

# THEOSOPHY IN INDIA

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*Articles by William Q. Judge*

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## THEOSOPHY AS A CULT IN INDIA

**T**HE pictures fabricated in our youthful minds, with in-finite care by missionary zeal, regarding India, are fast fading away. And, as the unreal image dissolve into the nebulous recesses of the missionary headquarters, the outlines of things as they really are in that country come into view. What reasons these paid servants of the Church had for thus beginning a deception, and for now keeping it up, we need not inquire into. It is sufficient to know that they do so.

The other day, in Brooklyn, N.Y., a returned missionary said, in a public meeting, that the poor Hindus need and are asking for the gospel of the Christians; that the condition of their women is deplorable; and lastly, to cap the climax, that Buddhism never could satisfy the intellectual needs of the people there, that it is fast losing ground, and that now is the time for the good Christian here to step in, pay out his money, and send more men—like the speaker—to bring these poor people into the true fold. Such is the constant cry at every missionary meeting.

In order intelligently to consider the question of Theosophy as a cult in India, it is necessary first to see how much truth there is in the statements we have just quoted.

They are undoubtedly false, and flow either from ignorance or from wilful tergiversation. The proposition that Buddhism will not satisfy the needs of the people is a species of trick, because the Hindus do not, except in some few cases, hold to Buddhism. They are of the Brahmanical and Mohammedan faiths, and of course do not pay any attention to Buddhism. But those who are Buddhists—in Ceylon nearly

all the people, and many in India—could never accept Christianity, because the latter is based on as much faith, suppression of intelligence, and miracle as the most corrupt form of Buddhism; while it is well known and accepted among students and thinkers that pure Buddhism is of the highest metaphysical and intellectual character. The experiment only succeeds in cases where, as has been done in Ceylon, the Roman Catholic Church makes converts by adopting and adapting later and popular Buddhist practices and legends as a part of the religion offered to the people, just as was done in the early part of our era, when pagan feasts, fasts, and saints were incorporated into the new religion.

For about the last fifty years, the English government has been giving to the Hindus free education in the colleges which confer degrees; and, if there is anything a Hindu of the better class likes, it is a degree given by a competent college. But these colleges are absolutely unsectarian; while those schools and colleges which the missionaries established are, of course, sectarian, according to the particular sect to which the missionaries belong. Previous to the establishment of these governmental institutions, almost the only way in which Hindus could learn English—absolutely necessary to them from the ever-growing English influences with which so much trade had to be done—was by going to the schools of the missionaries, in which English was taught. Several Hindu merchants have said to me, in India, that that was their only reason for attending those schools, and that they had a feeling of gratitude to the missionaries for the service thus rendered, but that they never did and never could accept their religion. Since the spreading of the governmental colleges, the natives attend there, to the sorrow of the missionaries. But the natives like it better for two reasons: first because they give degrees under government auspices; and, second, because they are let completely alone in their religious convictions. To all this, the missionaries have made and are now making violent objection; and each issue of the *Epiphany* in Calcutta, and other organs in their interest, are full of the matter. They have even gone so far as to try to influence the British government.

Having understood this, let us now pass to another branch of the subject. The young Hindus of whom we have been speaking are, by nature, in possession of metaphysical faculties of the highest order, transmitted to them by heredity, and necessarily cultivated not only by the system of religious teaching, but also by the very structure of the language in which they have to study their religious and philosophical tenets. In Madras, I have given out prizes at Sanskrit schools to little boys of from four to five years of age, as well as to those older. The Sanskrit is not, properly speaking, a dead language; for it is in constant use at any gathering of pandits met for religious or sociologic discussion, and of these there occur many. I remember one which was held at Madras in 1884, to consider the subject of child marriages. The Deputy Collector of Madras, Mr. Ragonath Row, who is also a prominent member of the Theosophical Society in India, came from the meeting to see me, and told me about the discussion, and that it was conducted altogether in Sanskrit. I have also numerous young and old Hindu friends who all read, and can, if needed, speak in Sanskrit.

At the same time, with these changes in the matter of education, there was also going on another change among the young men of India, in that they were beginning to run after and follow English manners and style of thought. They were giving up all hope of reviving Aryan literature, morals, or manners, adopting as much as they might of Western scientific thought in its most materialistic phase. Some of them, deluded by Huxley, Tyndall, Mill, Bain, and others, began to hold to such negations that they believed there was no such thing as Aryan literature or thought. And one of the learned Hindu founders (behind the scenes) of the Theosophical Society said he “went down to Calcutta, and there saw some of the descendants of ancient Aryavarta wearing the philosophical and mental garb of Western pessimism and Western materialism, boldly asserting that Patanjali was an ancient fool.” All the older Hindus deplored this state of things, and vainly longed for a revival of pure Hindu thought and philosophy. The hope seemed indeed vain.

At the same time, here in the West, it was thought by some that Christianity had turned out a failure, leaving the people floundering

into agnosticism and all forms of materialism.

At this point, in 1875, the Theosophical Society was formed in New York, with the distinct design in view of benefiting India and the whole of the Western world at the same time. This was its main object, and is expressed in its first declaration, "Universal Brotherhood." The means for accomplishing that were only to be found in India; and, therefore, after it had acquired some corporeal form, its headquarters were transferred to Bombay.

At first, it was viewed by the government with suspicion; for, as Madame Blavatsky was at its head, and she being a Russian, the ridiculous rumor was spread that she was a spy in the pay of the Russian emperor. After a time, that was given up; and the English officials declared that it was no longer tenable, resulting in a real triumph; for many of those high in authority declared that the society was an instrument of great good for India.

As soon as this spy theory was abandoned, the Hindus, heretofore deterred from affiliating, began to join in large numbers; for they saw that it [the Society] really was determined to unearth all that is good in the philosophy, in the religions, and in the sciences of ancient India.

Instead of being engaged, as so many self-styled scientists in England so often declared, in exploiting phenomena or in getting up a new kind of Spiritualism, it was really organizing Buddhist schools in Ceylon, Sanskrit schools in Hindustan, encouraging Mohammedans to see what, if anything, was to be found of truth in the philosophy of the Sufis, and in bringing together, on one platform, men of the most widely divergent creeds for the purpose of finding out the one truth which must underlie all religion.

## II

Since the writing of the preceding article in the April *Index*, I have been asked by several persons, "Why do you speak so oracularly on the subject of Theosophy as a Cult in India?" If any of the statements in that article has an oracular sound, it is due only to faults in expression, caused perhaps by the writer's profound convictions

upon the subject. In consequence of having been in correspondence for over ten years with various learned Hindus, and from personal observations made in India,—not as a foreigner, who is refused intimate relations with the Hindus, but as a theosophist, who, so to say, had known them for years and was entirely in their confidence,—the writer had arrived at certainty as to the facts in the case. This feeling naturally produces what some call dogmatic statement and what others feel to be oracular enunciation. But, for all allegations of fact, I can produce evidence in written and printed reports from Indian daily newspapers, the words of others and myself, as well as correspondence.

The Rev. Mr. Ashburner, in the *Independent* of a recent date, indulged in very congratulatory reflections upon the collapse in India of theosophy since the learned report of the London Psychical Research Society. Mr. Ashburner styles himself a missionary to the heathen of the blessed religion of Jesus the Jew, and pleasantly supposes that because the London expert, in a truly British style, declares that Madame Blavatsky invented the Mahatmas and adepts, therefore the Hindus will now abandon this new delusion called theosophy. This idea, although ridiculous, leads us to a point which ought to be cleared up in our inquiry into the cultivation of theosophy in Hindustan. Theosophy presents itself in one aspect to the Hindu, and in quite a different one to the European and American. In this country and in Europe, the doctrines which have filtered out to the world, through theosophical literature, seem to us new. They are in fact quite novel to us, so they color our conception of what theosophy is, representing themselves to us to be theosophy. And, as we have nothing in our past, in our literature, or in our ideas like them, it is quite natural that an ignorant missionary, learned in Christian rhetoric, should imagine, when a reputable Englishman declares the Mahatmas to have been evolved from Blavatsky's brain, that therefore there are no Mahatmas, because his first knowledge of them came from her. Even the learned Swedenborg, who saw many things clearly, did not speak of these great Beings. He only said that, "if the Freemasons desired to find the lost word, they must search for it in the deserts of Tibet."

However, he did not explain himself; and our only conclusion must be, that in some way he found out that in Tibet exist persons who are so far advanced in knowledge that they are acquainted with that much-sought-for lost word.

The aspect in which theosophy presents itself to the Oriental is quite different from our appreciation of it. He sees in it that which will help him to inquire into his own religion and philosophy. The numerous books which have issued from our various presses here, would make him laugh in their endeavors to lay before readers, subjects which, with him, have been household words for ages. If Marion Crawford's novels, *Mr. Issacs*, and *Zoroaster*, were respectively translated into Persian and Sanskrit or Singhalese, the Hindus, Ceylonese, and Parsees would burst with laughter at such struggling with an ancient plot, as if it were new. So a thousand reports of the *Psychical Society* would not for an instant shake the faith of Hindus that there are Mahatmas. The word is a common one, derived from two others, meaning together *Great Soul*. In some parts of India, it grew so common, in the lapse of centuries, that now and then it is used in derision of blusterers or those who are given to placing themselves on a pinnacle. Many Hindus have told me of various Mahatmas whom they had heard of in various parts of India. One lived on an island, another in a forest, another in a cave, and so on. In Bombay, a Hindu related to me a story, whether false or true I know not, of a man whose wife was dying. In despair, he went into the forest where a Mahatma was said to live, and had the happiness to meet a man of calm and venerable aspect. Convinced that this was the one he had heard of, he implored him to cure his wife. The sage repulsed him; and, in sorrow, he returned home, to find that the wife had suddenly completely recovered at the time when he had been refused by the sage. Next day, he returned to the forest to offer thanks, but the so-called Mahatma had disappeared. This is only one of a thousand such stories, many of them being filled in with details of a highly sensational character, and all of them very old. The very children know that their forefathers believed in Mahatmas or Arhats or Rishees, or whichever be the name, all meaning the same.

If, then, we assume, as some malignant persons have asserted, that Blavatsky, aided by Olcott, introduced this cult into India with a design of mere personal aggrandizement, it must be further admitted that they displayed a deep knowledge of Indian life and manners in thus adopting the Mahatmas. But neither of them can be proved to have been in India before 1878. Certainly, Olcott had, up to that year, to my certain knowledge, but a limited knowledge of the subject.

Yet at the same time there were many Brahmins who had about given up beliefs in Mahatmas now; for they said, "This is Kali Yuga (the dark age), and no Mahatmas will work with men until the next yuga." So, of course, they, while thoroughly appreciating the object which theosophy had in the revivification of Aryan thought, remained agnostics as to Arhats and Mahatmas being in the society. Others had never lost their faith in them; and a great body of Hindus, unknown before the advent of the society, for years had had personal knowledge of those great beings, had been in their company, and now have, in several instances, publicly declared their belief. Some of these declarations are contained in protests published in India, deprecating the constant degradation of the names of their teachers. To this last class belonged a Brahmin friend of mine, who said to me, in Central India, "I have been for fifteen years personally convinced of the existence of Mahatmas, and have had messages from them!" And the class of agnostics mentioned above, is fitly described in a letter, now in print, from a Brahmin holding an official position, running thus:—

Many of my friends, out of sheer love to me, take me to task for being a member of the Theosophical Society. . . . Theosophy means "a science of divine things." . . . The society has no Pope, no Grand Lama, no Saviour, no Mohammed, no Buddha, no Sankara Chariar, no Ramanuja Chariar, no Madhwa Char-iar. . . . It is a society for the inculcation of universal brotherhood and its actual practice. Of this society I am a member, and shall continue one so long as the object of the society is not changed, whether I be blamed or pitied or loved in consequence.

Among this class of men, then, the society was hailed as a benefactor just as soon as they became convinced by deeds of the founders, that it was not another European trick for acquiring money, or territory, or power. And, in consequence of the old-time knowledge of the various doctrines which seem new to the Western mind, the Hindu section of our society regards theosophy as a power which has begun to make it respectable once more to be an Aryan who believes in Aryan literature. It rose upon the

devoted minds of India as a lamp which would help them and their fellows to unearth the ancient treasures of the golden age, and has now become, for even the young men who had begun to follow the false gods of English money and English culture, a society, the initials of which, "F.T.S.," can be appended to their names as an honorable title.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

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## MADAME BLAVATSKY IN INDIA

A Reply to Moncure D. Conway

By WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

**T**HERE are three reasons why I reply to Moncure D. Conway's article in the October *ARENA*, entitled "Madame Blavatsky at Adyar."

First, I am an old and intimate friend of hers, while Mr. Conway met her but twice according to his own account, and then only for a short time. Second, she has given up her mortal body and cannot reply here to his attacks. Third, because, although his article is given as an account of her, it is, in fact, an attack on the Theosophical Society I had the honor to take part in founding with Madame Blavatsky and others, and with the history of which in all its details I am well acquainted, from having been one of its secretaries ever since its organization in 1875.

The October article covers twelve pages, and is mainly a rehashing of old charges made by other people and about which Mr. Conway has no personal knowledge whatever, besides a good deal of matter in which the mistakes are too evident to mislead anyone who has really given the theosophical movement any study.

Let us observe in the beginning the qualifications which Mr. Conway possesses as a reporter. He says Adyar is fifteen miles from Madras when at the most it is only six, and the extent of Madras itself is only fifteen. "Palms" are described as being at the entrance, whereas the only palms on the place were a few weak ones at the seaside of the compound, and where the road did not run. No doubt the "palms" he speaks of are to give a better color to the luxuriousness of the self-sacrifice he does not approve. In the next few lines the "gurti" of a

chela is described as a “mahatma” (page 580), a definition invented solely by the critic. In this little scene he gives the command of a mahatma as the reason for a Hindu’s not shaking his hand; all travellers know that the Hindus do not shake hands with one another, much less with strangers; Mr. Conway must have observed this as I did when there, if he met any but the official English. His description of the “shrine,” on page 582, is so far removed from fact that I am constrained to doubt the accuracy even of his recollection of what was said to him by Madame Blavatsky I know the shrine well, have examined it fully, and just after he was there, and not only that, but by my own orders it was taken from the wall, and its contents removed soon after he left India, and in that removal I took chief part just before the famous so-called *expose*, in the Christian College magazine. According to Mr. Conway “it reached nearly to the ceiling,” the fact being that it was a wall cabinet and nothing more, and its total height from bottom to top was not four feet, which would be a very low ceiling. Its doors were painted black and varnished, but his recollection attributes to it a decoration of “mystical emblems and figures,” perhaps to accord with what he thought a theosophical shrine ought to have. “The interior of the shrine was inlaid with metal work,” he says, and evidently he saw it but once in haste. I saw it for several days together, examined it fully, took charge of it, with my own hands removed the objects within it, and instead of its interior being inlaid with metal work it was lined with common red plush. The description given by Mr. Conway makes a better newspaper story, however. Painting the interior with his imagination, he says there was a Buddha there, which is not so; and then occurs the crowning absurdity that the portrait of Koothumi “holds a small barrel-shaped praying machine on his head.” This is a curious instance of hypnotism and bad memory mixing facts, for there was a tibetan prayer wheel in the shrine, but it lay on the bottom shelf, and the picture of

Koothumi which I then removed, gives him with a fur cap on. It sounds like a bad dream that the learned doctor had. But further, and this is a case where any good journalist would have verified the mere facts of record, he says, speaking of the effect of the scandals on the

branches of the society in India, that the seventy-seven branches there in 1879 are now (in 1891) “withering away under the Blavatsky scandals,” the fact being that now over one hundred and fifty branches exist there which pass resolutions of high respect for her memory, and continue the work she incited them to begin, included in that being a growing correspondence with the increasing membership in America, and the helping forward of a special department of the society’s work, especially devoted to the translation of their old books and the procurement of manuscripts and treatises that Max Muller and others wish to have. If Mr. Conway had never before taken part in attacks upon Madame Blavatsky and the society, some inaccuracy might be attributed to inexperience; but as the case is otherwise, one is led to the conclusion that some other motive than zeal for fact must have stimulated the present article. And it may interest him to know what Madame Blavatsky herself said to me of him after he had seen her:—”The gentleman is in his decadence, with a great disappointment hanging over his life; from this point he will find himself of less and less importance in the world, and you will find him at last for a paltry pay attacking over my shoulders the cause you wish to serve,” a part of which we know to be now true.

Since I am trying to defend a friend who has passed beyond the veil, it is impossible to overlook the statement made in the note on page 582 of Mr. Conway’s article, in which he leaves the impression that that article is his first presentation of the matter to the public: indeed, such is his declaration, the only indefiniteness being the omission of the names of the “friends of Madame Blavatsky” to whom he mentioned the affair so as to give them the chance of replying. The omission of their names now prevents my having their testimony, for I know all her friends and they are a sort who would not fail to give me the facts. It may have escaped Mr. Conway’s recollection that after he had made his visit to Adyar and had his conversation with Mme. Blavatsky, he wrote a long account of it to the *Glasgow Herald* published in Glasgow, Scotland, in which he showed the same spirit as in the one under review, and that I wrote a reply to it for the same paper, which the paper published; and that later when I was in London

on my way to Adyar he met Colonel Olcott and myself after one of the services in South Place Chapel, in which he had advertised himself as to speak on theosophy and spiritualism, but wholly omitted any reference to theosophy when he saw us there; and that our conversation was in the underground railroad, in the course of which he referred to the articles in the *Glasgow Herald*; and exhibited the same vexation of which he accuses himself in the present one at page 581, when he found that the shrine had been permanently closed just three days before he got there. Perhaps the “glamour” of Adyar still lingers around his recollections.

I come now to the particular incident around which the October article revolves. It is the explanation supposed to have been offered by Madame Blavatsky of all her life and work to a visitor who told her he wanted an explanation to give to his flock (in South Place Chapel) who were always ready to admit facts. From his account it is clear that he did not inquire of her as to the philosophical doctrines of man and mind, and theories as to cosmogenesis she had been engaged in promulgating, nor of the objects and purposes of the Theosophical Society to which her life was devoted, and then as now an active body working not only in India but in Europe and America. His sole inquiry was about paltry phenomena that she never spoke of with any particular interest. For, he goes on: “ ‘Now,’ I said, ‘what do these rumors mean? I hear of your lifting teapots from beneath your chair, summoning lost jewels, conversing with Mahatmas a thousand miles away.’ “

If this is all that passed—and no more is given of questions by him—there is not a word in it relating to philosophy nor any of the many other important subjects upon which Madame Blavatsky had been for long before assiduously writing and talking. Her reply therefore attaches solely to the question. It is given by him: “It is glamour; people think they see what they do not. That is the whole of it.” This reply has naught to do with the existence of Mahatmas, nor with their powers, nor with the theories of cosmogenesis and anthropogenesis given by her, nor with the aims and work of her society, nor with her views as to many hidden and natural powers of man, on which she

had before that spoken and written much. It simply offered an explanation she had never failed to give, included in the word “glamour” “This power of producing glamour is now well known to the French and other schools of hypnotists, and it is a correct explanation of many of her very best and most wonderful phenomena. It is the explanation of numerous extraordinary feats to be witnessed in India. By its means a letter could be brought into the room and deposited anywhere without a person present seeing either letter or messenger. For grant the power, and the limits of its exercise cannot be fixed. Take the production of a teacup from beneath a chair where a moment or two before it had not been. The same power of glamouring would enable her to leave the room, still seeming to be present, to procure a teacup from the adjoining apartment and then to produce it suddenly from beneath the chair, all the while the spectators thinking they saw her sitting there. This is one of the possibilities of the realm of glamour, and admitted by Mr. Conway in my presence as I shall show. Glamour is only another name for hypnotism, partly understood by Dr. Charcot and his pupils, but fully known to Madame Blavatsky, who was taught in a school where the science is elaborated with a detail that western schools have not yet reached to but eventually will. And this she has often asserted of many of her own phenomena, for she has deliberately called them “psychological frauds.”

I have said Mr. Conway admitted in my presence something germane to this inquiry. It was in his own South Place Chapel where I went in 1884 to hear him discourse on a subject which he advertised to be upon spiritualism and theosophy. For some reason unknown to me, he omitted all reference to theosophy, but dwelt at length on his experiences in India with fakirs, jugglers, and yogis. He related with a sober mien marvels of magic, of hypnotism, or of fraud that outshine anything he has criticised in Madame Blavatsky. Among those, he told of seeing an old fakir or yogi make coins dance about a table at the word of command and following Mr. Conway’s unexpressed wish, there being no connection between the operator and the table, as he averred. “This,” he said, “is very wonderful. I do not know how to explain it. But some day I will go back and inquire further.” And yet Madame Blavatsky explained it for him at the Adyar



conversation.

I do not think, as some have said, that she was making fun of him by thinking: “You soft-headed and innocent old goose, do you really suppose that I am going seriously to answer a person who proclaims in advance his mission here as you did and expects to see me execute phenomena whereon he may write a sermon for his London babes?”<sup>1</sup> On the contrary, she was ready to go on with him further if he chose to proceed beyond mere marvels that she had often dubbed with the name of glamour before he came. But he went no further, and calmly proceeded, plodding along with grotesque solemnity that is refreshing in the extreme.

In fine, all that Mr. Conway’s somewhat labored article amounts to is that we are asked by him to believe that after Madame Blavatsky had duped some of the brightest minds of both West and East, and secured a firm hold on their loyalty, reverence, and affection,—including many hundred Hindus of learning and wide experience in their own land of marvels, as they have told me with their own lips—had succeeded in establishing a system of imposture upon which, if we accept his view, she must depend, she was ready in a casual conversation to confess all her acts to be frauds and to throw herself on the mercy of Mr. Conway merely because he preached in South Place Chapel and had a congregation, — hardly. If confession,—”an unwitnessed confession” as he calls it,—were her determination at the interview, it is interesting to ask why she did not confess to him that there were trap-doors and sliding panels to help phenomena? But there was no such confession, no trap-doors, no frauds.

On p. 587, Mr. Conway says: “The most curious thing about this turbaned spiritualism is its development of the Koothoomi myth. I asked Sir W. W. Hunter, Gazetteer-General of India, and other orientalist about the name of this alleged Mahatma or Rahat (Sic), and they declared Koothoomi to be without analogies in any Hindu tongue ancient or modern.”

It is easy to lose one’s self in the ocean of Indian literature with its vast number of names, so perhaps Mr. Conway can be forgiven. But the name of Sir W. W. Hunter is not that of a great orientalist, and those of the “other orientalist” whom he asked are not given, so they must be considered of doubtful authority. On turning to *The Classical Dictionary of India* (by Mr. John Garrett, Director of Public Instruction at Mysore, India, printed in 1871 at Madras, Higginbotham & Co.) under K we find,

Kuthumi: a pupil of Paushyinji and teacher of the Sama Veda.

The name is the same as the one spelled “Koothoomi” in THE ARENA, for the double “o” stands for “u.”<sup>M</sup>

Proceeding with his peculiar analysis of this “myth,” Mr. Conway says: “I was assured *on good authority* that the name was originally ‘Cotthume’ and a mere mixture of *OX-Cott* and *Hume*, Madame Blavatsky’s principal adherents.” The evident recklessness of statement here is noticeable and inexcusable. No name of the “good authority” is given; certainly it was not Mr. Sinnett who first gave publicity to the name *Koothoomi*; perhaps it was some learned orientalist who never read John Garrett’s book. But as I knew H. P. Blavatsky well in 1874, before she met Messrs. Sinnett or Hume, and before this name—now dubbed a myth—was ever given to the public, I may be allowed to say that it was not originally “Cotthume,” but was one that I and others in New York were perfectly familiar with through his correspondence with us at that time on matters connected with the society. And when Mr. Sinnett published his *Esoteric Buddhism*, giving this name to the world, we all felt that ribaldry would follow. I wrote then to Madame Blavatsky expressing regret that the name was given out. To this she replied:

Do not be alarmed nor grieved. The name was bound to come out some day, and as it is a real one its use instead of the New York substitute is better, because the latter was unreal. The mud that you fear is now to be thrown at sacred names will not hurt them, but inevitably will fly back in the faces of those who throw it.

The remainder of the article shows an utter lack of acquaintance with the theosophical movement which has been classed by the great Frenchman, Emile Burnouf, as one of the

<sup>1</sup> Theosophical Forum for November, 1891.

three great religious movements of the day. Mr. Conway appears to think it depends on Colonel Olcott, ignoring the many other persons who give life to the “propaganda.” Such men as Mr. A. P. Sinnett, and women like Mrs. Annie Besant, are left out of account, to say nothing of the omission to notice the fact that in each of the three great divisions of the globe, Europe, Asia, and America, there is a well-organized section of the society, and that there is a great body of literature devoted to the work. This was so well known to others that shortly before her death an article by Madame Blavatsky was printed by the *North American Review*, describing the progress of the movement. But Mr. Conway would have us suppose that Colonel Olcott’s few published speeches represent us or indicate our future, and he gravely advises that headquarters should be fixed in Ceylon, so that through a union with Buddhism, a lasting vitality may be assured. This can never be done. The society has had for several years a headquarters in Ceylon, just as it has others in London, New York, San Francisco, and Madras, but it is not, nor is it to be, a Buddhist society. A slight review of its literature, emanating from those centres, would have shown this to Mr. Conway, and perhaps enabled him to give us a better and broader article. Again, the interest it has excited in England makes the last sentence of his article, “If theosophy is to live, it must ‘take refuge in Buddha’” a stale, emaciated joke. The convention of the society in London, in July last, attracted over twelve hundred people to a public meeting at Portman Rooms, and later St. James’ Hall and St. George’s were crammed with people, including such men as Sir Robert Peel, and Lord Justice Pollock, to hear Mrs. Annie Besant lecture as a theosophist on “Reincarnation,” while her lecture on theosophy at the Democratic Club brought such a crush that doors and windows were pressed in. All of this was the subject of newspaper reports, column after column having been devoted to it, with an immediate exhaustion of morning editions. It seems more likely that theosophy will “take refuge” in London than in “Buddha.”

Having now directly answered Mr. Conway’s article I will take advantage of the opportunity to append some facts directly known to

myself, about the “shrine” and the rooms at Adyar.

I went to Adyar in the early part of the year 1884, with full power from the president of the society to do whatever seemed best for our protection against an attack we had information was about to be made in conjunction with the missionaries who conducted the Christian College at Madras. I found that Mr. Coulomb had partly finished a hole in the wall behind the shrine. It was so new that its edges were ragged with the ends of laths and the plaster was still on the floor. Against it he had placed an unfinished teak-wood cupboard, made for the occasion, and having a false panel in the back that hid the hole in the wall. But the panel was too new to work and had to be violently kicked in to show that it was there. It was all unplanned, unoled, and not rubbed down. He had been dismissed before he had time to finish. In the hall that opened on the stairs he had made a cunning panel, opening the back of a cupboard belonging to the “occult room.” This was not finished and force had to be used to make it open, and then only by using a mallet. Another movable panel he also made in the front room, but even the agent of the psychical society admitted that it was very new. It was of teak, and I had to use a mallet and file to open it. All these things were discovered and examined in the presence of many people, who then and there wrote their opinions in a book I provided for the purpose, and which is now at headquarters. The whole arrangement was evidently made up after the facts to fit them on the theory of fraud. That it was done for money was admitted, for a few days after we had completed our examination the principal of the Christian College came to the place—a thing he had never done before—and asked that he and his friends be allowed to see the room and the shrine.

He almost implored us to let him go up, but we would not, as we saw he merely desired to finish what he called his “exposure.” He was then asked in my presence by Dr. Hartmann what he had paid to Coulomb for his work, and replied, somewhat off his guard, that he had paid him somewhere about one hundred rupees. This supports the statement by Dr. Hartmann (made in print), that Coulomb came to him and said that ten thousand rupees were at his disposal if he

could ruin the society. He merely exaggerated the amount to see if we would give him more to be silent.

The assailants of H. P. Blavatsky and the Theosophical Society have ever seemed to be beset by a singular fatuity. It seems that they must, as it were by force, deny all accepted laws of motive and of life in judging these things, explaining the conduct of members of the society on principles the reverse of any ever known to human beings, facts as plain as noonday being ignored, and other facts construed on theories which require the most tremendous credulity to accept. They perceive no fine impulse, and laugh at the idea of our desiring to give a basis for ethics although not a word in all the writings of Madame Blavatsky shows her or us in any other light.

*The Arena*, March 1892

## THE SO-CALLED EXPOSE OF MADAME BLAVATSKY

**E**DITORS of the *Index* : Will you give me a little space in your valuable paper for a few words regarding the so-called expose of Madame H. P. Blavatsky, and the report of the Society for Psychological Research of London upon Theosophic phenomena?

This report extends over several hundred pages, and is called scientific.

It must not be forgotten that, first, the investigation was self-constituted, and not requested by the Theosophical Society; and, secondly, that it related to a part of the history of theosophy which is not of great importance, nor dwelt on much by its members. We are a society devoted to Universal Brotherhood and Philosophy. It was true that Col. Olcott, the President, related to Mr. Hodgson nearly all the phenomena he had ever seen; but that was only injudicious, for they were not performed publicly nor for the public.

Now, I was the third person engaged in founding the society here, in 1875. Have been very active in it ever since. Went to India, *via* London, in 1884. And yet Mr. Hodgson did not interrogate me, nor did he get the facts he relates in his report at first hand.

He says, among other things, that "Mr. Judge, an American, was at Adyar, and was not allowed to see the shrine or its room." This is false. I went to India expressly to be concerned in the coming *exposure* by the Coulombs, and I took charge of everything the moment I arrived there. I had the final and exhaustive examination made. I myself removed the shrine to an adjoining room, from which that night it

disappeared. This was months before Hodgson arrived in India. If he saw what he thought was a part of the shrine, it was a joke put on him by Dr. Hartmann, who would be pleased to lead such a wild investigator into a trap. No part of it was retained by Hartmann.

Again, he describes a hole in the wall behind the shrine. There was none, and he gets it all at second hand. There was an unfinished opening in the second wall, behind the shrine, having jagged projections of lath ends all around it,—just as Coulomb had to leave it, when we stopped him. The cupboard put up against it was unfinished, and the false door thereof could only be opened with mallet and pryer. All this was Coulomb's concoction, ready to be opened to Missionary Patterson at the proper time. But the proper time never arrived, and I will tell you why. I was in Paris in April, 1884; and, while there, a message was received—in the very way which Hodgson thinks he has exploded,—informing us that the Coulombs had begun operations, and that, unless someone went and stopped them, they would get their traps finely finished, with a due appearance of age and use to carry out the conspiracy. So I started for Adyar, with full authority. But, while on the way, the people had received there a similar intimation, so that I found the Coulombs just out of the place when I arrived. At once, a register was opened there. Over three hundred people examined the place, who signed their names to a declaration of the condition and appearance of things; and then a resolution prohibiting further praying by the curious was passed. The very next day Missionary Patterson, expert Gribble & Co., came to examine. It was too late. The law was already in existence; and Mr. Gribble, who had come as an "impartial expert," with, however, a report in full in his pocket against us, had to go away depending on his imagination for damaging facts. He then drew upon that fountain.

I tell you, Mr. Editor, the report of Hodgson is only half-done work. No account has been taken of the numerous letters received by me and others, during these years between 1874 and 1884, from various adepts, under circumstances entirely free from Blavatskyism. And he has failed to get the evidence regarding things at Adyar, of the only person who went there free from excitement, and who

remained cool while the rest were wild. An experience of ten years had placed my mind where the puerile traps of missionaries, or resemblances of letters from adepts to Blavatsky's writing, could not affect it. For I will divulge to you this, sir, that, if an adept wanted to write to you, the curious circumstance might be found that the writing would resemble your own. I once saw a message thrown upon the leaf of a book; and it was in the handwriting of him holding it, who was as much amazed as any one else.

One word more Mr. Hodgson's argument on the evidence proceeds thus: Damodar says, in a separate examination, that the figure of the adept "went over a tree and disappeared," while Mohini says, "The figure seemed to melt away." *Ergo*, they lie, because they disagree as to the disappearance. This is sheer folly. Then he goes through what happened in Paris when I was present, asking Mohini and Keightley if a man might not have entered the window. They had forgotten the window. I say the window was in my room; and its height from the stone courtyard was over twenty feet, with no means of reaching by climbing.

Finally, I received in Paris several letters from American friends, ignorant of adepts; and inside were pencilled notes in the familiar handwriting which Hodgson has exploded and proved "fraudulent."

The report is valuable as a contribution to history; and when Mr. Hodgson has gained some acquaintance with the several adepts, of whom he does not dream, who are engaged with the society, he and your readers may be pleased to revise conclusions, as science has so often been compelled to do.

Yours,

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

New York, February, 1886

Boston *Index*, March 11, 1886

## THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

### AS RELATED TO BRAHMANISM AND BUDDHISM

The subjoined circular has been sent by me to as many Brahmins as I could reach. I have purposely used the words "Brahmins of India" in the title because I hold to the view of the *Vedas* and the ancient laws that the Brahmin is not merely he who is born of a Brahmin father. In America lack of accurate knowledge respecting Indian religions causes a good deal of misapprehension about Brahmanism and Buddhism, as very many think Buddhism to be India's religion, whereas in fact it is not, but, on the contrary, the prevailing form of belief in India is Brahmanism. This necessary distinction should be remembered and false notions upon the subject dissipated as much as possible. Buddhism does not prevail in India, but in countries outside it, such as Burmah, Japan, Ceylon, and others. The misconception by so many Americans about the true home of Buddhism if not corrected may tend to cause the Brahmins to suppose that the T.S. here spreads abroad the wrong notion; and no form of religion should be preferred in the T.S. above another.—W.Q.J.

### TO THE BRAHMINS OF INDIA

144 Madison Ave., New York  
April 5, 1893

MY FRIENDS:

In the English Theosophical magazine, *Lucifer*, for the month of February, 1893, is an admirable article by Rai B. K. Laheri of Ludhiana, Punjab, in which he asks his fellow Theosophists to remember that no religious form of belief should be prominently brought forward or disparaged by members of the Theosophical Society, and his words appeared at the very time I was contemplating a fraternal letter to you to show you that that Society is not engaged in any attempt to bring forward the Buddhist religion. I was the pupil and intimate friend of H. P. Blavatsky who founded the Theosophy Society; I took part with her in its first organization; I was conversant with her

sleepless devotion and untiring zeal in the work she wanted that Society to do, which was to follow out the plan laid down for it by some of your own Indian Rishees, the Mahatmas who were her Gurus; I was told by her in the very beginning of that work that her object as directed by her Guru was to bring to the attention of the West the great truths of philosophy contained in the old books and thought of India; I know that her first friends in the work in your country, even before she left this one, were Indians, Brahmins, sons of Arya-varta: hence my sensitiveness to any misapprehension by you of its purposes or of its supporters can be easily understood by you. I am not a Christian nor a member of any religious body; as I was born out of India in this incarnation I could not be a Brahmin under your present laws; but if I am anything I am a follower of and believer in the *Vedas*; I have therefore a peculiarly deep interest in the philosophy and religious literature of the Indian Aryans, am in strong sympathy with its convictions and spiritual quality, and have in all ways, but especially for the last seven years in my own magazine, the *PATH*, labored constantly to bring its treasures to the attention of students in this Western World.

Having, then, this triple devotion,—to the teaching of Indian sages, the ideals of the Messenger of your own Rishees, and the welfare of the Theosophical Society, it will be evident to you why the evil so strongly felt by my honored Brahmin co-worker, Bro. Laheri, and by myself should lead me, as an individual and as Vice-President of the T.S., to address as many of you as these words can reach. The evil is this: that a suspicion is spreading through the Brahmin community that the Theosophical Society is losing its impartial character as the equal friend to all religions and is becoming distinctly Buddhistic in its sympathies and affiliations. And the evil is not a mere mistake as to fact: it is evolving the practical consequences that interest in the Society diminishes among its natural friends in Brahmanism, that they hesitate to enter its membership or cooperate in its work, and that they withhold the aid without which the priceless treasures of their literature, so indispensable to the efforts we Theosophists are making to throw light upon the great problems of existence now agitating the Western

mind, and thus unite East and West, cannot be used in the spiritual mission the ancient Rishies have approved. In brief, Brahmins will not sustain the Theosophical Society if they believe it a Buddhistic propaganda; nor can they be expected to. No more could Christians, Mohammedans, or Parsees.

Although, as I am unreservedly convinced, this evil is due to misapprehension, it must none the less have had some cause to originate it. I believe this cause to have been threefold. First, the name *Esoteric Buddhism* given to one of our books. This book, as many of you know, was the first important attempt to bring the truths of real Indian spiritual philosophy to the knowledge of Europe and America. But it was not Buddhism. It was first named *Fragments of Occult Truth*, and might just as properly have been published with the title *Esoteric Brahmanism*. Its enormous circulation and influence, both on a constant increase, show the readiness of the Western mind for just this teaching. But its title, adopted from lack of a more accurate term at the time, has naturally led many to suppose it an exposition of mere Buddhism, although its author, Mr. Sinnett, has been at pains to explain the contrary and Madame Blavatsky has also pointed out the mistake.

Second, the well-known membership in the Buddhist Church of Col. Olcott, President of the Theosophical Society, and his earnest efforts to unite the two schools of Buddhism, as well as to popularize their teaching and to restore the temple at Buddha-Gaya. And yet you must remember that Col. Olcott was himself invested by Brahmin authorities with the Brahminical thread, the highest possible evidence of confidence in his character, and that he has recently lectured with enthusiasm on the essential unity of the inner teachings of Buddha with your own religion. Nor should any of us forget that any personal predilections for his own faith are as much the right of the President as of any private member of the Society; and that the very Constitution of that Society, the Constitution he himself was active in shaping, forbids the identification of the Society by any officer or member with his personal beliefs in either politics or religion. Those of you who know Col. Olcott must be aware how utterly he would repudiate any wish, or even willingness, to thus abuse his official station.

Third, the incautious remarks of Buddhist members of the Society. No doubt such have at times been made, and in the warmth of personal zeal or in momentary forgetfulness of the scrupulous impartiality a true Theosophist owes to all other lovers of truth, our Buddhist friends have occasionally used comparisons which were unwise. Yet even here we need remembrance that absolute fidelity to the highest ideal, ceaseless prudence in speech and pen, total faultlessness as to tact and wisdom, are not vouchsafed to any body of religionists or to any individual of them. In this, as in other departments of human conduct, there will be lapses of discretion, and it would be unfair to refuse to an inconsistent F.T.S. the allowance we concede to an inconsistent citizen or an inconsistent moralist. Certainly it would be unfair to antagonize the Society because some of its members proved defective in its spirit.

It is my conviction, then, that the suspicion which has thus interfered with the Society's work and impaired your own interest in it has no real basis. And I think you will share it if you recall such additional facts as these:—the explicit statements of the Society in its Constitution; the absolutely unsectarian spirit and proclamations of its great Head, Madame Blavatsky; the total freedom from sectarian affiliation exhibited in the actual conduct of the Society; the whole-souled devotion to its mission of many, both in East and West, who are not Buddhists in belief; the eager effort by many after all the light and truth your invaluable literature contains; the unqualified welcome given by Western Theosophists to such of your co-believers as they have been privileged to meet in their own lands. And possibly you may give weight to the unreserved assurance from myself, who have been close to Madame Blavatsky from the first and in constant conference and cooperation with her, an active worker in the Society and familiar with its history and genius, that it has not been, is not, and is most unlikely to become the organ of any sect or faith, the thing essential to its operations, nay, even to its existence, being the most absolute catholicity of thought and sympathy and respect. And I may go further, assuring you also that no one would more immediately, sternly, uncompromisingly, ceaselessly resist the contrary policy than

would I. I use these words in their fullest significance.

And so the purpose of this letter is to invite a revival of your confidence in the Theosophical Society. In many of you it has never declined. Where it has done so I would restore it. In my own country and in Europe the interest in the work of the Theosophical Society and in Indian philosophy and thought has had an expansion in the last few years which is simply amazing. I can hardly give you adequate idea of the change in the press, in public sentiment, in private study. The Society itself is growing steadily. In America we have seventy-three Branches and shall have seventy-five before this reaches you. Only one is really moribund. This means an increasing zeal for Oriental truth. More expositions of Eastern philosophy are demanded. The three editions I myself published of the *Bhagavad-Gita* have been exhausted, and a fourth is just coming out. Ancient Aryan ideas and views of life are permeating the land and moulding the convictions of its people. We need help to increase and fix them. Much of this can come only from yourselves and others in India. By your own identification with the Society you can strengthen it for its local work, aiding it to dissolve the barriers between religions and sects and to enliven fraternal feeling through all, assisting in the attempt to uplift higher ideals among your countrymen. And if you cannot join the Society, you can help it by countenancing its work. On our behalf you can transmit those valued treatises which throw light on the great problems of destiny which concern us and you alike, and can thus take part in the truly philanthropic work of giving truth to those who need and ask it. We who are, with you, fellowseekers after light and aspirants after progress know the joy of sharing our treasures with the sincere, and we invite you to give us more towards such sharing. Like you we are workers in the Rishees' cause, and we seek the most efficient aids in that work. If you do not give this aid or if you continue to rest under the wrong impression I have spoken of above, you will interfere with a work that is for the direct benefit of India and of your religion. For our work is meant also to bring the attention of the West to the philosophical and religious truths of the Sacred Books of India, to the end that India may be helped to lift itself up once more

to spiritual heights of power and thus in its turn benefit the whole race of man. It is only by teaching the West the soul-satisfying philosophy of the ancient Aryans that we can lead them on as parts of the human family, and as, indeed, perhaps the very nations where some of you may be drawn by Karma to incarnation in some future life. By having a wrong impression of the work of the Society you will be led to speak against it and to throw your powerful influence in the scale opposite to it, and thus very materially hold it back.

I invite you to communicate freely with me in answer to this letter, and to give the letter itself the widest circulation possible among Brahmins. I shall arrange for its translation into a native tongue. And so with respect and sympathy and fraternal spirit, and with the hope that these words may avail to correct an error which has distressed and alarmed me, I am

Your friend, however distant,  
WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

Path, May 1893

## THE LETTER TO THE BRAHMANS

**I**N April, 1893<sup>1</sup>, an open letter to the Brahmans was sent by William Q. Judge. It called them “Brahmans of India,” because its writer holds that there are Brahmans of the past now living in Western bodies, and because the term “Brahman” more properly refers in reality to character than to birth. Copies of the letter were sent all over the T. S. in India. Many criticisms were offered, but none were received pointing to the addition of the words “of India.” The letter was translated into Sanscrit, Bengali, and Hindi, and in that form was sent all over India.

Although some F.T.S., without corresponding with the Brahmans to whom the letter was directed, said that it was needless and that no idea existed among the orthodox Brahmans that the T.S. favored Buddhism as against other religions, and although the sender of the letter was chided for it, yet the many letters from the Brahmans who are not in the T.S. all state how glad they were to hear definitely that the T.S. was not to be confounded with a Buddhist propaganda. These letters are in Sanscrit, Hindi, Bengali, and English, and may easily be seen at New York.

In the second place the letter aroused discussion of an important point, for in the West the idea is prevalent that the T.S. is a Buddhist propaganda, and T.S. lecturers have to constantly combat this false notion. It is essential that the public shall not misconstrue us and say that because some doctrines given by Theosophists are Buddhistic therefore the Society is also.

So, carrying out the idea of this *Letter to the Brahmans*, Bro. Rai B. K. Laheri of Ludhiana, India, himself a Brahman and an F.T.S.,

went to the great Bharat Dharma Mandala held at Delhi in November, 1893, by the orthodox Brahman pundits, and laid before them the letter referred to. They discussed it and the T.S., and he reports that they passed resolutions to help the T. S., and showed they were satisfied that the Society is not a Buddhist propaganda. They then separated for their homes, to carry the letter and their own ideas thereon to the remotest corner of orthodox India. This result will of itself justify the letter. Western readers will the better understand when they know that this Mandala is a great orthodox Brahmanical gathering. They will see that the T. S. cannot afford to shut its eyes to the fact that some millions of Hindus do not use English, in which so much of our literature is written, and that it might be well if we could in some way spread our work among them.

The vernacular work of Bellary members is in line with this. It was brought up at last Indian Convention, but so far as the T. S. is concerned it is now in the hands of a committee. Bros. Jagannathiah and Swaminathiah hope to be successful in the Bellary work. Bro. Laheri also will work to the same end, and many Americans are willing to help with needed money. It would be perfectly competent for the American Section to raise funds for a work that might result in awakening a great current in India, leading to a revival of interest among Hindus themselves, to a looking up of MSS. both paper and palm leaf, to that change in India herself which must come so as to supplement fully the Western activity and devotion.

Brahmans are poor. They are disheartened. No one helps them. Old MSS. lie rotting away. Despair is around many a Brahman who formerly had pupils whom he fed, for now he cannot feed himself. Western glitter of invention and materialistic thought has drawn off the young, and some hand must be stretched out to help until the willing ones there are able to help themselves. Such help will be given, and even the letter to Brahmans has aroused a hope in the breast of many a man in India. Any one wishing to aid in the matter can address the General Secretary, American Section, or Bro. R. B. K. Laheri, Ludhiana, Punjab, India.

*Path*, March, 1894

<sup>1</sup> See PATH of May, 1893.



## INDIA AND HER THEOSOPHISTS\*

I AM moved to say a word, not by way of fomenting controversy, but merely to express my own view about a thing which needs discussion I distinctly disclaim the right or the desire to criticize the life or manners of the Hindu nation; nor have I any proposals to make for sweeping reforms in their life and members What T would direct myself to is the Theosophical movement there in relation to the national character of the Hindu, and to matters connected therewith.

I cannot agree with the statement that the Hindus and Hindu Theosophists are not intellectually active. They are, and always, have been too active, intellectually, altogether and at the expense of some other activities more important. That the peculiar characteristic of the educated Hindu is intellectual activity can hardly be doubted. It is exhibited on all occasions; in hair-splitting dialogues; in endless commentaries; in fine controversies over distinctions; in long explanations; in fact, in every possible place and manner. This is the real difficulty: it was the cause of India's decadence as it has become the obstacle against her rising to her proper place among nations. Too much intellectual activity in a nation like this, living in the tropics, with religion as a heritage and the guide for every act, is sure to lead, in any age, to spiritual pride; and spiritual pride in them then brings on stagnation. That stagnation will last until gradually there arise men of the same nation who, without fear of caste, or favor, or loss, or ostracism, or any other punishment or pain, will boldly bring about the reaction that shall result in the death of spiritual pride and the

acquisition of the counterbalancing wheel to pure intellectual activity.

Intellectualism represents the letter of the law, and the letter killeth, while the spirit maketh alive. For seventeen years we have had constant and complete evidence that the above views are correct. The THEOSOPHIST full of articles by Hindus, always intellectual: *Lucifer* printing similar ones by Hindus; the *Path* now and then doing the same; articles on mighty themes of abstract scope by Brahmins who yet belong to one of the eighty-four castes of Brahmins. But if the spiritual activity prevailed we would have seen articles, heard orations, known of efforts, to show that a sub-division of the highest of the four castes into eighty-four is not sanctioned by the *Vedas*, but is diametrically against them and ought to be instantly abandoned. I should not suggest the destruction of the four castes, as those are national divisions which exist everywhere. The Hindu, however, has the tradition, and the family lines, and the power to restore this disturbed state of things to equilibrium. And until it is restored the day of Aryavarta's restoration is delayed. The disturbance began in the Brahmanical caste and there it must be harmonized first. Spiritual pride caused it and that pride must be killed out.

Here then is the real opportunity for Indian Theosophists. It is the same sort of call that the Christians' Jesus made on the young man whom he told to take up the cross and follow him. No foreigner could do this; no European Secretary could hope to succeed at it unless he were an incarnation of Vishnu. It means loss, trouble, fight, patience, steadiness, altruism, sacrifice. Where then are the Indian Theosophists—most of whom are in the Brahmanical caste—who will preach all over India to the Brahmins to give up their eighty-four divisions and coalesce into one, so that they, as the natural teachers and priests, may then reform the other castes? This is the real need and also the opportunity. All the castes will follow the highest. Just now they all, even to the outcastes, divide and sub-divide themselves infinitely in accordance with the example set.

Have those Indian Theosophists who believed that the Mahatmas are behind the Theosophical movement ever asked themselves why those Masters saw fit to start the Society in America and not in India,

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NOTE.—The publication of the following article was inadvertently delayed—H.S.O.

the home of the Adepts? It was not for political reasons, nor religious, but simply and solely because of the purely “intellectual activity” and spiritual pride of the Hindu.<sup>1</sup> For the West is every bit as selfish as the East. Those in Europe and America who know of Karma think selfishly on it; those who do not know, live for self. There is no difference in this respect.

In the West there is as much to be fought and reformed as in India, but the problem is differently conditioned. Each hemisphere must work upon itself. But the Western Theosophist finds himself in a very uncomfortable corner when, as the champion of Eastern doctrine and metaphysic, he is required to describe the actual present state of India and her Theosophists. He begins to tell of such a show of Branches, of Headquarters buildings, of collecting manuscripts, of translation into English, of rendering into vernaculars, of learned Pundits in the ranks, of wonderful Yogis, of the gigantic works of long dead Hindus, and then he stops, hoping his interlocutor has been dazzled, amazed, silenced. But pitilessly his examiner pushes, and enquires if it be true that every one of the four castes is sub-divided into nearly hundreds, if women are educated, if educated Hindu women are active in the Society, if the Hindu Theosophists are actively and ever as martyrs working to reform within itself, to remove superstition; if he is showing by the act of personal sacrifice—the only one that will ever bring on a real reform—that he is determined to restore India to her real place? No reply is possible that does not involve his confusion. For his merciless questioner asks if it be true that one of the Mahatmas behind the Society had written to Mr. Sinnett that he had ventured

<sup>1</sup> I dissent from this theory as being unsound. Admitting H.P.B. to have been the agent of the Masters, would not that imply that she and they were unable to foresee and prevent the ignominious collapse of the Cairo attempt of 1871 at founding an Occult Society; although she did her best to make it succeed, and fortified her influence with psychical phenomena quite as strange as those we saw, four years later, at New York? But for that fiasco, a T.S. would have been formed by French, Russians, Arabs and Copts, in one of the moral pest-holes of the world. And, furthermore, although it was actually started at New York it had fallen almost into the article of death by the close of 1878, when the two Founders sailed for India; and it was not until its dry bones were electrified by the smouldering spiritual life of India that it sprang with resistless rush along the path of its Karmic mission. When Mr. Judge becomes my successor and comes to live in India, he will know more about the Hindus and what is possible and impossible for their would-be reformers. He writes now, in all kindness and good intent, in the strain of an Arya Samajist, and as H.P.B. and I did before and just after coming to India and replacing theory with actual knowledge of the Indian situation of affairs.—H.S.O.

down into the cities of his native land and had to fly almost immediately from the vile and heavy atmosphere produced by the psychical condition of his people?<sup>2</sup> The reply is in the affirmative. No Rishi, however great, can alter a people; they must alter themselves. The “minor currents” that the Adepts can deflect have to be sought in other nations so as to, if possible, affect all by general reaction. This is truth, or else the Mahatmas lie. I believe them; I have seen the evidence to support their statement.

So there is no question of comparison of nations. The Indian Section *must work out its own problem*. The West is bad enough, the heavens know, but out of badness—the *rajasika* quality—there is a rising up to truth; from *tamogunam* comes only death. If there are men in India with the diamond hearts possessed by the martyrs of the ages, I call upon them from across these oceans that roll between us to rise and tell their fellow Theosophists and their country what they ought to know. If such men are there they will, of themselves, know what words to use, for the Spirit will, in that day and hour, give the words and the influence. Those who ask for particularity of advice are not yet grown to the stature of the hero who, being all, dareth all; who having fought many a fight in other lives rejoices in his strength, and fears neither life nor death, neither sorrow nor abuse, and wisheth no ease for himself while others suffer.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

*The Theosophists* September, 1893

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Judge should not convey the false impression that the Mahatmas find the spiritual aura of India worse than those of Europe and America, for everybody knows that H.P.B. reiterated continually the assertion that the spiritual state of the West was unbearable, and she yearned for our transfer to India. What Mahatma K. H. wrote Mr. Sinnett (vide *Occult World*, p. 120, 2nd Edition) was that he had seen drunken Sikhs at the Golden Temple, at Amritsar, and heard an educated Hindu vakil declaring Yoga a delusion and the alleged *Siddhis* impossible; and that he could not endure even for a few days the stifling magnetism “even of his own countrymen”, i.e. that it was as stifling as those of other races. What he found the magnetism of London and New York, has often been described by H.P.B., to a host of witnesses. Mr. Judge has forgotten that every true Yogi of our day finds the same state of things and flies to the jungle to escape it. It is the evil effect of modern education devoid of spiritual stimulus which has made the whole world spiritually leprous as it is.—H.S.O.

## NIGAMAGAMA DHARMA SABHA

**T**HIS is the name of a society in India which has also members in the ranks of the Theosophical Society in America and elsewhere. It has been noticed by Col. H. S. Olcott in the *Theosophist* of April 1894, under the title of "The Hindu Revival," and it is now well that we should all know the facts more fully. This article will attempt to give some information. Col. Olcott says:

The foregoing remarks are introductory to the notice we are about to make of the founding at the recent Magh Mela at Prayag of a new association of Hindu ascetics and laymen under the title of Nigamagama Dharma Sabha. Our theosophical colleagues Rai B. K. Laheri and Pandit Jagneshwar Mukhapadaya are among the promoters and most active managers of this important movement, and are thus forging one more link in the chain of sympathy which ought to bind every well-wisher of the Aryan religion to the cause of theosophy.

Then follow the rules, and at the close he says:

Since the adoption of the above rules nearly five hundred Sadhus, Brahmacharyas, and pandits have signed for membership.

Strange as it may seem to some, this is an American movement, and was begun about January, 1893. Feeling that such a society should be started, I wrote to Brother Laheri and asked him to aid me in doing it, I promising on my part to raise money as I was able for helping on the work, and a little society was begun under a different name. Brother Laheri took hold of it at once, and after consulting with some pandits suggested that the name be altered to the present one, NIGAMAGAMA DHARMA SABHA. This was agreed to, and one of the rules affecting the West is that members from the West must be members of the T.S., and they should furnish means and also now and then give other help. One of its first works was the "Letter to the Brahmans," to which many replies were received from India and for which gratitude

was expressed. The object of that open letter was to remove from the minds of the Hindus, if possible, the wrong notion that the T. S. was a Buddhist propaganda, so that future work with the aid of the Society might be possible. It had a good effect. Brother Laheri acting for the new society went also, as before noticed, to a great meeting of orthodox Brahmans in India, and after his lecture to them they endorsed the movement of the T. S. Money has been raised in America and sent to India for the N. D. S. with the object of beginning the following as might be possible:

(a) To have a Sanscrit organ for the Society.

(b) To engage the services of a good pandit at some seat of learning in order to revive among the Hindus under Hindu methods their own religion, to the end that more and more a knowledge of its true philosophy should spread there and in the West.

(c) To have a district inspector.

(d) To aid all good movements among the Hindus, and especially to do all such works as would tend to spread theosophy there.

(e) To procure rare manuscripts and palm leaves, and have them translated.

Under (d) it has been proposed to aid effectively the work so long carried on by Jagannathiah and Swaminathiah, F.T.S., at Bellary, India, where they have a small vernacular section and a little journal. It is proposed to them, in a letter sent by me, to include their work in that of the N. D. S. without in any way impeding them or having them alter the name they have adopted. To this they will no doubt agree; and money has already been sent them for their help. Brother Laheri recently writes thus :

The fact is that N.D.S. is now all over India in some form or other. In the Northwest it is under the guidance of J. Muker-jee, and several Dandiswamis, Brahmacharyas, and Parama-hansas are among the members. I am in touch with the orthodox Brahmans in the Punjab and Northwest, and in Madras have the same relation through the Sanmarga Samaj, Bellary. I do not wish to make members at random nor to expend in useless matters the money they *our most beloved brothers in America* send in love, affection, and sympathy to their poor Hindu brothers. Hundreds of plans will have to be formed and hundreds given up as we learn by experience. You have got the best wishes of India for you because you really try to improve her

cause; people are simply delighted to see that America sends money through you to help in that.

Now this whole enterprise is for the benefit of the T.S. in India, and is not outside of its work. It was begun privately so as to prevent suspicion and distrust, but now there is no need for keeping it so. It is a fact that while Theosophy is forwarded best in the West by our own methods, those methods will not do for India, and such is the opinion of many Brahmans who know their own land. But help must be extended to them so that they can rise to their feet and help themselves. So the work of the N.D.S. in so far as the West is concerned is to furnish the means and later some of the men, so that under strictly Hindu ways and in the tongues of the land our objects may be forwarded by attempting to arouse a new spiritual aspiration. It is not competent for the T.S. as yet to donate money from its funds for this work, but it is right and proper that members should, if they see fit, give some of their money to it. This they have done, and several have sent me some subscriptions. These of course ought not to limit that which is needed for our own work, and it is not expected that members will cut off from the latter to give to the former, but that the aid given to N.D.S. shall be additional to all other. It is also intended to procure through the N.D.S. such rare palm-leaf manuscripts as will not only be of interest here but also perhaps a means of obtaining funds from those who would not give them to the T.S.

As Brother Laheri says, many plans will have to be formed and many given up until at last the best shall be discovered. But the plan of aiding the already-started work at Bellary is for the present permanent. It may result in a printing press there soon or late. American members become such by certificate issued by me under authority of Brother Laheri, and will be informed as the work goes on of its progress. So far, since May, 1893, I have received \$548.00 and have disbursed \$360.00 in drafts to India exclusive of a small bill for needed printing. Any one wishing to know more and to help can address me, as all names in the West have to go through my hands.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

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## THE TRUTH ABOUT EAST AND WEST

**M**RS. BESANT and others have joined together to try and show that I am attempting to create discord in the Theosophical Society between the East and West. In this case they seem to consider India as the East. I may say myself that I do not consider it the East alone. The charge is made publicly and privately, as well as in a set of resolutions offered by Mrs. Besant and passed at a meeting in India in December. It is based on the fact that in a circular issued by me privately in the E.S.T., I stated the fact that the spiritual crest, the center, of the wave of evolution is in the West and not in the East. A mere sentimental desire to preserve an apparent but not actual peace among the officials of the T.S. has no power to prevent me from stating facts and bringing forward ideas which are of the highest importance to the human family and to the right progress of that part of the Theosophical movement represented by the T.S. The attempt to create discord is on the side of those who take up, for personal ends only, my statement as to the relative position of the East and West—a statement supported by facts, and given also to me by the Masters, who know. This cry against me of fomenting discord is due also to a limited knowledge of the evolutionary wave and tendency, to a mere craze about India, and also to a narrow view of what is included in the term “East.”

Of course I must say in the very beginning that if we deny H. P. Blavatsky had any knowledge on this matter and deny that she has brought from the Masters definite statements relating to some matters connected with it which are greatly beyond our knowledge; if we intend to reduce her to the position of an untrained and irresponsible psychic; if it is our purpose to accept her reports of what Masters say

only when those agree with our preconceived notions; then of course there will only be a continual and unsettled dispute, inflaming sectional and race feelings, and leading to nothing but strife. But those who exercise calm judgment and try to divest themselves of personal pride, whether natural or acquired, in respect to any race or country; those who are not afraid to look at facts will be able to view this matter in such a way as to see that no discord should arise, and certainly that it is not intended by me to create any.

#### THE EAST NOT INDIA

Let us once for all give up the notion that the East is India. India is but a small part of it. There are China, Japan, Persia, Arabia, Turkey, Russia in Asia, Tibet, Mongolia, Ceylon, and other parts. Tibet is a large country, and the place where it was constantly said by H.P.B. the Masters are, if anywhere. India has been regarded carelessly as “the East” among Theosophists, because it is under English rule and hence more heard of than other parts. Were Tibet open and under English or French rule, we would speak of it as the East quite as much as, if not more than, we have done of India.

And when we examine into what, if anything, India has done for the great East of which she is a part, we find that for hundreds of years she has done nothing whatever, and apparently has no intention of doing anything. Her dominant religion—Brahmanism—is crystallized and allows for no propaganda. Other nations may die in their sins, unless, perchance, they are fortunate enough to be born among the Brah-mans for good conduct.

#### THE MASTERS AND INDIA

Mrs. Besant has referred to the sayings of the Masters about India to support her assertion that I am trying for discord. Let us refer to the published record which is in *The Occult World* by Mr. Sinnett, where K. H. says what I quote:

I had come for a few days, but now find that I myself *cannot endure for any length of time the stifling magnetism even of my own countrymen.* [Italics mine.—J.] I have seen some of our proud old Sikhs drunk and staggering over the marble pavement of their sacred temple. . . I turn my face homeward tomorrow (p. 120-121).

Imagine, then, that since we are all convinced that the *degradation of India* is largely due to the *suffocation of her ancient spirituality*. . . . But you know, as any man who has read history, that patriots may burst their hearts in vain if circumstances are against them. Sometimes it has happened that no human power, not even the fury and force of the loftiest patriotism, has been able to bend an iron destiny aside from its fixed course, and nations have gone out like torches dropped into the water in the engulfing blackness of ruin. Thus, we who have the *sense of our country's fall*, though not the power to lift her up at once, cannot do as we would. . . . (p. 126).

The present tendency of education is to make them (Hindus) materialistic and to root out spirituality. With a proper understanding of what their ancestors meant by their writings, education would become a blessing, whereas it is now often a curse (p. 136).

He finds the magnetism of his countrymen too stifling to be borne; asserts that India is spiritually degraded; hints that her destiny is to go out “in the engulfing blackness of ruin,” unless she is raised up, which would arouse a doubt as to her ability to uplift any other nation. It also explains why she has not, for so many centuries, done anything to help other countries. He says the Hindus are getting materialistic—referring to those who take English education—and ends by declaring himself a follower of his Patron Buddha. The *Letter to Some Brahmans*, published in the PATH, enforces the point about Buddhism, and also shows how dense is the surrounding aura of those Brahmans who are strictly orthodox, and how much easier it is for the Adepts to affect the Westerners than the Hindus. And if the wall around the educated Brahman is impenetrable, how much more so is that surrounding the mass of ignorant, superstitious people who take their religion from the Brahman? The spiritual degradation of India to which the Master referred is an indisputable fact. The great majority of Brahmans are theologically and metaphysically as fixed and dogmatic as the Romish Church; they also keep up idol-worship and a great number of degrading caste observances. The poor, uneducated, common people, forming the core of the Hindu population, are gentle, it is true, but they are ignorant and superstitious. Their superstitions are theological; the Brahman fosters this. The other class, consisting of those who take up English, have lost faith and are, as the Master wrote, materialized.

This is Master's picture. It is also the actual picture. Now where is the wrong in knowing the fact, and in asserting that such an India of today, no matter how glorious it may have been 10,000 years ago, is not the teacher of the West. Rather is it that the West is to lead the reform and raise up the fallen country with all others.

#### THE WEST'S MATERIAL POWER

India, Tibet, and other Eastern countries cannot draw, fix, and hold the attention of the civilized world. Their position is negative or imitative. But the Western nations are the conquerors who compel attention, first perhaps by arms, but at last by triumphs of science and industry. It is through the West's material power that our mental horizon has been enlarged by a knowledge of other nations, of their literature, their ancient philosophy, and their religion. Had we waited for them to give us this, we never would have obtained it.

#### THEOSOPHY A WESTERN PLANT

The Theosophical movement was founded and flourishes in the West preeminently and under Western influence. It began in America, farthest West, started there by the Masters. A very pertinent question here is, why it was not begun in India if that country is the one of all we are to look to? Very evidently the beginning was made so far West because, as so often stated by H.P.B., the next new race is to appear in the Americas, where already preparations in nature for the event are going on. This means that the centre, the top, the force of the cyclic wave of evolution is in the West—including Europe and America—and all the observable facts support the contention.

This evolutionary wave is not a mere theoretical thing, but is a mass of revolving energy composed of human egos from all the ancient ages of the past. It cannot be stopped; it should not be hindered in any way. This is what makes the importance of the West. The Masters work scientifically, and not sentimentally or by hysterical impulse. Hence they take advantage of such a cyclic wave, well knowing that to have begun in the East would have been child's play. They desired, one can see by viewing the history and the words from them of the last twenty years, the new and growing West to take from all the East

whatever philosophy and metaphysics were needed; to assimilate them, to put them into practice; to change the whole social and economic order; and then react back, compulsorily, upon the East for its good and uplifting.

We have had an accentuation of India in the T. S. just because this movement is a Western one and also an English-language movement. It is heard of in India precisely because the English conqueror is there with his language, which the lawyer, the government servant, and many merchants must know if they wish to get on. If, on the other hand, Russian were the governmental language of India, not much of this movement would ever have been there. So the T. S. movement is in India slightly—in proportion to population almost microscopically—because some English prevails there; it is in Europe in English; to a slight extent in other languages. But it cannot yet reach the masses of France, Germany, Spain, Russia, because of the languages. But while America has only sixty million or so of people, it already pays more attention to Theosophy than any other nation, because, although made up of all nations, it has English as its tongue for law, government, business, and social life.

If, as some experts say, the United States' population doubles every twenty-five years, then in a quarter of a century it will have over 120,000,000 people, and probably 1,920,000,000 in a century. All these will speak English or its derived future language.

Now in the face of all these facts, and of many more which could be brought forward, where is the brotherliness, the Theosophy, the truth in starting against me a charge that I wish or try to set the East and West against each other? If in India are Initiates—which H.P.B. often denied, if there is the highest spiritual wisdom, why so many Hindus trying to reform it; why so many Hindus at the feet of H.P.B. asking for truth and how to find the Master; why so many Hindus in the E.S.T. for the purpose of getting teaching from Westerners? The answers are easy. Let those who are not carried-away by a mere name, who can calmly examine facts, see that the West is the advancing conqueror of human destiny; that the Eastern lands, both India and other places, are storehouses for the world, holding from the past

treasures that the West alone can make avail of and teach the East how to use. Let sectional jealousy cease, and let us all be careful that we do not inject into the mental sphere of the Theosophical Society any ideas, arising from sentiment or from insufficient reflection, which might become a hindrance, however slight, to the evolutionary impulse, or which might tend concretely to limit the expansion of the great work begun by H.P.B. To create such a hindrance is an act, the gravity of which, though it may be not appreciated, is nevertheless very great.

It is the destiny of the West to raise the East from its darkness, superstition, and ignorance, to save the world; it is its destiny to send Theosophical principles, literature, and teachers into even such a remote land as Tibet, whose language we as yet can scarcely learn.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

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