

MRS. BESANT

and

"The Hindu"



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Mrs. Besant and the "Hindu"

THE differences between the President of the Theosophical Society and this Madras Newspaper are somewhat of a side-issue in the present campaign against recent Adyar Policy, but the incident shows up so clearly Mrs. Besant's tendency to vilification, and her subsequent inability to say frankly that she was misinformed, and her habit of trying to arrange matters by word-juggling, that it seems wise to make a leaflet reprint of the affair for public information, and this leaflet is issued jointly by Mrs. Celestia Root Lang of 614 Oakwood Boulevard, Chicago, Ill. U. S. A., and Mrs. M. H. Charles of Windswept, Reigate, England, and from either address further information may be gained on application personally or by letter.

We give first Para 29 of Mrs. Besant's Written Statement, in reply to the Complaint from Mr. Naraniah when he sought to recover his sons from her guardianship. It will be noticed that the Para is highly libelous, and chiefly because of this portion, that Written Statement was struck out by Judge Bakewell, and Mrs. Besant had to pay all costs and re-write it. This is a fact that we have not seen mentioned in Theosophical journals.

Annie Besant's Statement, Para. 29

The Defendant submits that this suit has been undertaken from political motives and personal malice in order to injure the Defendant, in pursuance of a settled policy to destroy her life or reputation, because she has held back the student population

of India from participating in the plots of the Extremist, and has sought to inspire them with loyalty to the Empire. Since she interfered to put an end to the secret drilling of boys and the collection of Maharashtra arms during the Vice-Royalty of Lord Curzon, she has been marked out as an obstacle to the propaganda of violence among students and has had her life threatened both in India and Europe. The persistent and malignant campaign against both herself and the Theosophical Society ; known to be a body of studious law-abiding and respectable men and women, that has been carried on in the columns of the **Hindu** Newspapers, instigated and supported by Mrs. Kathrine Tingley of America, and led by Dr. Nanjanda Rao since January, 1901, shows deliberate malice and an utter disregard of truth ; the libels are translated into many languages, and circulated over Europe at great expense, without the printer's name, the law in Europe not permitting the circulation of filth such as is printed here ; all this has only the ruin of the Defendant and the Society for its aim. The latest move is to use the Plaintiff, weakened in body and mind, as the tool of this nefarious movement of Extremist's theological persecution, and he has been driven into it against his will, and after long resistance. The Defendant asks that the boys may be protected by the Court from the renewal of influence which would make them hate the English, instead of loving and trusting them as they do now, and which would turn them into bad citizens."

We regret having to reprint the allegations about Mrs. Tingley, and state that we know nothing about the matter, but the Para had to be quoted in full so as to avoid the usual accusation of distortions, that are launched against those who quote in portion. Abuse from Mrs. Besant has almost become a com-

pliment of late, and we are sure that Mrs. Tingley regards it in some such way, and will be indifferent to the additional publicity given to the attacks upon herself.

Now to return to the **Hindu** affair. In the August Number of the **Adyar Bulletin** there was a supplementary leaflet giving the information that the suits between Mrs. Besant and the **Hindu** had been mutually dropped, each side giving up their suit.

One wondered at the time if the details of the agreement would be made public, and it seems obvious now, that a complete apology was part of the price asked by the **Hindu**. This is only an inference, and we give the page on which it is based, verbatim so that readers can judge for themselves.

Adyar Bulletin, September, 1913.

From the Editor

When I issued the Supplement to the last issue of the BULLETIN, I thought that the Appeal case in the High Court would be quickly disposed of either on the preliminary legal points or finally on the merits, and I wished to have that case over before completing what I had to say relative to the suit against me by the HINDU for paras 11 and 29 of my original Written Statement in the Narayaniah suit. As, however, the judgment is delayed I will say here at once what I intended to say later, and so get rid of the matter, for my statement has been used against the HINDU in a way not intended by me. [A. B.'s position reminds us of the young man on a syndicate,

Who wished his position to vindicate,
So he rose to explain
That he did not maintain,
The position his words seem to indicate !]

The statement as to the persecution of the Plaintiff by the HINDU and Dr. Narjunda Row for making me the guardian of his two sons referred only to the articles which had appeared from January 1911 to October of the same year, when the complaint about them was made to me and to others by Mr. G. Narayaniah. On these articles I have nothing now to say, since I have withdrawn my suits respecting them. Paragraph 29 is a different matter; two things were there dealt with: political and theological hatred. The theological, not the political attack was ascribed to the HINDU, and the HINDU was bracketted with Mrs. Tingley, who certainly, whatever her attacks on me have been, has never mixed herself up with Indian politics.

I stated in my answer to the plaint that the paragraph as to the "propaganda of violence" "was never intended to apply to the plaintiff (the Editor), nor is there anything to show that either the plaintiff or his paper has any connection with the same."

As this will not now otherwise appear, I print it here, in order to add definitely that, while I sometimes disagree with the views expressed in the HINDU, I have never seen in its pages any encouragement of the "propaganda of violence" or approval of "the plots of the Extremists."

I regret that I did not write two paragraphs on the two matters, so completely separating them, and then no misconception could have arisen. 'Anarchist,' not Extremist is the right word to apply to the propaganda of violence and the plotters of assassination, for 'Nationalists' and 'Extremists' in Indian politics are much like 'Liberals' and 'Radicals' in English. Neither term should be held to connote the use of physical violence in political agitation, and personally I now always use the word 'Anarchist' to indicate approval of assassination.

I have friends who belong to the Extremist party, men

of the noblest type, who would rather die than lift their hand in murder. While India is without representation, they stand aside on principle from all political strife, and will not even take part in the Congress, but they sternly discountenance all plots and all violence. I think they are unpractical and delay progress, but from such men Society has nothing to fear and much to hope ; **for they are idealists of pure and high character**, and will be England's most useful friends when she does what they feel to be justice to India. Until she does, they stand patiently aside and wait, with their eyes fixed on the future, when the Queen's Proclamation of 1857 will be really carried out.

It is scarcely necessary to add much in the way of comment to two paragraphs so obviously in mutual contradiction. In the first, the Extremist is held up as a plotter, as a person engaged in spreading a propaganda of violence, as a threatener of life, as the mind behind the campaign in the **Hindu**, and as the driving force behind G. Naraniah. And Mrs Besant pathetically asks the Judge to save her Wards from an influence which would make them into English-hating bad citizens.

In the explanation-apology the Extremist becomes nothing more than the equivalent of an English Liberal or Radical. He is a person of high ideals : Mrs. Besant has friends in that section who are men of the noblest type, and they would die rather than lift a hand in murder, and they sternly discountenance all plots ! !

Turning to the Dictionary as likely to give the accurate meaning of the word, we find that extreme is given as being—"Outermost, farthest from the mean, most violent, worst or best that can exist, beyond which there can be none?"—This definition is very clear, and confirms one in the idea that an Extremist in Politics in India would be the 'best or

worst that existed' according as one viewed him from the stand-point of English law and order, or Indian Rebellion.

We repeat that this matter is somewhat of a side-issue in the larger movement on foot to Reform the Theosophical Society, but the civil policy of Adyar is so well outlined in the above tale, that this leaflet may, we hope, stir some to action who have so far lain dormant.

In the Society that sets Truth above all Religions, is this sort of thing to go on unattacked? Is the writer of those two contradictory paras to be re-elected as President of a Truth-seeking Society?

These are questions that every reader should ponder. We say deliberately, **every** reader. Mrs. Besant is now acting as a Herald for a Christ that is to appear as the Teacher of the whole World; the propaganda for this teacher is being commenced on a huge scale. It is a **Public Matter**, and it behooves the **Public** to enquire whether a person who can write in the manner quoted above, is likely to be the Herald of any Manifestation emanating from the Lord of Truth and Righteousness.

CELESTIA ROOT LANG . HILARY M. CHARLES
SEPTEMBER 1913.
