

My Heresies

Or

"Where I beg leave to

. . differ from . .

Mrs. ANNIE BESANT"



By

F. T. BROOKS,

Theosophist At-Large;

FOREWORD.

I offer these brief remarks to my colleagues in the Theosophical Society and to the Indian Public.

I claim acceptance as a public worker by the Theosophical Society, because its fundamental professed 'Objects' are my objects, although the chiefs to whom it has now subjected itself are not my chiefs. I do not see why Theosophy should ever imply subservience to any *particular* chief or chiefs.

I claim, at the hands of the Theosophical Society, not only *acceptance*, but efficient *assistance* in convening the Public to my lectures and circulating my books.

I am a Theosophist in my own right : my lectures are Theosophic lectures and my books are Theosophic Books. I defy any one to demonstrate the contrary without proving that Theosophy is.....not Theosophy.

If the Theosophical Society will not assist me, I shall fatally bring discredit on it *by merely doing my Theosophic Work without it.*

My work is my only weapon. I need no other. The time for parleying is over¹. It is a pity that things should have come to this.

The Theosophical Society should of course equally assist any other workers whose work is relevant to its declared aims. I do not stand in any other worker's way, but merely claim my share among the rest, in the use of a social instrument obviously devised for the assistance of such work as mine.



1. See the curious correspondence published in the *Appendix*.

This Theosophical Boycott (save the mark!) has been going on ever since I left the E. S. T. (Esoteric Section) in the early days of 1912. It well-nigh extinguished me altogether. See *The Making of the Better Man*, Preface.

I.

The Paramountcy of Knowledge over Feeling, or of Plain Truth over Beautiful Sentiment.

I first came to discover this in 1901 or 1902, while endeavouring to study Mr. Bhagavan Das's "*The Science of the Emotions*"—a book strenuously supported for years by Mrs. Annie Besant, who prescribed it as a text-book for Theosophists of the Inner Section, and embodied its conclusions wholesale in the metaphysical portions of her own books¹. By doing this she emphatically placed *ichchha* above *jnanam* — "Desire-Emotion," or, in a higher aspect, *Will*, above Cognition or, in a higher aspect, *Consciousness*.

Well, something in me rebelled against this from the outset, and has gone on quietly rebelling ever since. As already mentioned, it was *The Science of the Emotions* which first brought my 'heresy' home to me. After carefully reading and annotating a few pages of that book (as in duty bound, being a member of the Inner Section²)

(1) See in particular the earlier portions of "*A Study in Consciousness*" and "*Thought-Power, its Control and Culture*." See also my new book "*The Theosophical Society and its Esoteric Bogeydom*," Chapter XXIII ("*On Intellectual Mediumship*,") where this matter is discussed at length.

(2) E. S. T., or "Eastern School of Theosophy" as it was then called.

I came upon the seemingly casual proposition:.. "That fundamental nature of the *Jiva*, which is Desire-Emotion,..." and could proceed no further. "Is Desire-Emotion the *fundamental* nature of the *Jiva* (Soul)?" I asked myself, and came to the conclusion that 'Desire-Emotion' was certainly *not* the fundamental nature of *my Jiva*, for one, however hampered and restricted by these that unfortunate *Jiva* might for the moment be.

The perspicuous reader will at once see that this is not a mere matter for Platonic¹ disquisition, but a vital question that affects the very mainsprings of life. He will see that this metaphysical difference of opinion was bound to result sooner or later in Mrs. Besant, with her magnificent abilities, being led to carry on some great and splendid movement of an impulsive and devotional rather than strictly scientific order, and in my loyalty to the Ideal which I serve placing me (in the eyes of Mrs. Besant's faithful ones) in the somewhat invidious position of the 'fallen angel' who 'refuses to serve' when the 'Lord Himself' is calling. The fact is, of course, that there are two sides to this shield as to every other, that loyalty to what one holds as Truth compels refusal of allegiance elsewhere, that truest Service must submit to being, from certain stand-points, viewed and branded as *dis-service*, for 'one cannot serve two masters at a time.'

(1) In the false sense of 'merely theoretical,' i.e., sterile.

And so it has happened. Mrs. Besant, not content with sending discreet circulars and instructions to members of the E. S. T. 'in the name of the Master,' has come out publicly with a message from On High, with sounding prophecies of a Personal 'Coming Christ' and *bodily* preparations for his reception; and when asked whether I believe in her topical visions and prophecies and am willing to lend a hand in impressing these upon the public mind, Truth compels me loyally to answer :

"I simply *do not know*, and cannot honestly take up systematic propaganda on behalf of a concrete future event as to which I have no vivid *personal* intuition, still less a scientific certainty¹."

Hence a parting of the ways.

(1) So little was I, on the other hand, inclined to positive *disbelief*, that, after discussing the main clause (belief in the near coming of a great Teacher) with a representative who gave it an exceedingly liberal interpretation (he was evidently bent on 'getting me in' somehow, trusting that emotional contagion would do the rest—which it didn't), I actually joined, in December 1911, the *Order of the Star in the East*, in which I passively remained until a truly 'inspired' article by Mrs. Ruspoli (*Herald of the Star*, 1912, pp. 96-98) on the internal management 'by Authority' of the Order woke me up. Even then I waited several months before sending in a formal resignation. See, '*The T. S. and its Esoteric Bogeydom*'.

NOTE. The nearest I have ever come to neo-adventist 'prophesying' is in the Introduction to my *Gospel of Life* (pp. 4-51) written in 1909, before Mrs. Besant had thought of starting a new sect 'in His Name.'

I am glad to say that I have practically nothing to withdraw from what I wrote then. I still regard our human world as on the threshold of a more synthetic phase of its historic evolution. I still regard our world-progress as inspired and guided by a Hidden Wisdom, however much I may doubt the power *or right* of this or that seer to concretise that Hidden Wisdom (for the use and abuse of superstitious folk) under the name and form of Mahatma X, or Manu Y, or Bodhisattva Z. I still regard the next great Religion as bound to be a vast Movement of Essential Synthesis in all aspects of life, to be embodied in as many true-souled and good-hearted Men as are required to intuit and carry out that Synthesis. Whether Mrs. Besant's particular Bodhisattva happens to be one of them or not, matters little. What matters is whether you and I shall deliberately co-operate in the work of *making Mankind more organic*. The founding of a new sect of *personal*—therefore exclusive—devotees can hardly give much help in that direction.

II

MY CHOICE OF WORK IN INDIA.

After exporting me to India in 1903, Mrs. Besant casually asked me one day what course I proposed to follow. "I want," I said, "to get at the *real* teachings of Ancient Vedanta—to make a thorough study of the *Gita*, the *Upanishads*, and so on." She told me, no doubt with the kindest of intentions, that I was not fit for that sort of work; and could scarcely make headway in a lifetime.

Well, the irresistible attraction of the subject somehow neutralised the effect of whatever cold and holy water the august Dame may have sprinkled me with on that and subsequent occasions; and I now propose, with the help of a discriminating public, to push on my work of publication in right earnest.

The perspicuous reader will easily see that this difference of opinion as to my choice of work makes a second definite line of cleavage between Mrs. Besant and myself. He will understand how, when it was proposed, at the end of 1912, that I should, in order to remain in the 'live' part' of the Inner Section, take a pledge of obedience to Mrs. Annie Besant in all matters relating to my Theosophic work,

(1) Now technically designated under the name of 'Esoteric Section'

I chose (after some months' rumination, as usual) to finally withdraw from the Inner Section rather than take a pledge I could not conscientiously keep, placing my work under the control of one who was patently out of sympathy with it. The only alternative being to remain inactive on a shelf while others strenuously worked on lines which I could not possibly approve of, what better could I do than quietly climb down and quit?

So I left the E. S. T. at a critical juncture when it was being made the tool of a new prophetic mission, and duly injected, for the purpose, with powerful psychic serum from Mr. Leadbeater's Akashic Laboratory. The rest happened just as might have been expected: whatever the unsectarian basis (on paper) of the Theosophical Society, the E. S. duly treated me as sects treat an apostate in these enlightened days. Vague and ever-shifting slanders—often half unconscious—and sly social obstruction have taken the place of bodily persecution. There is nothing to complain of here, for the work which in older times would have been summarily suppressed, *goes on.*

III.

THE DIFFERENT SCHOOLS OF TRAINING WE BELONG TO.

Mrs. Besant is a towering representative of a School in which the development of occult powers or objective *siddhis* is essential.

It is entirely through these, from the days of Madame Blavatsky and the '*Occult World*' onwards, that the Teachings of that School have been made manifest in the outer world of men.

Now I happen to belong to a School which regards objective *siddhis* as one of the chief obstacles to genuine spiritual regeneration or transmutation. According to that School, it is to the supernal glories of the Psychic Way that the prayer .. "and *lead us not into temptation*, but deliver us from evil '," refers.

Mrs. Besant's present widespread authority over her followers is entirely founded on the professed clairvoyant vision and psychic hearing of superhuman Adepts or Masters and of many other wonderful things by Mr. C.W. Leadbeater and herself. If those visions of theirs come to be regarded as false — whether as deceiving them, or being invented by them for purposes of deception¹ — the whole edifice painstakingly reared for years by Mrs. Besant in the minds of her adherents crumbles into dust.

Now I am no more concerned in saying that Mrs. Besant's Christ (or Bodhisattva or Lord Maitreya) will *not* come than in prophesying that

(1) Strictly paralleled in *Ishopanishat*, 15, which see.

(2) I strongly incline to the former view when considering this hypothesis.

he will. I simply *do not know* and am prepared to take cognisance of events when they come (or of their absence while they fail to come) and make the best of them (and of their absence too.)

But I am forced, from the standpoint of my own inner training, to characterise the whole position as *unsound* — not merely Mrs. Besant's and Mr. Leadbeater's personal position, but the position into which those gifted seers have through their strenuous propaganda and well-nigh overpowering 'guidance' involved the whole Theosophical Society.

The standpoint from which I thus view Mrs. Besant's position as unsound is no matter of mere intellectual preference. It is the fundamental standpoint of my whole Inner Life, the standpoint of such direct religious experience as *is mine* (unless I am myself deluded or deluding you.)

This is not the place for dwelling on my spiritual or religious experience which I am thus forced to set over and against Mrs. Besant's Occult School and its encroaching propaganda. The main Keynote of that experience will be found in *The Making of the Better Man*, pp. 239-251, with a few immediate deductions on pp. 251-254¹. To this I must refer you².

(1) Read also preface (of the same book) pp. LIII-LVI.

(2) More in further books, as yet unpublished.

IV.

**My peculiar position as an (efficient but)
independent public worker in the (pro-
fessedly non-sectarian) Theosophical
Society.**

It is said — nay, emphatically reiterated and emphasized by Mrs. Annie Besant herself — that once Universal Brotherhood is granted, all minor differences of opinion are welcome in the Theosophical Society.

I do not quite see how this can be while human nature remains as it now is and while the Theosophical Society is (now *avowedly*) controlled, in the name of certain extraordinary Adepts, inaccessible to the common run of mortals, by arbitrarily chosen (or thus professed to be) particular disciples of the abovementioned Adepts. Any one acquainted with the elementary facts of human nature will say, without requiring the gift of prophecy, that any opinion venturing to challenge the claim of the abovementioned 'disciples' to control the Society will be extremely unwelcome, both to their followers and to themselves.

In short, such a Society *is a sect*, or English words have lost their meaning; and the very claim

of being unsectarian tends to make it something less than an honest, straightforward sect¹.

But all this is much more than mere theory or inference to an experimental traveller like myself. For I have been more and more driven to *realise* that my own differing opinions—however staunch my loyalty to the Ideal of Universal Brotherhood—are in fact extremely unwelcome (and must necessarily be so) to all devout (and especially to *pledged*) followers of Mrs. Annie

(1) *Note*:—Any impartial observer will see that the position of the Theosophical Society is *exactly that of the Young Men's (or Women's) Christian Association*, minus the frank avowal of the latter that it is "Christian, but non-sectarian," i.e., under Christian management, governed by Christians in the interests of Christianity, while willing to admit all decent folk, irrespective of opinion, to simple membership and the benefits thereof. Thus should the Theosophical Society, to be consistent, declare itself "under Esoteric Mahatmic management, but willing to admit all decent folk, irrespective of opinion, to simple membership and the benefits thereof."

The parallel is obvious: The Theosophical Society, thus conducted, must automatically work to make converts, not merely to Theosophic Principles and Life, but to *specific belief* in certain particular Mahatmas, and their chosen disciples X, Y, Z, and the specific "Path of Initiation" of which they guard the gateway, as the Y. M. C. A. automatically works to make converts not merely to Christian Morality, but to *specific belief* in the Divinity of Christ and the Path of Salvation through Him.

In short the Theosophical Society, *as conducted* by Mrs. Annie Besant, is just a religion like any other, and not at all the Universal Solvent which it claims to be. In other words the Theosophical Society has ceased to be Theosophical. It has become a cult.

Besant. These consider it their duty, as members of her Esoteric Section¹, to control the Theosophical Society in her interests and to guard it from the 'evil influence' of 'mischief-makers' like myself². I am also given to understand, mainly by their acts (deeds are more potent than words) that they would far rather hinder than help me in my endeavours to air my 'heresies' (opinions) before the Indian Public which is nevertheless as much entitled to hear me if I have aught that is good, or even entertaining, to say, as it is entitled to hear Mrs. Besant herself.

Mrs. Besant would certainly feel bound, if consulted, to advise the Public to "hear all views and hold fast to that which helps." I ask for nothing more than to be heard, believing, rightly or wrongly, that it is my duty to uphold certain doctrines and views which I deem sound, and clear the way for their acceptance (and vital practice) by all to whom they may appeal.

As matters now stand, the Public *can* grant me such hearing (and *does*, when informed); Bar Libraries can; Social Clubs can; Students' Associations can and do; the Y. M. C. A. and other liberal religious foundations can; educational institutions of almost all shades and grades can and do.

But the Theosophical Society (and Universal Brotherhood) cannot. Why?

(1) Called by Mrs. Besant "the Heart of the T. S."

(2) See Appendix, Letter VIII, 4th para.

Because it is controlled, in the name of Mrs. Besant and Mr. Leadbeater, and *their* Cosmic Hierarchy of Adepts, by an Esoteric Section strictly pledged to loyally trust and strenuously assist Mrs. Besant in *her* propaganda based on topical clairvoyant visions and prophecies derived therefrom, not on 'mere' naked, everlasting principles¹.

Because its 'loyal' esoteric members, who control the T. S. lodges at all important centres, are being carefully, albeit gradually, informed by their clairvoyant leaders as to 'who is who' in the Esoteric World, from the "Supreme Director of Evolution on this Globe," through the descending

(1) The Public should note that the *Theosophical Education Trust*, by which Mrs. Besant hopes to control (in the averred interests of non-sectarian education) as large a section as possible of the growing educational work in India, is composed exclusively of members of the Esoteric Section, pledge-bound to win over as many young students as possible to Mrs. Besant's specific Neo-Adventist views, and to sedulously shut out all conflicting views. The staffs of the Colleges and Schools controlled by them must as inevitably be chosen with a view to this, as is the case with any other propagandist mission in its educational work. To choose otherwise would be disloyal to the chief. Preference will also inevitably be shown (howsoever privately) to students who are duly impressed or profess to be so. I see nothing to object to in this, any more than in other educational mission work, indirectly productive of good. What I object to is the stoutly profferred claim that such education is strictly non-sectarian—also the use of the name "Theosophical."

rank of Buddhas and Manus and Bodhisattvas and Chohans and Masters and Arhats (on the Threshold of Divinity) down to the merest newly initiated disciple.

Now this Cosmic Civil List of those authorised (by the Supreme Director of Evolution on this globe) to utter spiritual Truths and organise Spiritual Work does not *as yet* contain the name of a certain Mr. F. T. Brooks¹. Until it does, that unfortunate gentleman will (under the new T. S. dispensation) find himself, as a Theosophic lecturer, in an extremely awkward position — the position of an unwelcome interloper in the realm of moral and religious instruction, whom it were genuine relief for the faithful to get rid of by dubbing him a rank impostor. For, until E. S. members are informed by their clairvoyant leaders that this Mr. F. T. Brooks has a right to teach and may be safely and profitably listened to, they are bound to assume that there must be "something seriously amiss" with him. Nay, are they not bound to infer that he, differing in such important points from their revered leaders, must be some Envoy of the Prince of Darkness, a Messenger of the grim Brethren of the Shadow, sent to rouse suspicion and stir up strife, and to

(1) "We have not as yet recognised you" writes Mrs. Besant in answer to an enquiry regarding the author's share in the *akashic* record of past lives (and History) investigated by Mr. Leadbeater and herself.

obstruct the preparation of our rough Earthly Ways for the gentle feet of the Lord of Compassion and Wisdom ?

In short the only way for me to pull on with the Theosophical Society in its present phase consists, either in my suddenly developing '*siddhi*' on a scale commensurate with Mr. Leadbeater's and Mrs. Besant's claims, and then forcing my way into their Akashic Paradise and laying hands on my due share thereof if it be true ; or else in my respectfully and earnestly calling upon those gifted seers (presumably specialised for that very purpose) to make just one last little effort to discover me in their Akashic Records if I be there at all, and to find, besides, some cosy little niche for me in their Calendar of Saints, either 'on the Threshold of Divinity' or somewhere within easy reach of it, so that I may go on helping the Theosophical Society by amicably doing my work *in it* as before, and may also go on *being helped* by it with an easy and friendly access to the respectable Section of the Indian Public (Judges, Sub-Judges, Munsiffs, Municipal Chairmen and what not), whom I must otherwise seek to reach (not very successfully hitherto) through other and less widely organised channels.

If this cannot be managed, I fear my independent work must go on scandalizing and antagonizing, by its very efficiency and success

(*heightened* by obstructions laboriously surmounted) the faithful believers in Mrs. Besant's Cosmic Mission—often most estimable folk whom I had far rather be friends than foes with. I even fear lest it should in the long run assist, precisely to the extent that it is found beneficent and useful, in placing the Theosophical Movement, *as now conducted by Mrs. Annie Besant*, in a ridiculous position in the public eye—the position of a petty sect of sentimental enthusiasts, loudly claiming to be unsectarian and charged with a ‘Universal Mission’ which their very narrowness disproves, and of a more or less secret clique of fanatical busybodies interfering (after the fashion of vested ‘Trusts’) with free moral, intellectual and spiritual expansion while loudly claiming to prepare the way for the coming of a Lord of Universal Compassion and Wisdom whom they alone claim to know, but whom the palpable sectarianism of their attitude to other movements and workers proves them unfit to serve.

It is a queer position anyway, and it seems a pity that the Theosophical Society, which was once obviously intended for the forwarding (amongst other things) of liberal public religious work such as mine, should have been warped to such an extent by Mrs. Besant's (*cum* Leader's) esoteric dominance as to be made impossible for me to pull on with. It is actually a relief for me to pass out of that esoteric hothouse

atmosphere into the open, and have my work welcomed on its own merits by plain earthly folk who take some interest in the improvement of their country and of the world.

I fear the Theosophical Society must either 'climb down' considerably (and mighty quick) to less abnormal levels (and I, for one, am ready to loyally assist it in doing so) or be doomed to finally burst as an over-blown bubble in the realm of portentous but intangible Etherics to which its basis has been deliberately transferred by Mrs. Annie Besant and Mr. C. W. Leadbeater.

NOTE:—To let the reader decide whether I have not been putting things rather mildly—taking the colour off, so to say, instead of 'laying it on,' as some may accuse me of doing—let me quote three little recent samples from Mrs. Besant herself.

I

Mrs. Annie Besant publicly answering objections to her E. S. policy at the 1912 Convention at Adyar.

"You must remember that H. P. B. (lavatsky) was sent to found the Society *by her Master Morya*. The head of the *outer* Society was H. S. Olcott, another disciple of the same Master, and it was *by the Masters through* these two disciples that the Society came to birth, and the Colonel was

appointed by them President for life.....
 Clearly this *E. S. conception is older than the democratic arrangement that we now have* (namely, the whole Theosophical Society *as known to the public — B.*); and if there is to be any separation it is rather the outer membership that should leave the name to the inner, than the inner that should go away and leave the Society to the outer."

T. S. Convention Report, 1912. Italics and parentheses mine.

II

Mrs. Annie Besant haranguing (in theory) the whole Theosophical Society in the Peroration of her Presidential Address, 1912 Convention.

"Brethren: You are given a great opportunity, which, rightly utilised, may carry you far

"Therefore stand up, O children of Manu, followers of our great Warrior Master, the Rajput Chief of the Morya clan,¹ resolute to defend our righteous cause

(1) Surely a novel way of addressing an unsectarian body of workers for the cause of Universal Brotherhood! Are all Theosophists aware of being thus harangued *ex cathedra* by their President in her most official utterance of the year? (B.)

Ours in India is the glorious privilege of standing by our Masters, our true Leaders, in the day of reproach and imputed dishonour ¹. I congratulate you, I congratulate myself, that we are found worthy to defend Their Cause."

Convention Report, 1912. Footnotes Mine.

III

Mrs. Annie Besant comforting, as Official Protector, the persecuted (?) Members of the Order of the Star in the East, founded to prepare the World for the Reception of the Great Teacher whom she heralds.

"..... But if it (the Movement in question — B.) be of God, none may overthrow it, and *the opponents may haply discover that they are fighting against God.*" (A comfortable suggestion, is it not — and of course quite unsectarian, as befits the President of the Theosophical Society.)

*The Herald of the Star, p. 86, July 1912.
Italics and parentheses mine.*

(1) Any one reading this must infer that the Masters of Wisdom have been personally slandered in the Press and sued in the Law Courts. Have They *really* no existence apart from Mr. Leadbeater and the uncomfortably thin ice he skates on?? (B.)

APPENDIX.

A File of Theosophic (*new style*) Correspondence

With a few notes thereon by F. T. BROOKS.

I

LEAGUE OF THE HELPING HAND,
7, MANDAVALLI LANE,
MYLAPORE, MADRAS,
18th July 1913.

From F. T. BROOKS.

To

The Secretary,
Hyderabad T. S.,
Hyderabad (Deccan.)

Dear Sir and Brother,

Will you be so kind as to let me know sharp whether it is possible to arrange for a few lectures (say 3 at least) on a subject of absolutely general interest:—

"THE MAKING OF THE BETTER MAN"

- I. *The Truer Mind.*
- II. *The Better Heart.*
- III. *The Healthier Body.*

(Possibly more if demand and time permit).

It may be known that I do not follow Mrs. Besant in her present policy ¹. But *my lectures have nothing to do with that* and the T. S. should (alas, that it does not always) rise above mere sectarianism.

You might see Mr. D.....² (if there) and any other liberal Theosophists. Also Raja D.....K..... Bahadur and Raja B.....R...Bahadur of M.....D..... (with whom I am connected through the "*League of the Helping Hand*") to which Mr. A. R. H..... c/o. Mr. A. V.....R..... 1st Assistant *P. Q. R. High School* also belongs. I would be willing to lecture to

(1) (Later) This was obviously the only straightforward thing to say. The Theosophical Society in India has come to such a pass, nowadays, that working with it is generally taken to imply personal 'loyalty' to (in the sense of blind confidence in) its present leaders, Mr. O. W. Leadbeater and Mrs. Annie Besant. Loyalty to Principles and Ideals counts for nothing, and all the declarations (as to the nature of the Society) appended to Theosophical Publications have become null and void. T. S. Lodges (there are still many such) not knowing my position might invite me, taking for granted my 'loyalty' to their adored chief, and then find that they had been deceived. I can only obviate this risk by frankly stating my position at outset.

(2) I was so blindly confident as to give him the names (here suppressed) of all my other correspondents in the town. Happily they were past influencing. But another gentleman duly mentioned disparaging conversational hints and innuendoes such as that I was a hasty-tempered man, that I was *merely* bent on selling books, that (after their refusal) no one else in the town would care to accommodate such a disrespectable person — that it was therefore useless looking forward to my visit, and so on, and so forth. Is *this* the Lord Maitreya's inspiration?

the boys of the school on "THE THRESHOLD OF LIFE |
—*Ideals, Self-Control, Brahmacharya, Hygiene, &c.*

Please be quick as time is short. I enclose 6 as.
for reply by wire as soon as you can say definitely *Yes*
or *No*. I might come in 10 days or so.

Yours fraternally,
F. T. BROOKS.

[Followed a P. S. (not copied) assuring the Lodge
that I would pay all my expenses and would require
nothing from it except the use of the Hall and any
assistance the members might give of their own free
will.]

II

396, RAMKOT,
Hyderabad Dn.
20th July 1913.

From the Secretary Hyderabad T. S.

To

F. T. Brooks, Esq.

Dear Sir,

Your letter duly to hand to-day.

Sorry I cannot allow you the use of the Theoso-
phical Hall here, under existing circumstances, on my

own initiative, and I have referred the matter to the proper authorities¹ for their instructions and orders which will be duly communicated to you on receipt.

I return you stamp.

Yours faithfully,

(Sd.) EDULJI DHUNJEEBHOY,

Secretary, T. S.,

Hyderabad.

III

Extract of letter from Mr. T. D. Varma of Depressed Classes Mission, &c., Hyderabad, dated 24th July 1913, and addressed to my clerk in Madras :
 ".....On the very evening I received your letter, I went and saw the Secretary of the Local Theosophical Society and *he refused to assist in the matter in any way.*

(1) Mrs. Besant's own letter (see further) shows that he was simply referring to *her* (thus mysteriously alluded to) *as his Commanding Officer in the Autocratic Esoteric Organisation.* Her own official statement proves that he had no business to take such 'orders' from her as *democratic President of the T. S.*

It is this double-bottomed *organisation* that I am attacking in the interests of Truth, therefore in the *true* interests of the Public. It nullifies the most liberal *official* statements, such as Mrs. Besant's formal declaration further on. It makes the T. S. a *mere tool for hidden ends*, instead of the liberal *public* organisation it claim to be.

But the Secretary of the local Arya Samaj is willing to arrange for Mr. Brooks' lectures and I think he should have informed you of the same by this time.¹....."

IV

MYLAPORE, MADRAS,
22nd July 1913.

From

F. T. Brooks,

to the Secretary,

Hyderabad T. S.

Dear Sir AND BROTHER,

Your formal note to hand. I await the issue with interest. I understood Mrs. Besant to have repeatedly stated that the T. S. platform is free to all who stand for Universal Brotherhood.

I can hardly understand your being suddenly deprived of all local 'initiative' in the matter. It sounds like the answer of a Missionary Hall Manager. I have had to do with such. They will not allow the

(1) In the end my Hyderabad lectures were organised not by the Arya Samaj (there also shuffling won the day) but by the Young Men's Improvement Society, Chadderghat. They were successful thanks to Messrs. M. Seshadri and P. V. Naidu of the abovenamed Society, thanks also to Raja Binayek Raj of the League of the Helping Hand who provided excellent accommodation and organised a lecture in his family mansion.

The Rev. Mr. Lang also kindly organised a lecture in the Y. M. C. A.

To all these my sincerest thanks.

use of their halls for lectures such as mine ¹. I used to think the T. S. existed precisely for the forwarding of all such work.

May I also be permitted to observe that I am, like yourself, a member of the T. S., in which "Dear Sir and Brother" and "Yours fraternally" are usual forms of amenity in correspondence; and that you who have presumably become, through Mrs. Annie Besant, a follower of the Lord Maitreya, (the Lord of Friendliness) answer my friendly (though necessarily hurried) letter with a very frigid "Dear Sir" and "Yours faithfully". It may of course be mere inadvertence, in which case I shall be glad to hear you say so.

I do not wish to offend you by saying these things. But this is a time when Theosophy ² is in danger, and its influence on the public mind gravely threatened; and every move counts.

I am forwarding copies of this correspondence direct to Mrs. Besant. I am somewhat tired of being

(1) I am sorry I wrote this. For I have actually lectured in the Danish Mission Hall in Madras. I have also referred, in the previous footnote, to my friendly reception by the Y. M. C. A. All apologies wherever they are due.

(2) Whereby I obviously meant, not the particular faddist movement to which my correspondent belongs (he completely misunderstands this point in his reply, substituting "The Society" for my word "Theosophy") but the liberalising influence of Universal Brotherhood and cosmic (non-separative) Religious Ideals, which the world needs more than ever. I do not for a moment deny that Mrs. Besant is making the T. S. a *successful sect*.

"boycotted" by lodges of a Society of which I am a life-member, for no other sin than difference of opinion with its President who is weary of repeating *that such differences do not matter in the T. S.*

But apart from my own feeling in the matter, this is abominably detrimental to the good repute of the T. S. It tends to justify all the contentions of its 'enemies' that Mrs. Besant has turned it into a narrow sentimental sect and that its (and her) professions of unsectarianism are merest hypocrisy, etc.

N.B.—You do not seem to have consulted other members of the Lodge as I requested you to do. I hope you will kindly do so and let me know. They are surely reasonable beings with a voice in the management of their Lodge affairs.

I hope to hear from you again. Believe me meanwhile, dear Sir and Brother,

Yours ever *fraternally*,
F. T. BROOKS.

V

7, MANDAVALLI LANE,
Mylapore, Madras,
26th July 13.

From F. T. Brooks,

To

The Secretary,

T. S. SECUNDERABAD (with copies of the above)
Dear Brother,

Herewith a curious file, which will amuse you.

I remain as ready as ever to co-operate with my T. S. brothers, though they have during the last 2 years contrived to 'boycott' me in all large centres. This is the work of the E. S. T.

Will you please let me know whether the Secunderabad T. S. will still help, as in the past, in organizing my lectures, whether singly or in co-operation with other bodies. The latter plan I believe to be best.

Hoping for a prompt answer.

I am, as ever,
Yours fraternally,

F. T. BROOKS.

P. S. I shall gladly give a few lectures in Secunderabad after Hyderabad, as on the previous occasion. ¹

VI

7, MANDAVALLI LANE,

MYLAPORE, MADRAS,

26th, July 13.

To

Mrs. Annie Besant,

P. T. S.,

Adyar.

Dear Mrs. Besant,

You are *very* busy, but I shall be thankful if you will just glance through this little file of correspondence.

(1) In this case my correspondent did organise the lectures at Secunderabad. But I was sorry to hear that he had, a fortnight previously, given up the position of Secretary, having lost all interest in the present development of the T. S. A Theosophic Missionary (new style) had just revived the branch, with a new set of members, and the most comic result of his activity was to find *myself* approached by the newly enrolled and appointed Secretary, confessing himself quite ignorant of Theosophic work, and requesting me to advise him as to the conduct of his lodge. As well ask the.....devil for instructions about saying mass! I did actually, by invitation, give a Sunday morning address (on the *Gita*) to the (reorganised) Secunderabad T. S., and am thankful to them for their kind reception. The same with the Bolaram T. S. and its ever genial Secretary, Mr. Venkata Reddiar.

I am just going to start on tour, and if you will kindly favour me with merely a few lines embodying *your opinion* on the matter, it will help me to save the name of *Theosophy* from the dust of our personal differences—as far at least as my own public work is concerned.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely,
F. T. BROOKS.

VII

THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY,
ADYAR, MADRAS, S.
July 29, 1913.

Dear Mr. Brooks,

Mr. Pole just gives me your letter. The correspondence had been submitted to me before, and I expressed a strong opinion, which I now repeat, that the closing of a T. S. platform against any speaker on the ground of differences of opinion is against the principles of the T. S.

Criticisms of my own opinions and policy should be allowed free expression in any Lodge, and even if ordinary decency of language is not observed I should not personally approve of the exclusion of the speaker, so long as he attacked me as an individual.

You can use this letter as an expression of my *opinion*, although, as President, I have no right to dictate to any Lodge on its choice of speakers.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

(Sd.) ANNIE BESANT.

NOTE:—This looks like a very significant and sober document. Unfortunately the author of it happens to be at the same time the autocratic Chief of an Esoteric Section in which the Lodge Secretary in question is her pledged follower, bound to obey her in all matters relating to public work.

In the absence of any friendly (esoteric) hint from Mrs. Besant as to the advisability (to be clairvoyantly settled, I presume) of assisting Mr. Brooks in his public propaganda, the Lodge Secretary (and Esoteric Adherent) duly understands her declaration of principles to be essentially 'Platonic' (in a very wrong sense) — merely intended to keep up the declared policy of the Theosophical Society as a shop-front in the eyes of the Public. It has no more *practical* value than the (average official 'disclaimer' has in politics.

The Secretary therefore shapes his course accordingly, gingerly offering me the bare use of the hall, while quite abruptly (and in none too friendly terms) refusing all assistance *on the part of the Lodge as a whole*, the most important members of which (including the Financial Secretary of the Hyderabad State *have not even been consulted*). Thus does E. S. Autocracy pull the strings of (official) T. S. Democracy.

Note that the offer of the bare use of the hall (see Letter VIII) is quite a different thing from the free use of the "Theosophic Platform," which Mrs. Besant speaks of. The "use of the Theosophic Platform" would of course imply at least the issuing of notices to the public *in the name of the T. S. Lodge* and under the signature of its office-bearers. This was abruptly refused, and I am glad that the bare use of the Hall, so ungraciously offered, could be dispensed with in the end.

I need hardly refer to the almost libellous character of paragraph IV (Letter VIII) which clearly suggests that I am (on obviously *esoteric* grounds) a "mischief-maker" against whom my correspondent and his (esoteric) colleagues must sedulously "guard the T. S." lest it should be made use of "as catspaw" for the carrying out of my "whimsical and selfish objects."

Thus do these new-fangled (esoteric) Knights of the Round Table fight for the cause of Mrs. Annie Besant and of the (esoteric) Lord of Cosmic Friendliness whom she claims to precede and serve.

All this is (esoteric) political campaigning, not THEOSOPHY. Another year or two of it, and the Theosophical Society will have foiled its broader purpose past redemption and fulfilled the worst Madame Blavatsky foresaw for it when she clearly stated, in one of her later books, under what conditions her beloved Society might come to utter failure by degenerating into a sect.

VIII

Date 27th July 1912.

Branch Theosophical Society,
Hyderabad, Deccan.

To

F. T. Brooks, Esq.,

Dear Sir and Brother,

Your letter dated 22nd July is acknowledged.

You object to my addressing you as somebody else than a Theosophist, but I trust you will pardon me when you know that I honestly thought that you were no longer a member of the society, for I know that you had fallen out with Adyar people, and had even rushed into print, and wrote several things against our worthy President, and became an Arya Samajist, all this led me to believe that you were no more a member, after this apology I will answer the remainder of your letter.

With regard to 3rd para of your letter wherein you state that "the Society is in danger and that it is losing its influence over the people, &c., &c." I have to say that it is an invention pure and simple by that infinitesimal minority who seek to throw dust at the sun, let them do what they choose, but I will assure you on my behalf that the society is progressing as successfully as hitherto, and it is not affected in the least, not only that, but it was never before the general public in such] an emphatic and pronounced manner, as it is at present, and the members never so

loyal, and loved our worthy President so warmly and dearly as they do at present.

I note you are forwarding the correspondence to our worthy President.

With regard to para 5th I must say that we were never sectarian, and nor are we now so, only we guard against *mischief-makers*, and see that the T. S. is not made use of as catpaw to carry out their *whimsical and selfish objects*.

With regard to your last para I must say, that I have certain powers and privileges as Secretary and that I am free to exercise them, and I am one who is fully alive to his responsibility, and I think it is rather officious on your part to dictate me my duty, but that does not matter.

Now with regard to giving you the T. S. Hall for lecturing, after consulting the proper authorities I now write to inform you that you may have the use of the Hall or lectures only, as for your boarding, lodging, and arranging other details, the printing of hand bills &c., you have to make your own arrangements please and

I am,

Dear Sir & Bro.

Yours fratern ally,

(Sd.) EDULJI DHUNJEEBHOY,

Secy., T. S. Hyderabad,

[This quaint letter requires no comment. The English (faithfully copied) is obviously *not mine*, but the italics *are*. —B.]

BUSINESS NOTICE.

I. I have just published a book entitled "*The Making of the Better Man.*" All people interested in Moral Education are invited to procure that book, as it furnishes a clear solution of the problem of intensive moral education on an absolutely unsectarian basis. It also furnishes a direct introduction to the Theosophic Life (in its broadest and deepest sense) without the least reference to 'Modern' Theosophy and its literature. It will thus help sincere Theosophists to set their movement free from the narrow traditionalism and clannishness that have been warping it; and will help sincere anti-Theosophists to diffuse the vital grain without its (to them) objectionable husk. It is *a book for all save hypocrites*. Price: Re. 1-8-0 and Rs. 2-0-0, according to binding.

II. I am just going to Publish a book entitled "*The Theosophical Society and its Esoteric Bogeydom.*" I commend that book to those who may enjoy it. I commend it still more to those who will not (at first) enjoy it. They will have either to assent or to dissent, and can do neither without reading me.

To assist me in bringing out that book, I am accepting advance subscriptions (for a limited period) @ Re. 1-8-0 only per copy. As soon as I have 500 subscribers, the subscription-price will be

raised to Rs. 2. The price on publication will be still further raised.

The first 500 subscribers will receive *the whole book* in several instalments, as issued, *no matter what its length may run* to. It may come to 500 pages or more, neatly printed. There will be interest and entertainment in every square inch of it.

You have therefore every inducement to subscribe in advance.

Write for 32 *Specimen Pages*, already issued (but in cheaper style than the book itself), enclosing *two annas* in stamps, satisfy yourself by reading them, and remit Re. 1-8-0 to "*Vyasashrama*" *Bookshop, Mylapore, Madras*, with your name and full address on form provided with the specimen pages.

III. Another book, entitled "*Alfred, Lord Tennyson — A Modern Sage*," is likewise on the anvil. For this I am taking advance subscriptions @ Re. 1-0-0 only per copy.

Write for 16 specimen pages, already issued, enclosing 1½ annas stamps. Satisfy yourself by going through these introductory pages, and remit Re. 1 by money order to *Vyasashrama Bookshop, Mylapore, Madras*, with name and full address on form provided.

IV. I intend bringing out from next winter a monthly publication entitled "*The Herald of Truth*," containing a monthly portion devoted to the Propaganda of Truth Paramount (See "*The Making of the Better Man*") and serial instalments (easily separable for binding) of at least two new books other than those just spoken of. This will include from the outset my own annotated translations of the principal *Upanishads*, with word for word, plain prose and meditated metrical version—the closest approach to the original that can be made in a foreign tongue. The subscription-price for the first year of this publication (12 issues including two finished volumes of at least 300 pages each, besides monthly topics) is at present fixed at Rs. 3-0-0 only for the first 500 subscribers. It will be raised later on.

SUBSCRIBE EARLY.

Reduced price can only be guaranteed for those who pay cash in advance. This is on account of difficulty in finding a reliable printer. I may have to arrange for the work on much higher terms than previously expected. Those who subscribe for the 1st issue by V. P. P. will have to pay the rate fixed at the time of issue. They will be duly informed.

Please forgive delays and try to help. I am working under great difficulties.

