koot Hoomi”) as “complete as possible,” writes to Mr. Gebhard, of Elberfeld, who had submitted to him the letters, to assure him “most positively” that if he “believed that both letters came from one and the same hand,” he has “laboured under a complete mistake.” And here we quote from Mr. Sinnett’s pamphlet:¹

Berlin, 16th February, 1886

To Commerzienrath Gebhard, Elberfeld.

I have the honour to enclose the desired testimony on the second letter. This letter was written by the same hand as the letter B; and there is not the remotest similarity between A and C, etc. (Signed).

The testimony concludes by affirming that:

The letter A [from Madame Blavatsky], which is written in ink, has not the remotest resemblance with the letter B [from Koot Hoomi], according to the standpoint of a [406] calligraphist, and *they are of different handwritings*. This, my expert testimony, I give on the oath, taken by me, once for all, as an expert in handwriting.

(Signed) ERNST SCHÜTZE

Calligrapher to the Court of H.M. the Emperor of Germany.

Useless to dwell on this any longer. If it is thus that honest investigations are conducted, and of such evidence that people’s reputations are forever blasted in God-fearing Christian England, than the sooner all unpopular characters take themselves off to some deserted island, the better for them.

Let us pass on now to a different kind of

Suppressio veri, suggestio falsi.

Nothing more comical than to read the wild jubilations in clerical papers over Annie Besant’s alleged secession from “infidelity” and her “conversion” to Theosophy. From *Satanism*, the latter has suddenly bloomed into “a belief in God” and become *almost* respectable in the sight of some Christian Sectaries. Yet, it is a matter of great doubt whether such rejoicings — in Christian organs, at all events — are not due more to the supposed discomfiture, occasioned by that “conversion” to the hated Secularists and Freethinkers than to an honest feeling of satisfaction at finding one of the most intellectual women of this age publicly announcing her failure to find truth in the current materialism of the day. The fact is, that the *odium theologicum*² felt by the Churchmen and Dogmatists towards Mr. C. Bradlaugh’s Secularism and the “Foote-

¹ See also *Incidents in the Life of Madame Blavatsky*, by A.P. Sinnett [London: Geo. Redway, and New York: J. W. Bouton, 1886], pp. 323-24.

² [theological hatred]

Wheeler” *Freethought*, so called, had led our traditional enemies and persecutors to suddenly discover in theosophical Pantheism beauties hitherto branded by them as heathenish falsehoods and Satanic snares!

But for the present moment all is changed. Cautiously as it is worded, yet the glorification of Theosophy over the head of Freethought — fondly imagined as prostrate and in the dust — appears prominently in several *Christian* papers, and chief among them is the miniature but aggressive organ [407] of the Rev. Z.B. Woffendale. The *Light of the World*, published “for the spread of Christianity and the *cure* of Infidelity” (*sic*) — (*esoterically*, “cure” should read “abuse”) — sends to the *Light of Asia*, like Jacob to Esau after having deprived him of his birthright, “presents for his brother,” she-goats and rams, “ewes and milch camels,” in the shape of rather forced preference for Theosophy over freethought. Pious Jacob bows seven times to his injured brother. Shall Esau run to meet him and weep, falling on his neck? Alas, no; *Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes!*¹ The *Light of the World* may exhaust its capitals to print as it has done in its August issue in inch-long letters about “MRS. ANNIE BESANT’S CONVERSION FROM ATHEISM TO GOD” (?!); withal, it fails to hoodwink anyone but those who find it convenient to remain blind. If Theosophy were no better than “Satanism” only yesterday, it cannot have suddenly become “theism” and even “God,” today — and this owing only to the said and so-called “conversion.” Nor does the pious editor of this little monthly believe anything of the kind in his heart of hearts; he must know as well as we do that Mrs. Besant is, as a Theosophist, as far from the God of the Theist and the dogmatic Churches of today, as she ever was, when a Secularist. Nay, the reverend editor ought to be told something more. He has to be informed without one moment’s loss of time that Annie Besant is *much more of a Freethinker* now, than she ever had a chance of being, before she joined our ranks. And the reason for it is this: because Modern Freethought shows itself in the person of some of its chief public representatives in England — we exclude, of course, Mr. Bradlaugh from this group — as stubborn in its fossilized views, as bigoted in its special ideas, and as ferociously vindictive and unscrupulous, as any Church sectarians can be. And Theosophy, kind enemies, is the reverse of all this.² [408]

¹ [I fear the Greeks, even those bearing gifts — the warning given to the Trojans that they should not trust the Trojan Horse.]

² The difference that exists between the policy of the editors of theosophical magazines and that of the conductors of the London *Freethinker* is clearly marked by the respective attitudes of their editors and the contents of their journals. *The Theosophist* and *Lucifer* for instance, are ever ready to publish a well-written philosophical article or even a skit against the Society if it contains some truth — as witnessed by the (August) *Theosophist* in the article called “About the Kabbalah” and our serial story “The Talking Image of Urur.” But it remains to be seen whether the *Freethinker* would ever insert one line against the personal views of its editors. We invite anyone to try. Again, neither *Lucifer* nor *The Theosophist* has ever breathed one word against the extreme views of the editor of the *Freethinker*, and our Madras journal has ever defended and expressed sympathy with him in his great trouble when “Blasphemy Law” had, like the car of Juggernaut, almost crushed him. But, if anyone would find scurrilous abuse of Theosophy and especially slander of, and brutal insults offered to, H.P. Blavatsky, caused by Mrs. Besant’s joining our ranks — let him open the *Freethinker* and learn what Freethought is like in its columns.

Annie Besant, having entered upon the royal highway of true Freethought, she now stands on a secure spot, wherein every collateral path lies in the sunlight of Truth in Nature, and where no personal preconception, no partisan fanaticism, is ever permitted to overshadow it.

Judging indeed by the attitude of a few of Mrs. Besant's late colleagues, now her open enemies, they wanted to see her following them as a bondwoman rather than as one made free by the recognition of fact and truth. If to be considered a modern English Freethinker it is held absolutely necessary to be bound hand and foot to the so-called *scientific* materialism of the Vogt and Hæckel school — that crass materialism which destroys all, without ever creating anything lasting — and especially to hold to the vituperating canon of Messrs. Foote and Co., then we doubt whether Annie Besant was ever a Freethinker at all until she joined us. But now she is one by birth-right. As well remarked by herself, some Freethinkers neither “keep open a window towards new light,” nor do they refuse — as they ought to if they were *real* Freethinkers “to pull down their mental blinds.”¹ And seeing all this, and to be consistent with herself she joined Theosophy, and thus became a true Freethinker.² Now Mrs. Besant has entered upon the one royal [409] highway of Freethought. Now she stands on a secure spot, wherein every collateral path lies in the sunlight of truth and fact in nature, as much as these can ever be unveiled by human and finite intellect, and where no personal preconception, no partisan fanaticism, is ever permitted to overshadow it.

Aye, reverend sir, none can know better than you do, that it does not at all follow because Annie Besant has become a Theosophist that (as you say in your August Number) she,

. . . one of the cleverest of the Infidel advocates, has suddenly hauled down the black banner of Atheism and trampled its folds ignominiously beneath her feet.

For, she has done nothing of the kind. Nor has she turned “from Atheism to God,” if *atheism* means simply denial of an anthropomorphic god and refusal to recognize or bow before an *extra-Cosmic* deity. If so, then the Theosophical Society is full of “Atheists.” Nor could Annie Besant be a *Theosophist* were she to turn round on any belief

¹ Pamphlet: *Why I became a Theosophist*.

² It is interesting as an answer to some who persist in accusing us of shifting our views in order to “compass converts,” to quote here a few lines from an article we have written in *The Theosophist* as early as August, 1882. — It is just seven years ago, when Mrs. Besant, misled by a misstatement of our views as to the so-called “Supernatural,” pointed out that belief in the supernatural was not consistent with Secularism. To this we replied as follows:

. . . We beg to assure the *Radical* editors of the *National Reformer*, that they were both very strangely misled by false reports about the as radical editors of *The Theosophist*. The term “Supernaturalists” can no more apply to the latter than to Mrs. A. Besant or Mr. C. Bradlaugh. Our Society is neither a sect of jumping Shakers who invite “the Spirit to move them,” nor a band of Spiritualists who long to hold communion with the “spirits” of the dead . . . Most of our Members decline to believe on second-hand testimony, even in the well-proven phenomena of mesmerism . . . We doubt whether the “scientific materialism of secularism” can ever hope to reach, *let alone surpass, the “scientific materialism” of Buddhism.*

We closed our reply with the hope that our secularist “colleague and Brother,” the editor of the Madras *Philosophic Inquirer*, “will remain forever *true and loyal to his principles of a Freethinker* and — a Fellow of the Theosophical Society.” (See *The Theosophist*, Vol. III, August 1882, p. 278.) Where's the difference between what we said then, and now (See Editorial in the July *Lucifer*), to the editor of the *National Reformer*? Did we seek to “compass a convert” then also?

or school of thought she happened to disagree with and trampling it “under her feet” damn and anathematize it. Theosophy, moreover, as shown in our editorial of July in reply to Mr. Bradlaugh and others, was never synonymous with belief in God — *i.e.*, a personal Being. Our “God” is not even an *intra*-cosmic deity but the COSMOS itself, the soul of nature, its spirit and its body; our creed being, therefore, [410] transcendental PANTHEISM. Is this, reverend sirs, *your* god? You admit the contrary yourself, moreover, for you further say that:

Our Deity is a universal Absolute Principle manifesting in Humanity as in Nature, the Spirit in both being one and inseparable, hence the true Spiritual Brotherhood of Man.

Mrs. Besant acknowledges that she has joined, and has “reasons for joining THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY,” a Society, she remarks, in which “a somewhat subtle form of Pantheism is taught as the Theosophic view of the Universe.”

And she is right in this.

Our Deity is a universal, absolute Principle manifesting in Humanity as in Nature, the Spirit in both being one and inseparable — hence the *true* Spiritual Brotherhood of Man. With us, man *is the offspring of the GODS* (not of God), and *the forefather in the present cycle of still greater gods, in a future cycle*. Such is the creed of our philosophy.

It follows then that if Mrs. Besant has somewhat modified of late her Secularistic opinions with regard — not merely to “another life and worlds,” but — *to other lives and other worlds*, she may still repeat as sincerely now as she did then, when writing the sentence quoted by the *Light of the World* from the “National Secular Society’s Tracts” — “We drive the God idea (of theology and the Churches) back from off the ground we have won.” For the majority of the Theosophists are with the Secularists — in this, at any rate. Otherwise how could we ever be really philosophical and logical?

There is a darkness thrown over the heathen word “theosophy” through the fanciful etymology it has been given in dictionaries compiled by monotheistic lexicographers.

Theosophy, and the *Rules* of its Society if not the embodiment and practical demonstration of the widest tolerance and of the broadest Catholicity would be but a farce. Freethought, which in the views of the lexicographers is only unbelief “which discards revelation” and “undue boldness of speculation” according to Berkeley, is, in the *Rules* of our Society, a *sine qua non* of true Theosophy which being liberty of thought untrammelled searches for and accepts truth, and nothing but the truth, sacred to every lover of Wisdom. Hence, while laughing at this absurdly sudden change of front, evanescent as it is, on the part of several of our Christian contemporaries in our favour, we cannot but feel at the same time, indignant at the strenuous though fruitless attempts made by the *Light of the World* to use us, Theosophists, as convenient weapons in its warfare *against* [411] (if not altogether for “the cure of”) Infidelity. It would fain profit by the darkness thrown over the heathen word “theosophy” through the fanciful etymology it has been given in the Dictionaries compiled by

monotheistic lexicographers, and use the term now, as a sledge-hammer to break the heads of Secularism and Freethought. Against this — we protest. We may not be in sympathy with materialism, and may even abhor it; yet the Theosophical Society ought never to forget that which it owes to Freethinkers. It is to the unceasing efforts of a long series of adherents to Freethought — almost every one of whom has been made a martyr to his convictions at the hands of bigotry — that we, in the present century, owe the very possibility of our existence as an organized body. And the fact that none of us has been or can be now roasted alive in Trafalgar Square — to the greater glory of that God to belief in whom Annie Besant is now alleged to have been converted — is due to the long battle of Freethought against Superstition and dark fanaticism.

Yes, we protest, and Mrs. Besant, we feel sure, will protest along with us. It is just because “her eyes have been opened,” that she can never be converted “to a belief in [a personal Moloch of a] God.” Hence we repudiate any such dire results of her “conversion” to Theosophy as fondly hoped for by the editors of the *Church Reformer* and the *Light of the World*. It may have “fallen like a bomb-shell among the London Infidels” in the sense that it took them by surprise. But, we have too much sincere respect for Mr. Bradlaugh and genuine sympathy for Mr. Foote — as a man who has greatly suffered for his convictions¹ — to ever [412] admit the possibility that one of them “is filled with *alarm, dismay and despair*,” and the other (the dauntless and fearless editor of the *National Reformer*!) “rendered almost prostrate by this sudden secession of Mrs. Besant from the Freethought ranks.”

This is simply inane gush and malicious exaggerations, O pious contemporary.

Mr. Bradlaugh having made the mistake of saying that from his point of view a consistent Secularist cannot be a Theosophist, the editor of the journal for the “Cure of Infidelity” now repeats it, assenting thereto with spasmodic joy. But what next, ye gods of the older Heaven! After the painfully absurd and illogical deductions from Mrs. Besant’s “conversion” by some Christian papers we would not really feel *too* much surprised at finding General Booth’s *War-Cry* claiming her as a convert, and the Salvationists boisterously proclaiming Annie Besant a candidate — as a Hallelujah Lass — for a “harp” in the “Sweet By and By.”

We feel sorry to nip the hope of so many reverend writers in the bud, but truth compels us to do so. We have the courage of our opinions and we can pander to no one, even if occasionally we do fail to carry out theosophical injunctions and our philosophy practically.

¹ Those who had the opportunity of reading the latest pamphlet — *Mrs. Besant’s Theosophy*, by G.M. Foote, and remembered his uncalled-for and shameful attacks upon “Madame Blavatsky,” may wonder perhaps, at this *sympathy*? Let the reader attribute it neither to forbearance, nor desire to render good for evil, but simply to theosophical principles. The editor of the *Freethinker* may become ten times more vulgar and brutal than he has already shown himself on more than one occasion — it does not matter to us in the least. If instead of following the sunlit paths of freedom of thought he prefers to drag its noble car along the miry ruts and furrows of his personal and narrow bigotry, prejudice and likes and dislikes — it is the look out of the Freethinkers of the better kind and does not concern us at all. It is not his *personality* we sympathise with, but only the “Freethinker” (in its abstract sense) who was made to suffer for his convictions, however much they had run off from the right track, that has ever inspired us with a feeling of sympathy. What we think of him personally may be found in our REPLY to *Mrs. Besant’s Theosophy* — *The Thersites of Freethought*, at 7 Duke Street, Adelphi.

It is always dangerous to sail under false colours, especially for those whose recognized motto reads:

There is no religion higher than Truth.

ADVERSARY



Part 2. Slander and malicious poppycock levelled against Theosophists by the press.

From the London “Globe”

First published in *Lucifer*, (MONTHLY REPORT), Vol. V (26), October 1889, pp. 151-55. Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (“GOING TO AND FRO IN THE EARTH”) XI pp. 456-63 (Monthly Report).

Theosophists cannot complain, just now, that they are suffering from a conspiracy of silence on the part of the press. In fact there seems to be sweeping over England a wave of curiosity and enquiry as regards Theosophy, while we are favoured with enough and to spare of criticism wise and — otherwise. The London *Globe* expatiates on Buddhism in Japan, which, being translated, is Olcott in that sunny land; it dilates on “spirits in Council,” which being translated, is Theosophy, Olcott, and H.P.B.; yet once more — and all this in the same issue — it considers, “The invention of new Religions,” which, being translated, is H.P.B., Olcott and Theosophy. Naturally the *Globe* is hostile, but it does not allow itself to be betrayed into deliberate unfairness, and that is much now-a-days.



From the “Weekly Times and Echo”

The *Weekly Times and Echo* is enlivened with a controversial correspondence on the respective merits of Atheism, Theosophy, and Christianity, mostly noticeable for the voluminous ignorance shown by the correspondents of the *isms* they attack, ignorance promptly exposed by other correspondents belonging to the assailed creeds. On the whole, controversy would be more edifying if those who take part in it would take the trouble to acquaint themselves with the views they controvert, and would exclude matters which do not touch on the questions in dispute. [457]



From the “Christian Commonwealth”

The *Christian Commonwealth* is much exercised in mind over what it calls “The Buddhist Craze,” and it opines that

. . . no one would expect such a person as Mrs. Besant to become enraptured with anything that is not susceptible of the clearest proof, unless her mind had first become somewhat unhinged.

This suggestion it borrows from its whilom¹ antagonist, Mr. G.W. Foote, who has been stating from the platform that this is the explanation of Annie Besant’s adoption of Theosophy; he, however, ascribes the unhinging to the loss of her daughter suffered by her twelve years ago at Christian hands. The cause and effect are somewhat far apart in time, and maybe the *Christian Commonwealth*, while adopting the method of attack, will not care to saddle its religion with the responsibility of the “unhinging.” We fancy we have read somewhere that a similar accusation was flung

¹ [formerly]

at one Paul by a gentleman named Festus; nathless¹ Paul cut a deeper mark in the world's spiritual history than did his somewhat uncourteous judge. May it not be just possible, we venture to whisper, that now, as in earlier times, those who are scoffed at as madmen and dreamers may only be a few steps ahead of their fellows. The *Christian Commonwealth* uneasily admits that among the adherents of "Spiritualism and Theosophy" are some of "the brightest intellects of our day." Is it not conceivable that there may be something to be said for a philosophy that attracts these brightest ones?



From a spiritualistic "weekly"

In a Spiritualistic *Weekly* (not *Light*), we find the following delightful if even malicious "flapdoodles" probably inspired by the wits from the Summer Land.

We gather that the term "Mahatma" with which the Theosophists mystify their dupes [*this, from an editor who advertises, and patronizes Spiritualistic Mediums!*] is applied to such reformers as Ram Mohun Roy, who was the founder of Brahmoism, as Mr. Oxley recently showed in his article on Chunder Sen. With a term derived from a foreign language Mme. Blavatsky has succeeded nicely in bewildering John Bull, Brother Jonathan, etc. It reminds us of the pious old Scotch woman who derived much holy delight from a contemplation of that "blessed word — Mesopotamia." [458]

The above "reminds" Theosophists of the quack Doctor Dulcamara who, from the eminence of his rickety platform, raised in the midst of a fair, pours on the heads of the "University" men the vials of his wrath. In this case, it is an editor who supports the phenomena produced by the "departed *angels*" through thick and thin, and who attacks those who do not believe in those materializing seraphs. It does not take long to expose his ignorance. "Mahatma" is a word as old in India as the Sanskrit tongue. It means "great soul," and as it may be applied to every grand and noble heart, Ram Mohun Roy deserved it as much as any other sincere and learned philanthropist and reformer, such as he undeniably was. It is not Mr. Oxley who made the discovery; but the editor of the said Spiritualistic *Weekly* may be pardoned for being ignorant of the fact. As for that other assertion, namely, that it is with this "term" that Mdme. Blavatsky has succeeded in bewildering John Bull, Brother Jonathan, it is as false as all the rest. The person of that name had never pronounced the term "Mahatma" (having used quite another and a more telling one) in America. It was first used by Mr. Sinnett in his *Esoteric Buddhism*, because the Hindu Theosophists used it, applying this adjective to the MASTERS.

When, oh, when will the benighted editors who bark at our heels, vainly trying to snap at them, "speak the truth and nothing but the truth" — *à la lettre, nota bene*,² not as in the present courts of justice.

¹ [nevertheless]

² [literally, note well]

From the “Evening Express” of Liverpool

Slander of the living and slander of the dead! Quite in the spirit of the modern Press. One of the last skits at Theosophy in the *Evening Express* of Liverpool, asking “who are the Theosophists?,” gravely informs the public that the first Theosophists date from the XVIth century and were the

. . . followers . . . of the low-lived humbug, who adopted the high-sounding appellation of Aureolus Theophrastus Paracelsus . . . [a] coarse, vulgar, drunken, and debauched physician, alchemist and astrologer.

And then the *Express* winds up its scientific disquisition by the following lofty [459] Parthian arrow:

In his own day his [Paracelsus’] reputation chiefly depended upon his position as a “quack,” for he pretended to the discovery of an elixir for indefinitely prolonging life. Such was the original Theosophist. People may guess the aims of the body which have adopted the designation [*i.e.*, the Theosophical “body”].

The editors of papers desiring to support their reputation of literary catapults, engines used by the ancient Greeks and Romans for throwing stones and missiles at the enemy, would do well to train their young men and themselves in History. The first historical Theosophists — *i.e.*, those who first used the name, not those who first taught the doctrines — according to the best writers, were the *Neo-Platonists* of the Eclectic Theosophical system in the third century, and even earlier.¹ Paracelsus was not a “quack”; and if he is to be called so, then the Patriarch of the French Chemists, Dr. Brown-Sequard who claims now to have discovered the elixir for prolonging life, and Professor Hammond who supports and corroborates him,² ought to share in the flattering epithet. There are more “quacks” *inside* than *outside* of the royal and imperial colleges of surgeons and physicians. As to the fling that concludes the ignorant attack, it falls harmless. The aims of the T.S. are now better known than ever, and no one need be ashamed of them. We only wish the aims of the *civilized* press were as lofty.



Our sincerest condolences to the Chief of the Detective Department of the Government of India.

The editors of *Lucifer* offer their sincerest condolences to the Chief of the Detective Department of the Government of India. His most cherished ancient delusion has been shattered. He had inoculated the Anglo-Indian mind with the notion that H.P. Blavatsky was a “Russian spy”; and [460] *faute de mieux*³ the enterprising emissary and detective of the London Society for Psychical Research had adopted the same theory to injure his intended victims of the T.S. By repercussion the idea had spread

¹ See *The Key to Theosophy*, 1st chapter.

² See *North American Review* for September 1889, first article, “The Elixir of Life,” by Dr. William A. Hammond. The ingredients of which Dr. Brown-Sequard’s *elixir* is composed are, moreover, of such a filthy nature that the school of modern *Vivisectors* can alone boast of it. We Theosophists call this *elixir* blasphemy against nature and bestiality, if not black magic. — *Ed. Lucifer*.

³ [for want of a better alternative]

through Anglo-Indian channels, like the cholera *bacillus*, to some extent, to the mother country. The Theosophical Society was founded, its phenomena produced, and the “Adepts” *invented*, you see, as a screen for “Russian intrigues” in India — as stated in the famous *Report* of the S.P.R. That no Russian roubles could be traced from the St. Petersburg Bureaux into our pockets, nor any sign be detected of our enjoyment of a “spy’s” emoluments, was a trifling detail; the theory was convenient and enthusiastically adopted. But now comes the Russian censor to prick the balloon in which our amiable traducers were soaring above the level of homely facts; and if they are not endowed with adamantine “check,” such as the American humourist assigns to the “lightning-rod canvasser,” they must perceive the ridiculous position in which they are placed. Denied a “spy’s” reward, and left by the heartless “Imperial censorship” to die or live, as we best may, Mr. Pobedonostseff¹ would forbid his compatriots even to read what we Theosophists write.

The antipathy between the Russian and British Governments is fanned by the Conservative party.

The popular tradition that the antipathy between the Russian and British Governments is fanned by the Conservative party is thus now disproved by the above fact and also by the following: Mr. Smith, the leader of the House of Commons boycotts *Lucifer* in his railway book-stalls, while the Imperial Russian censorship does the same for us in the Empire of the White Tzar. Whether this is a result of the exchange of confidential dispatches, or the benevolent interference of our Karma, which, by causing our literature to become “forbidden fruit,” must end by making it the more attractive to both publics — it is not for us to say. Yet we humbly thank his Excellency the Chief Censor of the Russian metropolis for the [461] wide advertisement given to us. In any other country it would at once double the circulation of our books; in this country of paradoxes, however — “God knoweth.”

Meanwhile we cut out the comminatory paragraph from the *Pall Mall Gazette* of September 20th, inviting to it the attention of our readers and those benighted editors who are inclined to still see in “Mdme. Blavatsky” — “a Russian spy.”



English books proscribed in Russia.

Mr. F. von Szczepanski, of the well-known house of Carl Ricker, at St. Petersburg, sends to the *Publishers’ Circular* the following complete list of all English publications the prohibition of whose sale in Russia has been decreed by the Imperial censorship during the first six months of the current year:

Amaravella, *Parabrahm*. Translated by G. R. S. Mead. Revised and enlarged by the Author, 1889.

¹ [Konstantine Petrovich Pobedonostsev (1827–1907), Russian jurist, senator, chief Procurator of the Holy Synod, and writer. Teacher of Alexander III. Uncompromising enemy of all Occidental ideas and unyielding reactionary who opposed every liberal movement and introduced methods of repression in education and the Press. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

- Blavatsky (H.P.), *The Secret Doctrine: the Synthesis of Science, Religion, and Philosophy*. Second edition, 1888.
- Drage (G.), *Cyril: A Romantic Novel*, 1889.
- Gunter (Arch. Clav.), *That Frenchman!* 1889.
- Ingersoll (R.T.), *Social Salvation: A Lay Sermon*, 1888.
- Ingersoll (R.T.), *The Household of Faith*, 1888.
- Krapotkine (P.), *In Russian and French Prisons*, 1887.
- Ladies' Treasury of Literature*. Edited by Mrs. Warren, Vol. XIII.
- Sergeant (L.), *The Government Year Book*, 1889.
- Sinnett (A.P.), *The Theosophical Movement*, April 15th, 1888.
- Stepniak, *The Russian Peasantry*, 2 vols., 1888.
- Swallow (Henry F.), *The Catherines of History*, Second edition, 1888.
- Theosophy and the Churches: Lucifer to the Archbishop of Canterbury*.
- Watson (Sydney), *Marie, the Exile of Siberia*. (Horner's Penny Stories for the People.) [462]



Angels and ministers of grace, defend us!

Angels and ministers of grace, defend us! What have the poor Theosophists, the conservative Mr. A.P. Sinnett included, to do in the company of such terrible personages as Messrs. Stepniak and Krapotkine? We fervently hope that the “mild” Theosophist is not going to be confounded by Mr. Pobedonostseff with the warlike Nihilists?

* * * * *

We can do no better before closing our laborious journey “to and fro in the Earth” than by quoting from a paper — of some ornithological name — a clever skit at the hopeless ignorance of the world about Theosophy. It is a faithful record of the average conversation about it in the London Drawing-rooms, during afternoon “teas”: →

After hearing Mrs. Besant

Miss Smyth: Oh! my dear Miss Jonesky, how glad I am you have called. I hear you went to hear Mrs. Besant on Sunday. What is all this talk about your trying to get a profit out of Philosophy?

Miss Jonesky (*severely*): Trying to become a prophetess of Theosophy, I suppose you mean, my dear.

Miss S.: Yes, that's it. Sit down and tell us all about it.

Miss J.: Well, my love, you can't think what a sweet thing it is — all about *Altruism* and *Karma*, and the reincarnation of the *Ego* and — er — *Karma-rūpa*, and *Prāna* and *Linga Śarīra*, er — er — er.

Miss S.: Oh! that must be nice. And what do they all look like?

Miss J.: What do which look like?

Miss S.: Why, the *Prāna* and the *Karma* and the *Ego* and — the other dear little things!

Miss J.: (*with a very superior smile*): My dear child, you don't understand. *Karma* is a kind of state that — er — as Mrs. Besant says “presides over each reincarnation, so that the *Ego* passes into such physical and mental environment as it deserves.” [463]

Miss S.: Does it really, now? How exquisitely lovely! And what about the other darlings?

Miss J.: Well, the *Sat* or *Be-ness* is a sort of — er — esoteric cosmogenesis that — er — in fact — differentiates *Altruism*, and *Karma* by the *Linga Śarīra* or astral body, and is the causation of the *Ego*, assuming the *Manas*, or something of that.

Miss S.: How delightfully soothing it seems! Let us go and have some. (*Exeunt*¹ *enthusiastically*.)

* * * * *

¹ [stage direction to exit]

From the New York “Sunday Times”

Dr. Coues asserts that Madame Blavatsky has been expelled from the Theosophical Society — a poor boast dictated by wounded vanity.

The newest cock-and-bull story going the rounds as we find in a paragraph just received is the following:

Madame Blavatsky

Much excitement is caused in esoteric circles by a published statement of Dr. Coues, who asserts that Madame Blavatsky has been expelled from the Theosophical Society.

This is from the New York correspondent of the *Sunday Times*. We offer our thanks to him and beg to inform the credulous correspondent of two facts.

- 1 It is Dr. Coues who was publicly expelled from the T.S. for untheosophical statements.
- 2 We have read that the small Branch of the American T.S. called the *Gnostic*, threatened through their President Dr. Coues to expel Mdme. Blavatsky — from *their hearts*, I suppose, as this was their sole privilege.

But as the said Branch was officially *unchartered* by the Council of the American Section at the same time that its President was expelled — the threat remained what it always was — a poor boast dictated by wounded vanity.

ADVERSARY



Part 3. Beware! He who makes of the Science of sciences a sinful pretext for worldly motives should tremble.

The Theosophical Ideal is so high, that few will fully realize. For the true Theosophist is he who makes Theosophy a living power in his life.

First published in *Lucifer*, Vol. V (27), November 1889, pp. 251-54. Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, ("GOING TO AND FRO IN THE EARTH") XII pp. 26-30.

*Evoe!!*¹

In the benevolence of their hearts, the editors of *Lucifer* offer their sincere condolences to their equitable neighbours and impartial, generous critics, the English clergy and editors, whose cause has just received a bad stab under the ribs from one of their most learned and distinguished prelates. His Grace the Bishop of Peterborough, presiding at the Diocesan Conference at Leicester, on the 25th of October last, made the following direful admission:

The bishop, summing up a discussion on Socialism, said they must be careful, while knowing that many of the advocates of Socialism held doctrines which were very dangerous, that they gave full credit to the nobility of motive and tenderness of sympathy with suffering and wrong which had stirred many of those persons. Christianity, however, made no claim to rearrange the economic relations of men in the State and in Society, and he hoped he would be understood when he said plainly that it was his firm belief that any Christian State carrying out in all its relations the Sermon on the Mount could not exist a week.

Henceforth, let editors disposed to hold up to public condemnation the Theosophical Society because of dissensions among members, and to write comic editorials on "Kilkenny Theosophy," be more reserved, lest this pregnant confession of the Great Anglican Bishop be quoted against them. When Col. Olcott, in his South Place Institute lecture, replying to a carping questioner who sought to confound him by charging ill-temper and uncharitableness on his colleagues, said that the theosophical ideal was so high, that few could fully realize it practically, he spoke a profound truth. If it now be alleged that the Lord Bishop has but placed Christianity and Theosophy on the same level, the natural reply will be that this should make the Christian adversaries of our Society a little more just in their [28] behaviour towards us. There is one notable difference, however, between the Christian Churches and our Society, and it is this: Whereas every baptised child or adult is called a *Christian*, we have always drawn a clear and broad line between a *Theosophist* and a simple member of the T.S. A Theosophist, with us, *is one who makes Theosophy a living power in his life*. We have been often accused of *hating Christianity*. This is as untrue as it is unjust. Some of the teaching ascribed to Christ, teaching which he has in common with other great religious leaders, is admirable. But we would be as untruthful as our accusers, were we to show anything like a friendly feeling or sympathy for dogmas and ritual or that which the late Lawrence Oliphant called *Churchianity*. For it is

¹ [Exclamation of Bacchic frenzy. Cf. Εὖιος, an epithet of Dionysos implying, Well done, my son! — words ascribed to Zeus, when he saw Bacchus returning victoriously from combating the Giants.]

this which deserves far more than the T.S. ever has, to be loudly and fearlessly proclaimed — especially after the Bishop of Peterborough’s confession — Kilkenny Christianity. Verb. Sap.¹



From a “Pall Mall” interview of Grant Allen.

Great minds think alike!

We are happy to find Mr. Grant Allen confessing to *Esoteric Buddhism* doctrines, and his agreement with *The Secret Doctrine*. For this is what he is alleged to have said to a *Pall Mall* reporter who interviewed Mr. Grant Allen upon his views:

“ . . . All the higher forms of religion even now contain traces of the earlier stages. The human race goes so far back.” Here I intervened. “Yes; where do you cradle its infancy — in far Chaldea or, as the new theory has it, in North West Europe, or do you hold the ‘glacial-period-primeval man?’” “Oh,” was the smiling reply, “in my opinion the human race goes as far back as the Miocene period, so far back that our existing continents hardly have assumed their present shapes when man first appeared, and as the whole world was then tropical in climate, man may have appeared anywhere.”

The reader of the above, is asked at his first leisure to open *Esoteric Buddhism*, 4th edition [1885], at *p.* 60, and compare. It is soothing to find that the *beaux esprits se rencontrent*² — at any rate the antediluvian spirit of Dzyan and [29] the spirit of modern anthropological and geological speculation as represented by Mr. Grant Allen. But there, we believe, all agreement ceases, especially on metaphysical and physical teachings. So much more the pity — for modern science.



From the “Methodist Times” and their Madras ally, the “Christian College Magazine”

Amuck!³ In the name of Christ!! An old fugue in the orchestra of slander.

Our friends, the *Methodist Times* are at their old tricks again. Finding their own little . . . intellectual *variations on Fiction* unequal to the occasion, they call in their Madras ally — the *Christian College Magazine*, the paradoxical organ of the “heathen” College of the never-to-be-converted Hindus, which plays once more its old *fugue* in the orchestra of slander. We are told again in the “Patterson Correspondence” that Madame Blavatsky fled from India in 1885, *leaving Madras secretly*. Considering:

- 1 That Mrs. (Dr.) Sharlieb’s *certificate* was published more than once in various papers;

¹ [Abbreviation of the Latin *verbum sapienti sat est*, a word to the wise is enough, *i.e.*, a hint is enough.]

² [*i.e.*, great minds think alike]

³ [Rampant psychopathological behaviour]

- 2 The fact that a kind friend, then and to this day, one of the Madras magistrates, himself saw Mme. Blavatsky off to the steamer;
- 3 That he kindly sent an invalid chair and his own police *peons* to carry in it the personality now accused of having left the country “secretly”; and
- 4 That, moreover, her departure took place publicly, and in full daylight — the charge is rather risky!

False accusations lavished on innocent men and women when the life and reputation of such became a danger to those who envied or feared them.

Plain truth and known facts hold good, however, to the present day, and with all men. Therefore it is quite needless to disprove point by point the other dozen or so *ruses*, all as uncanny as this above-mentioned fabrication. As to the elegant epithets and insulting terms sent by Mr. Patterson to the address of Mme. Blavatsky, they really do not matter. What, or where is she, when compared with the great and eminent men and even *a god*, who were far worse ill-treated than she is, by the bigots of their respective countries, and this invariably only because the victims *were in their way*? No comparison, of course, is here contemplated, as any such would be absurd. Yet the records of history are there to show *false accusations* lavished, in every case, on innocent [30] men and women when the life and reputation of such became a danger to those who envied or feared them. Witness Socrates and Hypatia, Bruno and Joan of Arc, etc., etc. Remember the hundreds of martyrs, the latchet of whose shoes Mme. B. is not worthy of loosening, who suffered tortures and death at the hands of unscrupulous liars, of false witnesses and fanatical murderers. Does not Jesus himself head the hosts of the martyrs for truth in the Christian era? Were the reverend detractors to exhaust the whole vocabulary of Hungerford Market to abuse and vilify her, they would still never approach, let alone surpass, the insults lavished by the Pharisees on the head of Jesus — *their* Christ. “Thou hast the Devil,” said these dignitaries of the “grandmother” Church, the Synagogue, to the God of the present mother Church — “the Man of Sorrows.” And did they not denounce Christ as “that *deceiver* who said . . . After three days I will arise again”? And for that “deception” was Jesus flogged, and spat upon, and crucified; all of which in no wise prevented Mr. Patterson and a host of Mme. B.’s slanderers from worshipping that same Jesus as their God and Master. Nor does it prevent the descendants of those who put the prophet of Nazareth to death, adding, “His blood be on us, and on our children,” from holding their victim to this day as a “deceiver”; and yet prospering, the curse notwithstanding, having wealth enough to buy into bondage the whole of Christendom, and holding actually in durance vile all the crowned heads of Christian Europe!

All of which proves that fate plays ducks and drakes with gods as with mortals; that all of us are born, live and die under Karmic law, in consequence of which law few of us can know who is who, or what is what, in this world of *māyā*. Our sincere advice to the irrepressible Mr. Patterson is, not to attempt, in the words of Job, to bore leviathan’s “jaw through with a thorn,” lest Karma “put an hook into his (own) nose” for the trouble.

ADVERSARY

Part 4. From the firebrand of the American Free Methodist Church.

Fragments of civic ethics from a French vivisector.

First published in *Lucifer*, Vol. V (28), December 1889, pp. 349-50. Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, ("GOING TO AND FRO IN THE EARTH") XII pp. 55-57.

[After some rather extensive quotes from current newspapers and missionary organs, H.P. Blavatsky quotes also a passage from the *Fire-Brand* of the American Free Methodist Church. A very materialistic view is presented with regard to God and the manner in which He is alleged to supply food to his workers. In this connection, H.P. Blavatsky asks the question:]

Going to and fro in the earth, the adversary came across a relic of Paul Bert,¹ the vivisector. He was a practical man it seems; who having succeeded in his praiseworthy efforts to "exile the god" of theology from the schools, tribunals, burial grounds and hospitals of France, proceeded to replace the old by new primers; hence his "Civil Catechisms," for the use of the future citizens of the great Republic. He wrote himself a *Manual of Civic Ethics*, and invited others to do the same. His appeal resulted in the creation of a model [56] library of Primers full of civic morality and scientific revelations. We choose a fragment out of the *Catéchisme Laïque* (of 1883), as a sample of the great truths in them (revealed to, and by, Science).

What is God — A. "I do not know."

Who created the Universe? — A. "I do not know."

Whence mankind? Whither does it tend? — A. "I do not know."

What have we to expect after death? — A. "I do not know."

When and how has man appeared on earth? — A. "I do not know."

Do not you feel ashamed of your ignorance? — A. "No shame to be ignorant of that which no one ever knew."

If you deny all the truths of alleged religion, what are the truths that you do accept? — Answers:

"I believe in the emancipation of mankind through natural science;

I believe in the harmony created by the enactment of all our duties;

I believe in the regeneration of my country with the help of democracy;

I believe in the conquering genius of our nation which ever was and will be the bearer and promoter of light and freedom."

This is followed by the teaching of other truths of the *natural religion* according to the last word of natural science. *Zoological evolution* is explained. The descent of the bird from the lizard is taught as follows:

The lizard, we are told, was consumed with gigantic ambition; it wanted to become a bird, and fly sunwards; this was its *idée fixe*. The dreams and aspirations of that flat-headed quadruped reptile were so decided and intense, its will so strong, that obedient nature had to submit and act accordingly (*sic*).

¹ [Paul Bert, 1833–1886, French zoologist, physiologist and politician.]

Obedient to whom, or what? What is it nature had to submit to? — A. “To the eternal right, the law of evolutionary life, diffused throughout the universe in such quantity that it overflows every spot of it, ever absorbed and ever renewed.”

Go on! — A. “I say, that once that the *taste* for evolution had been developed in the lizard, nature had to undertake the duty of transforming it into a bird. The lizard felt one day the appearance of feathers on its scaly back, and standing on its hind legs, proceeded to move its four paws, rhythmically which it did until these gradually changed into wings.” [57]

It is interesting to note that the mere uninterrupted action of intense will power and desire, is regarded by Science as a *magic* agent calculated to perform that which the occultist call phenomena through *Kriyāśakti* (“creative will”) which transforms one object into another, and even *created men* out of material on hand, in days of the *pre-Adamic* mankind. Thus one point is gained. But had these *Catéchismes Laiques* prevailed and become popular, what kind of a race would Frenchmen have become, brought up in the sole faith in the “principles of lizard evolution” bereft of even an inkling of metaphysics?



The shape of the hand shows character and training.

A very curious study is that of Chiromancy,¹ and one that may well be looked into by the biologist. It is known that at Paris the most infallible way of registering criminals has been by taking the impress of the fingertips. People can change their faces, but their hands never. The shape of the hand, as a whole, undoubtedly shows character and training. To be sure of this, it suffices to set side by side the hand of the artist, the man of administrative ability, and the navy. Contrast the fingertips of the weaver, the watchmaker, the collier. The relative lengths of palm and fingers are also said to show character, the passional and physical nature showing itself in the undivided part of the hand, the intellectual and psychical in the fingers. The thumb, again, is significant, showing in shape and length the balance of the character — “a capable thumb,” as a novelist said, describing a clever woman. And then the lines: fewer and simpler in the more direct and simple characters, numerous and complex in the more many-sided and sensitive natures. If any of our readers care to look into this queer byway of speculation, they will find Mrs. Louise Cotton, 43 Abington Villas, Kensington, W., a very intelligent expounder of the subject.

ADVERSARY

¹ [Cf. Astrology, Chiromancy, Cartomancy, in short, all the arts of divination, rest ultimately on numbers and their occult powers, as a foundation. — *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (TRAITÉ ÉLÉMENTAIRE DE SCIENCE OCCULTE – REVIEW) IX p. 45

Alchemy, Astrology, Occult Physiology, Chiromancy, exist in Nature and the exact Sciences—perhaps so called, because they are found in this age of paradoxical philosophies the reverse—have already discovered not a few of the secrets of the above arts. But clairvoyance, symbolised in India as the “Eye of Siva,” called in Japan, “Infinite Vision,” is not Hypnotism, the illegitimate son of Mesmerism, and is not to be acquired by such [occult] arts. — *ibid.*, (OCCULTISM VERSUS THE OCCULT ARTS) IX p. 252]

Part 5. Madame Blavatsky appeals to the law.

First published in *The Path*, New York, Vol. V (6), September 1890, pp. 187-88. Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (MME. BLAVATSKY APPEALS TO THE LAW) XII, pp. 332-34.

[From H.P. Blavatsky] *To the Editor of the Path*:

While I fully agree to the proposition that we should forgive our enemies, yet I do not thereby lose “my appeal unto Cæsar,” and in that appeal, which is now made to the Law and not to the Emperor, I may keep the command to forgive, while for the protection of the name of a dead friend and the security in the future of Theosophists, I hale into the Courts of the land those who, having no sense of what is right or just, see fit to publish broadcast wicked and unfounded slanders.

For some fifteen years I have calmly stood by and seen my good name assailed by newspaper gossips who delight to [333] dwell upon the personal peculiarities of those who are well known, and have worked on for the spread of our Theosophical ideas, feeling confident that, though I might be assailed by small minds who try their best to bring me into reproach, the Society which I helped to found would withstand the attacks, and, indeed, grow under them. This latter has been the case. It may be asked by some members why I have never replied to those attacks which were directed against Occultism and phenomena. For two reasons:

- 1 Occultism will remain forever, no matter how assailed, and
- 2 Occult phenomena can never be proved in a Court of Law during this century.

Besides, I have never given public currency to any of the latter, but have always objected to the giving out of things the profane cannot understand.

But now a great metropolitan daily paper in New York, with no knowledge of the facts in the case, throws broadcast before the public many charges against me, the most of which meet their refutation in my life for over a decade. But as one of them reflects strongly upon my moral character and brings into disrepute the honourable name of a dead man, an old family friend, it is impossible for me to remain silent, and so I have directed my lawyers in New York to bring an action against the *N.Y. Sun* for libel.

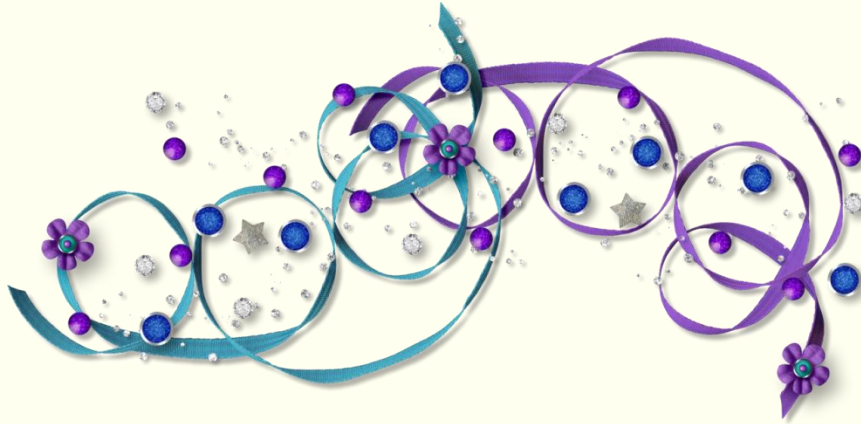
This daily paper accuses me of being a member of the *demi-monde* in '58 and '68, and of having improper relations with Prince Emile Wittgenstein, by whom the paper says I had an illegitimate son.

The first part of the charge is so ridiculous as to arouse laughter, but the second and third hold others up to reprobation. Prince Wittgenstein, now dead, was an old friend of my family, whom I saw for the last time when I was eighteen years old, and he and his wife remained until his death in close correspondence with me. He was a cousin of the late Empress of Russia, and little thought that upon his grave would be thrown the filth of a modern New York newspaper. This insult to him and to me I am bound by all the dictates of my duty to repel, and am also obliged to protect the honour of all Theosophists who guide their lives by the teachings of Theosophy; hence my appeal to the Law [334] and to a jury of my fellow Americans. I gave up my alle-

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giance to the Czar of Russia in the hope that America would protect her citizens; may that hope not prove vain.

H.P.B.



Part 6. On The Theosophical Society and its detractors.

First published in *Lucifer*, Vol. VII, October 1890, pp. 168-70. Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, [THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY AND ITS DETRACTORS] XII pp. 375-81.

Introductory Notes by Boris de Zirkoff.¹

On September 10th 1890, the New York *Daily Tribune* published the following report:

THE ĀRYAN THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY DETERMINES TO DEFEND ITS REPUTATION IN THE COURTS.

The second fall meeting of the Āryan Theosophical Society, at No. 8 Union Square, last evening, was full of interest not only to the large number of members present, but also to the visitors, who listened with rapt attention to the discussions. W.Q. Judge, president of the New York branch of the Society, acted as chairman. After the secretary had read the minutes of the last meeting, and Mr. and Mrs. C.A. Griscom had been elected members, Mr. Judge announced that a new branch of the society had been established in Jamestown, N.Y. This increased the number of branch societies in the United States, he said, to forty-three.

Mr. Judge then called for the resolutions in reference to the publication in the *New York Sun* on July 20th.² They were submitted for the consideration of the society at their last meeting. The resolutions were first amended, and were then passed unanimously without discussion. They read as follows:

Whereas, A most gross and false aspersion upon the moral character of the members of the Āryan Theosophical Society was made by the *New York Sun* of July 20th, in an article purporting to be an interview with Dr. Elliott C. Coues, of Washington; and,

Whereas, The vindication of the good name of the society demands either a voluntary formal retraction of these charges by the *Sun*, or else compulsory damages through process in the courts of law; therefore, [376]

Resolved, That it is the conviction of the members of the Āryan Theosophical Society that the society, as such, should seek its vindication.

That it is the sense of the society that all necessary legal measures should be taken upon the said libel in the *Sun* against the Āryan Theosophical Society, and also such as shall lead to retractions; and that the trustees should take action to that end, as shall be advised as proper by competent legal advisers.

That the trustees are hereby directed to draw from the reserve fund \$500 to be applied to the expenses of the legal proceedings already begun by W.Q. Judge on said libellous matter, or those to be instituted under these resolutions.

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

² A scandalous article by Dr. E. Coues (a member expelled by the General Council for open and secret intrigues, chicanery and calumnies against the founders of the Society and Mr. Judge), who thus thought to revenge himself on his judges. Two separate suits have already been brought in the courts of New York and Washington, by two of the persons mentioned, each claiming 50,000 dollars. The Āryan Theosophical Society is now bringing a third suit.

That the Āryan Theosophical Society takes this occasion to renew the expression of its unabated confidence in the founders of the Theosophical Society, Colonel H.S. Olcott and Madame H.P. Blavatsky, as well as in its own president, William Q. Judge, and gratefully attributes no small part of the growth of the society and the edification of its members to their devotion, sincerity and blamelessness of life.

After listening to the reading of a chapter from the new edition of the *Bhagavad Gītā* which will be published in a short time in New York, the members devoted the latter part of the evening to the discussion of “Evolution.” The leaders in the discussion were Mr. Judge and Mr. Pryse, both of whom read papers. The president of the society explained the meaning of Evolution from a theosophical point of view and showed the relation between the theories of Herbert Spencer and those of the philosophers of India. The discussion of the same subject will be continued at the meeting on next Tuesday. After the adjournment of the meeting the new library of the society was opened to the members.

This statement was translated into French and published in the pages of the *Lotus Bleu* of Paris. Immediately following it, there appeared a Circular Letter from the pen of H.P. Blavatsky, the text of which is in French. *Lucifer* published both the *Daily Tribune* item and Blavatsky’s Circular Letter, the latter in English. It is uncertain whether H.P. Blavatsky wrote the original Letter in French and translated it into English, or whether the sequence was reversed. Owing to this uncertainty, we publish both the French and the English texts. We are inclined to believe, however, that Madame Blavatsky’s original text was in French, a language in which she enjoyed writing. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.



À tous les Membres to la Société Théosophique en France.

En vue du paragraphe cité, la soussignée prend l’occasion de s’adresser à tous les M.S.T., en France, aux théosophes sérieux, honnêtes, hommes et femmes, tenant à adapter leur vie à leur profession de foi, pour expliquer quelques détails qui pourraient leur être utiles.

A Londres aussi, un procès en diffamation vient d’être commencé, il y a quelques semaines, par un membre du Quartier Général, contre un individu — jadis un membre aussi, mais depuis longtemps un ennemi, sans aucune raison — et qui appartient, comme amateur, à la même bande des conspirateurs, tous ex-membres expulsés, qui se sont unis pour attaquer sans trêve ni relâche l’honneur de notre *Société* et de ses fondateurs. Il paraîtrait que, depuis dix-huit mois, à peu près, des ex-membres, en Amérique et à Londres, se sont mis en correspondance active dans ce but, et afin de tâcher de ruiner la *Société Théosophique* en déshonorant ses fondateurs — et sa fondatrice, par une calomnie incessante et des mensonges infâmes qu’ils répandent sous main dans le public. Ils sont aidés en ceci, à notre grande honte, par un membre, des plus actifs, de la *Société*, en France, qui a traversé, une ou deux fois, dans *ce but honorable*, la Manche, amenant avec lui d’autres personnes

(des *ex*-membres aussi), qu'il a présentées à nos ennemis personnels à Londres. Vains efforts, car le *Karma* ne leur paraît pas propice. Un procès, entamé contre moi, en juillet 1889, sous un prétexte quelconque, par l'un de ces tristes personnages, préparé à grand bruit, et sur lequel de grands espoirs étaient fondés, vient de faire, il y a deux mois, un *fiasco* déplorable! Dès le premier jour de l'ouverture, devant les juges assemblés, en pleine session publique et devant les témoins, l'avocat de la plaignante, ayant lu une certaine lettre écrite par sa cliente et qui se trouvait en ma possession, se refusa net à procéder plus avant et *retira la plainte au moment de commencer l'affaire!* [378]

Or, toute chose, même la patience théosophique, a une fin. Depuis six ans que cela dure,—la première fanfare de cette chasse aux réputations, chasse aussi honteuse que non méritée, ayant été sonnée par la *Société des recherches psychiques de Londres* en 1885 — jamais je n'ai cherché à obtenir une réparation par voie de poursuites devant les tribunaux.

En effet, les buts poursuivis par les membres de la *Société Théosophique* et les voies judiciaires s'accordent mal ensemble. Je me suis tue dans tous les cas de diffamation (sauf un seul), ne répondant à des attaques lâches que par un silence de mépris.

Mais il ne m'est plus possible de le faire, car ce silence même semble avoir prêté de nouvelles forces à mes ennemis. A l'heure qu'il est, et maintenant que je viens d'accepter l'office responsable de *Présidente de toute la section Européenne de la S. T.*, et que le Président-fondateur, à Adyar, vient de renoncer en ma faveur à tous ses droits sur l'administration de notre *Société, en Europe*, il est de mon premier devoir de sauvegarder la réputation de Celle qui est à la tête des théosophes; de prouver que les calomnies honteuses répandues sur son compte, par certains membres ambitieux et *ex*-membres vindicatifs, de notre *Société*, ne pourraient soutenir l'éclat du jour et de la vérité devant les tribunaux; et en dernier lieu, d'éloigner ces membres et les séparer à jamais de la *Société*, en leur notifiant, d'envoyer leur démission, ou, en cas du refus, de les en expulser publiquement.

Ma conscience ne me reprochant rien, je ne redoute personne.

Il est certain que si le colonel Olcott et moi n'avons point craint d'expulser publiquement de la *Société Théosophique* un savant reconnu, un homme riche et d'aussi grande réputation scientifique et intellectuelle, que l'est le docteur Coues, pour intrigues et calomnies, nous n'hésiterions point à le faire avec tout membre qui le mériterait. En effet, un membre qui, oubliant ses plus simples devoirs d'honnête homme et la première des trois règles fondamentales de nos statuts, passe son temps à intriguer contre ses frères en Théosophie, à salir la réputation et l'honneur des chefs de [379] cette *Société*, dans des commérages et mensonges indignes d'un galant homme — ce membre ne pourrait réclamer sa place dans une fraternité composée d'honnêtes gens.

Je conclus en annonçant, qu'ayant dans ma possession tous les documents qui prouvent qu'il se trouve dans notre milieu des frères Judas, qui ne rougissent pas de publier sous leur signature les calomnies plus épouvantables contre moi, je leur conseille d'avoir à se retirer de nos rangs, sans bruit. Autrement, j'aurais la douleur,

d'abord, d'annoncer publiquement leur expulsion, et ensuite de les assigner devant les tribunaux de France, pour les contraindre à prouver, s'ils le peuvent, les accusations qu'ils se permettent de porter contre la soussignée, depuis bientôt deux ans.

H.P. BLAVATSKY

Présidente de la Section Européenne de la Société Théosophique.

Londres, le 23 septembre 1890



To all the Members of the Theosophical Society in France.

[Translation of the foregoing French text by Boris de Zirkoff.]

In view of the above quoted paragraph, the undersigned takes this occasion for addressing all the members of the Theosophical Society in France, who are serious and honourable Theosophists, men and women who endeavour to adapt their lives to their professed beliefs, in order to give them a few details which may be of service to them.

In London, as well, another suit of the same nature will shortly come up for trial. This has been brought by one of the members at Headquarters against a certain individual, who, once a member of the society but now for a long time without the slightest reason an enemy, has become an *amateur* adherent of the same brand of conspirators, all [380] expelled members, who are bound together to attack, without truce or cessation, the honour of our society and its founders. It would appear that for nearly eighteen months back, some ex-members in America and at London have actively corresponded together with this object in view, and with the intention of endeavouring to ruin the Theosophical Society by dishonouring its founders and foundress, by incessant calumnies and infamous lies, which they spread in an underhand manner amongst the public. They are assisted in this, to our great shame, by one of our most active members in France, who has once or twice crossed the Channel for this *honourable* purpose, bringing with him others (ex-members also) whom he has introduced to our personal enemies in London. Vain efforts! For Karma does not seem propitious to them. A suit, which was brought against me in July 1889, on some pretext or other, by one of these unhappy persons, with noisy preparations, from which great hopes were entertained, has ended, some two months ago, in a deplorable *fiasco!* On the very day of the trial, before the assembled court, witnesses and public, the counsel for the plaintiff, having read a certain letter written by his client which was once in my possession, refused point blank to proceed further and *withdrew the suit just as the case was about to begin!*

But everything, even theosophical patience, has an end. For the six years during which this state of affairs has lasted — the first halloo of this shameful and unmerited reputation-hunt being shouted by the London Society for Psychical Research in 1885 — I have never sought to obtain redress through the courts of law.

In fact, the objects pursued by the members of the Theosophical Society, and the methods of the law do not agree well together. I have kept silence in every case of

defamation (save in one single instance), refusing to answer such cowardly attacks save by a contemptuous silence.

But this is no longer possible, seeing that this very silence seems to have lent new strength to my enemies. But now that I have just accepted the responsible office of President of the entire European Section of the Theosophical Society, [381] and the President-Founder has transferred in my favour all his rights over the members of our Society in Europe, it is my first duty

- To protect the reputation of her who is at the head of the Theosophists;
- To prove that the shameful calumnies spread about her by certain ambitious members and revengeful ex-members of our Society cannot stand the light of day and truth before a jury; and finally
- To remove these members and separate them forever from the Society, by requesting them to send in their resignations, or else, in case of refusal, expelling them publicly.

As I have a quiet conscience, I fear no one.

It is evident that if Colonel Olcott and myself have not been afraid to expel publicly from the Theosophical Society a scholar of note, and a man as wealthy and of as great a scientific and intellectual reputation as Dr. Coues, for intrigues and calumnies, we should not hesitate a moment to do the same with every other member who deserved such treatment. In fact, a member who, forgetting the most simple duties of an honourable man, and the first of the three fundamental rules of our Statutes, spends his time in intriguing against his brothers in Theosophy, and in endeavouring to befoul the reputation and honour of the leaders of this Society, by his tittle-tattle and by lies unworthy of a gentleman, can claim no place in a fraternity composed of honourable men and women.

I conclude by announcing that as I have in my possession all the documents which prove that we have in our midst Judases who do not blush to put on paper and over their full signatures the most shocking calumnies against myself, I advise them to withdraw from our ranks quietly. Otherwise I should have the disagreeable duty of announcing their expulsion publicly, and then summoning them before the tribunals of France, to prove, if they can, the accusations which they have allowed themselves to bring for now almost two years against the undersigned.

H.P. BLAVATSKY

President of the European Section of the Theosophical Society.

London, September 23rd, 1890

Part 7. The allegations that Madame Blavatsky was a Russian spy were quietly dropped.

First published in *The Theosophist*, Supplement to March 1889, p. lviii-lix. Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (MADAME BLAVATSKY SPEAKS OUT) XIII pp. 205-7.

A young woman having lately libelled Madame Blavatsky in a novel, that redoubtable lady recently brought down her sledge-hammer on the poor little literary mosquito in an interview in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. The young woman had repeated the fusty slander which is so sweet to the nostrils of certain persons, that the Corresponding Secretary of the Theosophical Society is a Russian spy. This is part of the reply:

There are only three or four lines which refer to me. The dozen other persons who are lied about in this work of unique fiction are invited to take care of themselves. As for me it is enough for me to answer the four distinct falsehoods and the libel for which the author is responsible on my account alone. These falsehoods are based on no foundation whatever, save perhaps on public gossip and the efforts of those good souls who think that the best way of “entertaining people” is to serve them with slices of freshly murdered reputations. This particular calumny is an ancient three-years-old slander, picked up from the gutters of Anglo-Indian hill stations, and revived to serve a special purpose by one who, unknown to the world the day before, has since made himself famous in the annals of the world’s iniquitous verdicts by playing at the detective on false scents. But if the originator of this vile invention is not the authoress of “Miss Hildreth,” she is still the first one who has had the impudence of recording it in a novel, adding to it, moreover, a flavour of her own venom. It is, therefore, to her that I address the following refutations: [206]

- 1 I have never corresponded, whether secretly or openly, with a “Monsieur Kinovief”; nor with the General of this name; nor have I ever been accused before to my knowledge of having done so.
- 2 I have never written, in all my life on politics, of which I know nothing. I take no interest in political intrigues, regarding them as the greatest nuisance and a bore, the falsest of all systems in the code of ethics. I feel the sincerest pity for those diplomats who, being honourable men, are nevertheless obliged to deceive all their lives, and to embody a living, walking LIE.
- 3 Ten years ago, the Anglo-Indian Government, acting upon a false and malicious insinuation, mistook me for a spy; but after the Police had shadowed me for over eight months — without unearthing a trace of the charge brought against me — it found to its great sorrow that it had made an April-fool of itself. Yet the Anglo-Indian Government acted, after that, in the most honourable way. In November 1876, Lord Lytton issued an order to the Political Department that Colonel Olcott and myself should be no longer subjected to the insulting surveillance of the Anglo-Indian Police.¹ From that day we were no longer annoyed.

¹ [See the *Allahabad Pioneer*, November 11th 1879.]

- 4 Prince Doudaroff Korsakoff stands probably as the cunning anagram of Prince Dondoukof Korsakof?¹ This gentleman has been a friend of my family and myself since 1846; yet beyond two or three letters exchanged, I have never corresponded with him. It was Mr. Primrose, Lord Lytton's Secretary, who was the first to write to him, in order to sift to the bottom another *mystery*. The Anglo-Indian Mrs. Grundy² had mistaken me for my "twin-brother" apparently, and people wanted to know which of us was drowned in the washtub during our infancy — myself or that "twin-brother," as in the fancy of the immortal Mark Twain. Hence the correspondence for purposes of identification.
- 5 Lord Dufferin's³ "clear-sightedness" is no doubt a fact of history. But why endow his Lordship with soothsaying? Doomed by my physicians to certain death unless I left [207] India (I have their medical certificate), I was leaving Madras for Europe almost on the day of Lord Dufferin's arrival at Calcutta. But then perhaps Lord Dufferin stands in the novel only kabbalistically for Lord Ripon? In such case, as all three Viceroys — from 1879 to 1888 — are now in Europe, it is easy to learn the truth, especially from the Marquis of Ripon who remained Viceroy during almost the whole period of my stay in India.⁴ Let the Press inquire, from themselves or their Secretaries, whether it has been ever proven by any of their respective Governments that I was a political agent, whatever may be the malicious society gossip of my enemies. Nor do I feel so certain yet, unless this disgraceful rumour is sufficiently refuted, that I will not appeal directly to the justice and honour of these three noblemen. *Noblesse oblige*. The least of beggars has a right to seek redress from law, and to appeal to the evidence of the highest in the land, if that evidence can save his honour and reputation, especially in a case like this, when truth can be made known with one simple word from these high witnesses — a yea or a nay.



¹ [Prince Alexander Mikhailovich Dondukov-Korsakov, 1820–1893, rose to prominence fighting in the Caucasian War, and in the Crimean campaign. In 1869 he was appointed Governor of Kiev, Podolia, and Volhynia. Having been promoted full General of Cavalry, he took a conspicuous part in the final Russo-Turkish war, remaining as the head of Russian administration in Bulgaria after the war ended, and helping pen the Tarnovo Constitution, the first Bulgarian constitution. He ended his long and illustrious career as the Governor of the Caucasus in 1882–1890. — Cf. *Wikipedia*. See also biography of this distinguished military officer, by Boris se Zirkoff, in his *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, Vol. VI, p. 432. — ED. PHIL.]

² [A figurative name for an extremely conventional or priggish person, a personification of the tyranny of conventional propriety. A tendency to be overly fearful of what the respectable might think is also referred to as Grundyism. Although she began life as a minor character in Thomas Morton's play *Speed the Plough* (1798), Mrs. Grundy was eventually so well established in the public imagination that Samuel Butler, in his novel *Erewhon*, could refer to her in the form of an anagram (as the goddess Ydgrun). As a figure of speech she can be found throughout European literature. — Cf. *Wikipedia*]

³ [Frederick Temple Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, 1st Marquess of Dufferin and Ava, KP, GCB, GCSI, GCMG, GCIE, PC, 1826–1902, British public servant, one of the most successful diplomats of his time, and prominent member of Victorian society.]

⁴ [George Frederick Samuel Robinson, 1st Marquess of Ripon, KG, GCSI, CIE, VD, PC, 1827–1909, styled Viscount Goderich from 1833 to 1859, known as The Earl of Ripon in 1859, and as The Earl de Grey and Ripon from 1859 to 1871, was a British politician who served in every Liberal cabinet from 1861 until the year before his death. When Gladstone returned to power in 1880, he appointed Ripon as Viceroy of India, an office he held until 1884.]

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- FOUL CONSPIRACIES AND BLATANT LIES LEVELLED AGAINST MADAME BLAVATSKY
- THE RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL IS NEITHER RELIGIOUS NOR PHILOSOPHICAL
- THE SPARKLE OF LIGHT ON THE PATH, HAS BEEN DIMMED BY A DARK STAIN
- TRUTH IS EXILED FROM THE PRESS BECAUSE IT IS NOT AS BEGUILING AS FALSEHOOD
— *in our Down to Earth Series.*
- LUCIFER IS CHRISTOS, INNER LIGHT
— *in our Secret Doctrine Third Proposition to Earth Series.*



A parting thought

The Silent Watcher acts as a channel for all the spiritual forces flowing to and from the earth.