

"MY RESIGNATION"

OR
THE
SEQUEL

TO

"MY

HERE-
SIES."

BY

F. T. BROOKS,
THEOSOPHIST.

The Religion which rises above
sectarianism is Theosophy, no
matter when or where.

The Politics which rise above
party-interests are Theosophy, no
matter when or where.

The Good of Man and World, no
matter when or where—the Truth-
fulness by which Truth becomes
known, the Service by which Happi-
ness grows—that is Theosophy.

Whereas—

The 'Theosophy' which sub-
ordinates the simple Good of Man,
no matter when or where, to the
exaltation of a person or
the pushing of a Policy,
is not, never was and
never will be Theosophy.

In justice to a great and noble
Word, let this be known.

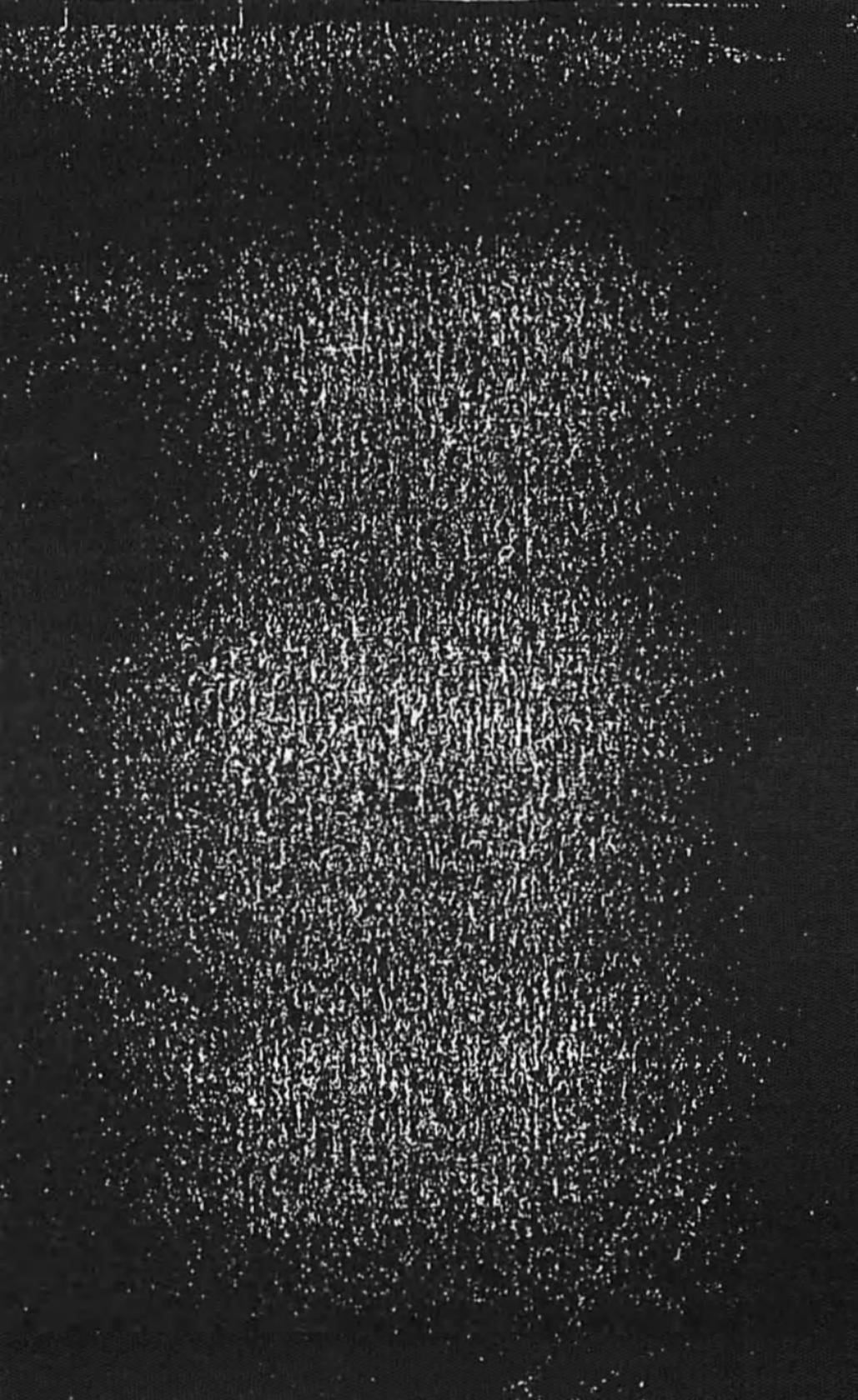


VYASASHRAMA

Mylapore,

MADRAS.

Four Annas.



FOREWORD.

This is a thing I *had* to do. It is not a pleasant thing. That is why I postponed it to the point of well-nigh ruining my public work in India : forfeiting the support of 'Theosophists' through my obvious disloyalty to the 'Cause' and deserving no other support since I did not make my independent position definite by stating the reasons for it and frankly throwing overboard what I profoundly disapproved of.

The Ideals of Theosophy will stand : Impartial Truthfulness and Universal Brotherhood are not the monopoly of any clique.

For the sake of those Ideals I joined the Theosophical Society, and then took seventeen years to discover *and declare* that those Ideals are systematically set at naught by Mrs. Annie Besant's Esoteric mismanagement.

Better late than never.

MY RESIGNATION.

After seventeen years of membership, I have severed my connection with the 'Theosophical' Society over the destinies of which Mrs. Annie Besant presides. I shall not rejoin unless Mrs. Besant gives up her esoteric methods of control, or is replaced by one who clearly sees the evil of such methods, and accordingly shuns them.

For the last fourteen years I have been studying the sterling Theosophy of the Bhagavad Gita and the Upanishads, not with the help of conflicting argumentative commentaries, but in relation to the facts of my own inner and outer life. Since 1908, I have been engaged in lecturing and publishing books on these and kindred topics, visiting at least 300 Indian towns, both large and small, from Peshawar to Ceylon and East Bengal.

Since then I have been increasingly conscious of opposition on the part of Mrs. Besant's followers¹ in the Theosophical Society, who either stood in the way

1 Mainly a matter of spontaneous devotional allegiance on their part until 1911, when Mrs. Besant bound them (in the E.S.) by definite pledges to obey her in all matters relating to Theosophical work.

of my being invited by Theosophical Lodges to lecture to the Indian Public, or, worse still, invited me and then refrained from efficiently organising my lectures in such a way as to give me a fair chance of putting my views before those to whom they might have been of interest. There is not a single instance of these lectures failing to win appreciation from such audiences as *happened* to attend them, large or small. Thus the failure to organise efficiently has meant disservice to the public as to me. My lectures being essentially relevant to the first and second objects of the Theosophical Society, there is no logical explanation of the attitude of Mrs. Besant's followers,¹ save their unwillingness to see another than their beloved Chief, and especially one not personally inspired and led by her, win such appreciation at the hands of the Public. Small blame to them, I say, seeing that the success of a constructive regenerative Mission, spiritual, rational and ethical, based on a living interpretation of Scripture, must of necessity counteract the sensational *psychic* claims (intercourse with mysterious 'Mahatmas,' visions of past and future lives, and what not) on which Mrs. Besant's authority is mainly founded. Be those claims true or be they false, they tend to foster

1 Already referred to in my earlier books. See *Gospel of Life*, Preface, pp. xlii, xliii, and the curious riddle of p. xlv, 1st para., explained in "*My Heresies*," pp. 5, 6. I willingly confess to having occasionally been cryptic to the verge of misrepresentation. Taking discouragement as encouragement is good training; but *representing* it as such is not exactly *true*. It is expecting too much from the average reader's intuition. From this I have duly repented (see *The Making of the Better Man*) and pray that I may sin no more.

See also *Sannyasa*, pp. 46, 47, Foot-note.

superstitious awe and to warp judgment, and invariably create, in lesser minds, an atmosphere of devotional partisanship in which no truly Theosophic thought can grow. They are thus essentially irrelevant, or even antithetic, to the admirably chosen Motto and Principal Object of the Theosophical Society: the Paramountcy of simple TRUTH, or verifiable fact, and the spread of Universal Brotherhood or better understanding between enlightened adherents of all sections of the Human Race, including in particular *religious faiths*. The Theosophical Society, under Mrs. Annie Besant's leadership, has now become a definite sect with a definite faith—faith in her (and her colleague's) visions and Mahatma-given Authority to teach and lead—and can no longer therefore claim to mediate between *all* extant sects. As I have said elsewhere, "The Theosophical Society is, or has been hitherto, 'open to the followers of all creeds.' But it cannot remain *really* so for long if it comes to be *led* by the followers of any."

But I have been 'crying in the desert' as far as the Theosophical Society is concerned. Mrs. Annie Besant has, by successful manipulation,¹ and with the whole-hearted support of that veritable psychic giant,

Shunting.

¹ Chiefly the blinding of the Esoteric Section in personal allegiance to herself while still insisting upon its being regarded as "the Heart of the Theosophical Society"—nay more, as the *only real* Theosophical Society, the other (the well-known, and duly registered organisation of members, lodges, general secretaries, council and president) being merely a sort of exoteric 'blind'—a sop to the democratic Cerberus of our graceless times. Read her own words quoted in "*My Heresies*," pp. 16, 17.

C. W. Leadbeater,¹ carried practically the whole Theosophical Society with her into what is demonstrablynot Theosophy.

So that I have, through my independent public work, merely been instrumental in putting to the test and verifying my own forecast a few lines higher. I now know that the Theosophical Society is a sect, for it has, throughout India at any rate, treated me exactly as sectarians treat a dissenter. And there is not a single clause in their declared Objects which justifies 'Theosophists' in doing so. They have gone clean off the track !

Wishing to pointedly draw attention to this curious condition of affairs in an " My Heresies." ' unsectarian ' Society (of which I have probably been in recent years, next to Mrs. Besant herself, the best-known public worker in India), with a view to either mending or ending it—mending it if my brother-Theosophists, and in particular Mrs. Annie Besant, were willing to acknowledge it as wrong; ending it by frankly severing a connection increasingly harmful to my public work if they were not—I published the small pamphlet entitled " My Heresies," to which I appended, by way of illustration, some recent correspondence showing the attitude of Mrs. Besant's devotees to my public

1 In return for which she has planted him at the very heart of her new Messianic cult, altogether failing to realise her responsibility for the inevitable current of demoralisation which the cloud of uncanny suspicion hanging over him must (whether founded or otherwise) of necessity generate among blind followers, especially where a vast educational movement based on " love, gentleness and personal devotion " (but not on truth) is being launched.

work, and a brief notice of certain publications which I intend bringing out, either in the interests of sanitary *reform within* the Theosophical Society, or (if the T. S. *as it now is* thinks itself above criticism) as a definite attack¹ upon such an insidious sectarian movement in the interests of all free spiritual workers and of a much befogged and long-suffering public.

In order to elicit some definite statement from Mrs. Annie Besant (something more definite, say, than the pious opinion published in "*My Heresies*," Appendix, p. x) I sent her a copy of the pamphlet in question with a covering letter containing the following (to my mind very moderate) propositions :

A Test.

"I am very thankful for your kind expression of opinion, which I publish on p. x of Appendix. I speak subject to correction (and shall gladly make the correction as public as the criticism) when I infer that your sentence, "as President, I have no right to dictate to any Lodge. . ." implies esoterically : "As Head of the E.S., I have *no desire to suggest* to any E. S. Group or worker. . ."

If I am right in this, it is incumbent upon me to defend my public Theosophical work as best I can against the underground obstructive tactics of your Esoteric Section which has well-nigh ruined me by depriv-

¹ Referring particularly to *The Theosophical Society and its Esoteric Bogeydom*—though my book on *Tennyson* will also help, by showing up the character and life-work of a *genuine* Theosophist.

ing me of the assistance of T.S. Lodges in all important centres.

If I am wrong you can easily show it by sending to Indian E.S. Groups and members a little word of *suggestion* to the effect that you have reasons to regard Mr. Brooks' work as good and useful, and would be pleased to see E.S. members assist him and encourage their T.S. Lodges to do so.

(Followed some remarks as to the great help she might give to the circulation of my proposed translations of the *Gita* and the *Upanishads* were she to commend them to her esoteric followers. I also enclosed the opinions of such eminent scholars as Pandit Ganganath Jha and Mr. Mahadeva. Shastri as to the value of my translation-work.)

To this Mrs. Besant has replied with a letter

A sorry Letter. which finally shatters my last hopes of seeing any valid spiri-

tual Good done to our suffering race by her in her present condition. She counts among her spell-bound victims men and women of considerable attainments and sterling good nature. The Good these do under her 'guidance' they will do in spite of her. The sooner they make up their minds to give the credit to God, or frankly take it back unto themselves, the better it will be for all concerned. With honest individualism I have no quarrel.

I publish Mrs. Besant's Answer *in full*, commenting on it sentence by sentence. If half-a-dozen of her victims can thereby be helped to see what type

of *personality* now lies at the back of the gigantic Public Surface which they fairly *worship*, and pulls the strings thereof, I shall consider myself well rewarded for this unpleasant task.

President's Office,
Theosophical Society,
Adyar, Madras, S.
Nov. 28, 1918.

Dear Mr. Brooks,

I wrote you a perfectly frank and straightforward note.

The note may be seen in "*My Heresies*," Appendix, p. x. It certainly *looks* all right on the surface, and I said as much in the very moderate critical Note which I appended. To one who knows the fact of her *double-bottomed control* over the Theosophical Society—her secret Autocratic Headship of the Esoteric Section which now manages¹ the Lodges at all big centres, the members of which are pledge-bound to obey 'without cavil or delay' her orders in all matters connected with Theosophic Work—it is a most elusive piece of political fencing. No, my dear Mrs. Besant, your note was neither frank nor straightforward, though it *looked* both, and was obviously intended to. You had been consulted *as Esoteric Head* ("the proper *authorities* for their instructions and orders" of the Hyderabad Secretary's letter ::

¹ Until the present crisis, the Esoteric Section was essentially a more intimate body of *students* within the Theosophical Society. Mrs. Besant has turned it into a well-organised body of *wire-pullers* in the interest of her esoteric schemes.

the terms used by him were meaningless in relation to the *exoteric* Theosophical Society. What he had to consult as Secretary was.....the members of his Lodge—exactly what he did not do.—“*My Heresies*,” Appendix, p. iv) whereas you deliberately answered “as President” of the *merely exoteric*. T.S.’ The Hyderabad Secretary, your pledged follower *in the E.S.*, knew full well that if you had anything good to say of me and of my work, you would take occasion of his query to say it, and that if you refrained from commending, it was that you had (esoteric) reasons for *condemning*. I do not blame you for this sort of esoteric telegraphy, for you could say nothing against me openly without compromising your position as President and laying yourself open to a charge of libel for the simple reason that, barring esoteric revelations (of rascality in past incarnations, or ‘on the astral plane,’ or what not;) you have not one valid thing to say against the steady and efficient Theosophic (in the *true* sense) work to which I have devoted my whole life. My one crime is my refusal to put blind trust in you. Your present letter justifies my refusal in a manner which none save the *very* hypnotised will fail to see.

You charge me with deliberate falsehood and pretence.

No, my dear Mrs. Besant, I have never *yet* openly charged *you* with *deliberate* falsehood and pretence.

¹ And, by her own declaration (“*My Heresies*,” pp. 16, 17) more or less *unreal*, the ‘esoteric conception’ being the only *real* thing.

If I am now reluctantly and gradually led to suggest this as a possible explanation of your attitude (the other alternative being an extraordinary degree of blindness, positively dangerous in one situated as you are) it is by the compelling force of statements such as this, irrefutably proving that you are possessed of a very considerable gift of...let us say, conscious or unconscious imaginative inexactitude. The terms of my covering letter (pp. 5, 6, above) are clear:—"I stand subject to correction.....If I am right.....If I am wrong, you can easily show it....." Those are not the words of an out and out accuser. What the Note in "*My Heresies*," (pp. xi, xii) does draw attention to is your apparent unwillingness to take any steps (though it is in your power to do so *even now*) to check the growing hostility of your pledged followers to my independent public work. This is the real point at issue between us. You conceive yourself entrusted with a mission to concentrate within *your* hands (under pretext of handing it over to the coming 'Lord Maitreya' by and by) all possible Theosophic, *i.e.*, professedly non-sectarian, work—educational, literary, propagandist, social, etc. You conceive, as I heard you yourself putting it at a lecture in Benares, a sort of gigantic 'Trust'-organisation for the cross-sectional uplift of the Human Race. *Now I do not happen to believe such an over-centralised organisation to be intended*, at our present stage, either by the 'Lord Maitreya' or by any intelligent Spiritual Authority on Earth¹; and I know for certain that, if

¹ Even that other Ecclesiastical conundrum, the Catholic Church, seems quite content with the *qualified* catholicity which its epithet 'Roman' obviously implies.

it were, it would *never* be entrusted to such painfully inartistic hands as yours, controlled by such an undiscriminating mind and such a sentiment-ridden heart. Such a Spiritual 'Trust' as you conceive and are deliberately trying to build up, I regard as far too dangerous a weapon to be entrusted by any Godly Authority to *any* human hands—least of all such party-serving hands as yours. I am therefore an experimental opponent of your work *at its very centre*. I regard it as fraught with danger to the hardly-won liberties of the human Soul. Nay, I may as well frankly profess myself an opponent *of the very Lord Maitreya*—or rather of the psychic misrepresentation of such a 'Lord of Universal Friendliness'—whom you are sedulously trying to foist *as a new competitive Bogey* upon our already too much Bogey-ridden Humanity. What my pamphlet accused you of was not "*deliberate falsehood and pretence*," but unavoidable *politic concealment of your instinctive missionary hostility to my independent public Theosophic work*—concealment willy-nilly *forced* on you by the obvious fact that the Constitution of the T.S. gives you no right to *officially* object to such work (as it gave to the German Section, now excised, no right to *officially* object to the encroaching and polymorphous propaganda of the 'Star in the East'—wherefore they, having frankly overridden the Constitution in favour of the Motto, were duly excised by you in Council. Were you to follow suit you would have to excise yourself likewise). As a matter of fact I was not *accusing* you at all, but simply endeavouring to point out, for the sake of possible medication, the

unfortunate position in which your simultaneous assumption of two utterly inconsistent responsibilities (as democratic exoteric President and autocratic esoteric 'Head') has landed you. Either you must frankly *disapprove* of my work *and state your (esoteric) reasons for so doing*, which will make you both ridiculous *and* obnoxious to my friend the Public, or you must go on playing a double-shuffle game of public proclamations of tolerance *cum* private toleration of intolerance, thus laying yourself open to my perfectly legitimate (and very moderate) remarks, which seem to have cut you to the quick. If your vivid imagination chooses to conceive itself as charged "with deliberate falsehood and pretence," that is after all its own affair. If your sensitive heart finds the situation intolerable, the remedy is easy: give up your democratic Presidentship of an 'unsectarian' Society and frankly proclaim yourself the autocratic Leader of a more or less esoteric Neo-Adventist Sect. The moment you do this, you will find in me a tolerant critic of your teachings and a sincere admirer of your courage. Till then your double position as President of an unsectarin Society and Head of an Esoteric Sect, the two being partly composed of *the same members* (1), makes it *impossible* for you to deal straightforwardly with such a case as mine. As President of the T.S., you *cannot* oppose a Theosophic lecturer; as Herald of the Lord Maitreya you *cannot* countenance an opponent of your mission. Your ambition has landed you in an untenable position—untenable for one who has an ancient reputation for straightforwardness to maintain. Either you mus

vacate that position (saveguarding your dignity as best you can) or expect to see your reputation for straightforwardness evaporating by degrees, in the T.S. and the world at large, as it has already begun to do in the Madras High Court and elsewhere. *And I shall help it to do so.*

By all means do so, if you choose, but it shows a very unworthy spirit.

It shows nothing of the sort, if you will allow me to say so.

It shows that I realise my responsibility to the Public and feel bound to warn it of what I regard as a danger.

You have assumed a position of quasi-divine Missioner which makes you either the greatest benefactor of our age or one of its greatest impostors. Such claims as yours must be put to the test. A mind in sympathy with Humanity would understand this, and make allowances. Your very unwillingness to *be tested* is an index of unsoundness. Besides, the business of a Missioner of Christ is not to expect saintliness in others, but to practise it towards them. Your ascription of unworthy motives to all who efficiently oppose you disproves the mission which you boast of. If any Christlike Teacher is to come—an embodiment of Universal Truth and Good—your partial method of recruitment on His behalf, your inability to see 'the other side of the shield as well,' point to your 'mission' as being rather a disservice than a service to His Cause.

I have never made any suggestion to any T.S. or E.S. group or person, discouraging their invitation to you to lecture. I have never interfered with any person's lecturing, and do not propose to do so.

I am very glad to hear this, and hope it does Mrs. Besant good to say it. The reader can see for himself that I never suggested anything of the sort, but simply took Mrs. Besant to task for *not discountenancing* the obvious (and, *through her management*, inevitable) hostility of her pledged followers to an efficient and independent Theosophic public worker. If she will not *positively* interfere in a matter like this after she has taken pledges from her followers *to enable her to do so*, it shows that she approves of their hostility, and that her pretence of saintly goodwill is mere hypocrisy. If she is *not* hostile to my work, she *must* interfere to prevent injustice being done by the T.S. If she persistently refuses to interfere, it means that she secretly regards my work as bad, and *I want her to say so frankly and give the reasons for her objection*. I shall heckle her until she does, for I require to know exactly where I stand. That is the very purpose of these polemic pamphlets.

I believe in a free platform.

So do I.

... and have invariably said so, publicly and privately.

Well, then, the question is: Will you DO something to give *me*, through the admirable organisation of which you pull the strings, *both* esoteric and exoteric, the free platform which you so generously *speak* of? (It positively makes my mouth water to *hear* you *speak* of it.) Will you, for instance, invite me to deliver the next Convention Lectures at Benares—or, better still, at Adyar where more delegates from abroad usually foregather? Would a subject like '*The Theosophy of Alfred Tennyson*' do, for example? (A three-lecture course, say—enough to impress people with what one has to say). Of course it must be clearly understood that such encouragement is not to be given as a bribe. If Mrs. Besant, by some miracle, suddenly makes up her mind to give Mr. F. T. Brooks the free Theosophic platform she speaks of—*i.e.*, to *invite* him in her presidential capacity, as a public lecturer of *proved* ability, to freely utter Theosophic thoughts on the Theosophic Platform on a public occasion when Theosophists assemble from all parts—it will be well understood from the outset that he remains a *free agent*, and that his efficient presentment of unsectarian Theosophy will naturally, as before, tend to undermine—as naturally as a solvent melts crystals—the sectarian Esoteric Authority which Mrs. Besant is so anxious to maintain, and which he neither believes in, nor will hypocritically pretend to.

Under those conditions, will Mrs. Annie Besant give Mr. F. T. Brooks the free platform which she so emphatically speaks of? Answer: No more than she will commit (esoteric) suicide. Query: Why not, if so it be that his lectures are relevant (more than hers, perhaps) to the avowed aims of the Theosophical Society? Answer: Because the aims of the Theosophical Society count for nothing where the aims of Mrs. Annie Besant are concerned. Query: Then why does she still publicly claim to uphold those aims of the T.S.? Why does she go on openly declaring herself in favour of a free platform which she cannot possibly give to a free and efficient speaker (like Mr. F. T. Brooks) without undermining her cherished Esoteric Personal Authority? Answer: Because to desist from officially upholding Theosophic principles would mean relinquishing her hold on the Theosophical Society, while to apply them would mean.....(esoteric) suicide. Therefore Mrs. Annie Besant must go on publicly saying one thing while (through her unchecked followers) doing another or letting it automatically be done.

That is how Mr. Brooks, loyal (in principle) Theosophist, is systematically discountenanced by all 'loyal (in person) Theosophists' for no better or worse reason than that he, not believing in Mrs. Besant's leadership, refuses to follow it or pretend to. And that is how Mrs. Besant, while discountenancing their behaviour as a matter of opinion, will do nothing to discourage it in practice, the while she winces at being told that her management is not altogether straightforward. Her 'Mission' seems to

be such, that straight Theosophic dealing will ruin it, while the *admission* of anything else will equally ruin it by lowering *her* in public estimation. A pity, truly.

On the other hand I cannot force anyone on other people.

Neither can I. I cannot even force *myself* on them. If I have ever to pull through as many as three consecutive lectures anywhere, without appreciative audience, I shall gladly retire of my own accord. But that has not yet happened anywhere. The point which you, dear (however fallible) Mrs. Besant, seem to be deliberately missing is this: My lectures are undeniably Theosophical. The Indian Public likes them. Your '*Theosophical*' followers sulk me because I do not profess to follow you—a very simple matter of sectarian sentiment which none (least of all myself) would find fault with *outside a professedly Theosophical (i.e., unsectarian) Society*. Shall I go on organising my Theosophical lectures *in spite of* your '*Theosophical*' followers, as I had to do in Hyderabad and elsewhere? I charitably object to doing so, as it makes your followers (and yourself by implication) ridiculous in the eyes of the Public—ridiculous, that is, *so long as you persist in calling yourselves Theosophists and your propaganda Theosophical*. Therefore do I charitably call upon you to remind your followers of their Theosophic duty to the public of the towns they live in, and to urge upon them that they are making themselves and

'Theosophy' (and you) *ridiculous* by trying to oppose in your name the popular work of an efficient Theosophic lecturer. Such advice is what your followers expect from you on such an important point as this, involving the very reputation of the Theosophical Society. It is not "forcing" me on them. If your kind *suggestion* to them (I never asked for more) fails, it will simply show that you have no real hold on them, and that their pledges are in vain, (a thing worth testing, surely!) In that case I shall certainly not ask you to resort to disciplinary measures (on the astral plane). I shall simply swallow my charitable objection and push on. Meanwhile your notion of "forcing" me on your open-mouthed devotees irresistibly reminds me of the 'forcible feeding' of Suffragettes. Forgive me for not feeling unduly tragical about the very palpable difficulties which your new propaganda—combined with your equally palpable lack of appreciation (Has the Lord Maitreya been consulted?) puts in the way of my simple public work.

People must be free to go to a lecture or not, as they please; and if you talk about me as rudely and unfairly as you write, people who respect me may prefer to stay away.

N.B.—Read the Hyderabad letters (*My Heresies*, Appendix, pp. iii, vii, xi-xiv) and try and understand that the Secretary (and Assistant Secretary) of the Lodge arranged to boycott my lectures *without even consulting their fellow-members* whom they were

(exoterically) supposed to represent. And Mrs. Annie Besant *talks* of Freedom !

As for the other (happily conditional) imputation, I shall be delighted to marshal the witnesses to my having slandered *Mrs. Annie Besant*, either in public or in private. While her esoteric influence was ruining me, I went on with my work as best I could, leaving unsaid what might have brought me timely help. On the last occasion when the Bombay Theosophists invited me to lecture (in 1911, if I mistake not), I actually pleaded *for* a judicious *acceptance* of Mrs. Besant's and Mr. Leadbeater's accounts of psychic experience, on the lines followed in the Preface of *Sannyasa*, written about the same time. Go through that at your leisure, Friend Reader, and see for yourself how "rude and unfair" I was. At the conclusion of those lectures, some representative members of the Bombay ("Blavatsky") Lodge actually congratulated me upon having done much to remove the bad impression created by the sneers of a lecturer who preceded me. I had, it seems, restored the wavering belief of many in the actuality of psychical experience. The fact is, I never did more than to hand on and illustrate Mrs. Besant's own repeated declarations as to liberty of opinion and reservation of judgment. Those declarations were deliberately set at naught by her followers, and I now, and for the first time, verily believe that she expected them to do so. This is a sort of duplicity far more dangerous than outright mendacity, because of its elusiveness. It imperceptibly corrodes the minds of those who, drawn by great Ideals attrac-

tively presented, become involved in such a movement and open their hearts to such an influence. It is a protean sort of unrighteousness almost impossible to "knock on the head and have done with." To attack it is dangerous; to tolerate it, more so. I count on the fellowship of those who understand. Their help must be informal, for I am precluded from esoterically counter-organising. The impardonable sin would be to offset an unsound growth by another, equally unsound. *Let our Esoteric Section consist of a spontaneous recognition of Principles and a steady endeavour to live up to them.* Our connecting "Link" is God's own Will which none can tamper with, and our register of membership is in His Hands, safer there than in any hands less righteous.

Now while most members of the Bombay Lodge congratulated me on my fair and conciliating speeches, some ten or twelve of them, so I was credibly informed, clubbed together to send a private report against me to Mrs. Besant. This may or may not be confirmed by her. If true (as I have reason to think it is) Mrs. Besant never mentioned the matter to me. She never said to me, "Well, Brooks, I am informed that you have said this and that about me. Is it so? What have you to say for yourself?" *That* would have been a straightforward thing to do, and I might well have found fifty witnesses to the fair trend of my speech against the dozen esoteric mischief-makers who accused me of *I do not even know what*. I have reasons to believe that such private reports were actually sent, possibly more than once. In no single case has Mrs. Besant followed the one

straightforward course, and given me an opportunity to justify myself. I thought (at that time) that it might be because those reports had no effect on her, since she could well see for herself (if need be, astrally) what sort of work I was engaged in. She now shows me how mistaken I was. She has, by her esoteric methods, sown a very noisome wind. Let her now reap a cleansing whirlwind.

Why are you always so disagreeable and hostile?

"Always" is indeed a large order.

I do not attack you, or blame you for all your unjust and unkind writings.

I indeed fail to see on what grounds Mrs. Besant *could* "attack" me, or blame me for "all" my "unjust and unkind writings" without making herself ridiculous.

"All" my "unjust and unkind writings" before last winter ¹ may be summed up in five pages of the Preface of my *Gospel of Life* (xlii-xlvi), which I am now led to regard as prophetic, and a few remarks on personal pledges (*Ibid.*, pp. 93, 217-219) to which the same observation applies, since they were written at least a year *before* Mrs. Besant instituted the personal pledge *to herself* in the E. S. Then there is the solemn warning (the obstruction was acutely felt at that

¹ I write this in December 1913.

time) embodied in the footnote on pp. 46-47 of *Sannyāsa*. The reader may well take stock of these, and wonder. That was before the Krishnamurti 'boom.'

Since then, "*A Sober Account of the J. K. Cult*," published in the *Vedic Magazine* last year and reproduced by several others, was purely topical and passed no judgment. I cannot see that it was either 'unjust' or 'unkind'. To approach nearer to a bald statement of facts, seems difficult. If mere facts are galling, there must surely be something wrong with the policy which brought them into existence. If the remark about the virtue of Truthfulness being left out of the 'Star in the East' programme is resented, I can't quite help that. The simplest remedy would be to include it in the next edition. So long as it is *not* included, you can hardly expect me to say that it is. If my regarding Truth as *fundamental* is wrong, it is a sort of wrongness in which I shall contentedly abide.

Finally we come, last winter, to the '*Making of the Better Man*,' in which a frank note of dissent and warning is at last sounded; and to one out of two articles written in 1912 to help Mr. Bhagavan Das in his courageous campaign for "Impersonality vs. Personality in Theosophic Propaganda" (a pretty academic question, by the way) and which Mrs. Besant returned from Europe just in time to stop him from publishing in *Theosophy in India*. That article was subsequently published in the *Hindu* a year later, and its sequel dropped, probably as being too long for convenient insertion. Both will be inserted as landmarks in '*The Theosophical Society and its Esoteric Bogeydom*.'

There undoubtedly is, in those several writings, a gradual evolution towards a definitely unfavourable opinion. This will be more fully traced in "*The Theosophical Society and its Esoteric Bogeydom*," to which (when out) the reader is referred. Mrs Besant regards all this as "unjust and unkind." The Lord Maitreya's Messenger might as well be expected to regard me (barring esoteric information as to my inmost heart of hearts) as acting under a sense of duty, *even if mistaken*. He (if He exists) certainly gives me credit for good intentions. So does the Indian Public where I lecture. Cannot Mrs. Besant do the same?

I do not publicly charge you with publicly writing one thing and privately insinuating the reverse.

(a) It would be rather difficult for you to do so, seeing that I have no Esoteric Section to control on psychic revelational lines while managing the same, with others added for recruitment, as democratic President, under the name of 'Theosophical Society.' I *may* be full of duplicity (I am no better than my stars have made me) but thank God my simple work (since I have withdrawn from all secret association) affords it mighty little opportunity for coming out.

(b) Note again that I never accused Mrs. Besant of "privately insinuating the reverse," but took her to task for *not positively using* her Authority to make my Theosophic work, among and through her followers, smoother than it has been of late. I wrote

on the assumption that Theosophical Principles, which I have always adhered to, might still count for something with her, and that she might give me an opportunity (while still differing as to views) to bear witness to her public spirit and her sense of fairness. It is a sadly different view that I am now compelled to put before the Public in appealing to it to support my work if it deems it worth supporting.

Now for the most miserable crux of this most miserable epistle:

<p>Why can't you leave me alone to do my work as I leave you alone to do yours ?</p>

Some of my friends will hardly believe it possible that Mrs. Besant should have written this. Yet here I have it in my hands, in her own characteristic handwriting.

This is the sentence that has ferreted out and slain, like so many poor little rabbits, my last lurking hopes of Mrs. Besant's 'taking a turn for the better' in this life. I *had* some still, in spite of all previous misgivings, for I felt them being killed when I read this. The writer of that sentence—addressed to the best-known Theosophic lecturer next to herself in India—stands unmasked. She is a petty, jealous, thwarted woman, *not* a spiritual Leader, still less a Messenger of the Lord of all Wise Lovingness. That sentence, written from the 'Threshold of Divinity,' irretrievably smashes either the threshold in question, or the writer's claim to stand there.

Now Mrs. Besant, as a struggling, suffering woman, might be admired and pitied as she rose and fell. But Mrs. Besant as claimant of a quasi-divine status, Ambassador of the (astral) Lord Maitreya, guardian and trustee of the appointed 'vehicle' of His next Incarnation, stands, unless her saintliness be *patent*, exposed as a most dangerous adventuress in realms of sacerdotal enterprise. It is horrible to have to say so after all the good which somewhat more wisely directed ambitions had led her to undertake in the past.

The answer to that fatal sentence is :

"I cannot leave you 'alone' to do your work any more than you can leave me 'alone' to do mine, for the simple reason that we both claim to work for Theosophy, and happen to live in the same country and address ourselves to the same Public. If I were a tinsmith and you a shoemaker, your sentence might have some sense in it—provided there were other tinsmiths to supply your needs and other shoemakers to supply mine. But we are members of the same movement (even my resignation cannot alter that). I have given many of the best years of my life to the Society of which you are the President. I once took considerable pains to translate some of your best books into French¹, thus obviously becoming a sharer in the net result of your lifework. Now you are literally swamping the Indian Public with offers of powerfully organised assistance, educational, social, political (with an extraordinary Mystic Wonderland

¹. *The Ancient Wisdom, Man and his Bodies*, and four-fifths of *In the Outer Court*.

in the background, now clearly disclosed through the indiscretion of the Law-Courts). Do you think I can go on working—catering for the *same* Indian Public—without frankly stating my dissentient position with regard to your new sacerdotal campaign, and giving the reasons for it? Do you think *you* can quietly extinguish me (after the fashion of big trusts with petty tradesmen) without being taken to book for it, and being required to give the reason why, or lose all reputation for moral responsibility, hence all right to assume such Leadership as you are now assuming?

If our two lines of work are incompatible (as I now fully believe they are) one of us must be proved—by common consensus—a genuine Theosophist, and the other a sham one. Theosophy cannot be two incompatible things at one and the same time. It cannot be *both* sound progress in Truth and Life, and the mystic charlatanry of *The Adyar Album*¹. I deem my Theosophy genuine as far as it goes. What of yours?

If you give up your claim to represent *Unsectarian Theosophy* and your esoteric wire-pulling, I have (as already said) nothing save admiration for you as a straightforward sectarian leader. If you cannot do this, it means a trial of strength between us—between you, the great Leader with an army of pledged devotees and fervent admirers and me, the solitary voice and pen—for I have not made a single 'follower' in fourteen years' work in India, and do not intend

¹. Referring to Mr. Leadbeater's appeal to blind credulity on behalf of Mrs. Annie Besant, which forms the *crux* of that remarkable production. I reprint it further on, as it deserves a wider circulation than it has hitherto had.

making a single one in fourteen more. 'Leading' and 'following' are not in the programme of Theosophy as understood by me. Not that I object to your having them. They belong to the curriculums of the various cults and movements between which Theosophy has to mediate. They define your status as less than Theosophical. You are quite welcome to them.

Why constantly nag¹ at me? It is paltry and discreditable.

Answer: Why leave my good work to suffer when you have the power, as no one else has, of helping it along? If my work is Theosophical and efficient, you are duty-bound, as President of the T. S., to say a good word for it whether I am your personal follower or not. An independent worker like myself is precisely your opportunity to *practise* the unsectarian tolerance you *speak* of. I have waited years for you to do this, and must now, in the interests of my life-work, make my separation from your sectarian organisation clearly known to the public, without any such esoteric reservations as you are prone to.

Or again: Why allow the bigotry of your esoteric followers to insidiously obstruct my public work (if you admit that it is worth obstructing, therefore *bad*) instead of frankly saying what is wrong with my work as I frankly say what I consider to be wrong

¹. I need hardly draw attention, at this stage, to the exaggerative misuse of words. What is *on Earth* no more than an occasional statement of deeply felt misgivings, becomes 'constant nagging' on the Threshold of (Mrs. Besant's) Divinity. Any well-read Theosophist ought to be able to locate Mrs. Besant's 'Divinity' without requiring further class.

with yours? This wire-pulled Esoteric Section of yours, privately obstructing work which the Public deems good, is obviously a public nuisance and a danger. I ask for a free and open discussion. Such *esoteric* tactics for pushing the cult of your 'Lord' (and of your 'Lordliness') are at least as paltry and as discreditable as anything I may have said and done. And I do *not* claim to be permanently ensconced on the Threshold of Divinity.

If people love and respect me it is because I have won their love and respect by my life and teachings. Why do not you do the same instead of sneering at and belittling me?

Well, I do my best to live as I think fit (willingly confessing to a considerable percentage of failure) and teach what I think right. How much love and respect my attempts may incidentally bring, I simply do not know, as I am not in the habit of 'taking stock.' All I can say is that your question does not even begin to *prove* what it would seem to tacitly imply—namely that I win neither love nor respect by my life and teachings. The fact is that I leave these assets free to follow or not, as they like, instead of tying them into a bundle with pledge-strings and pasting them over with "PRIVATE" luggage-labels. That enables me to take things easier than you do, while nevertheless trying my little best.

I fully admit your courage—now turned to daring—and your remarkable power to impress (some would say 'fascinate.') One of your most able fol-

flowers¹ compares these with Napoleon's—whom some people were satisfied by 'merely looking at.' That power of fascination, or soul-enslavement, in the hands of one who can utter such separative heresies (and inexactitudes) as you have been found giving vent to a little higher, is a *public danger* of no mean importance. I had never fully realised this up to now. If ever I have 'belittled' you in the past, I am sorry for it. It is my duty henceforth to *magnify* you by way of compensation, lest you win over more victims (under various plausible pretexts) to your disastrous esoteric separative purposes.

I see no reason why I should ask people to subscribe in advance to your books.

In that case you obviously needn't. But if the books *happen* to be good, and ultimately win their way, it will scarcely redound to the credit of Mrs. Annie Besant, President of the Theosophical Society and Messenger of the Coming Christ, to have written this. People will say that the fact of the books being good *and* Theosophical was plentiful reason for helping them on (by at least bringing them to the notice of those whom you are so well organised to reach) while you were President of a Society formed for the very purpose of helping on such work.

¹ Miss Elizabeth Severs, who writes a thought-provoking article in *Theosophy in India* ('Besant Number'—October 1913) comparing Mrs. Annie Besant with Napoleon. She judiciously forgets to mention either Waterloo or St. Helena. Will somebody try and pair me off with Nelson? I couldn't do for Wellington: I haven't got the nose!

I do not ask anybody to subscribe in advance to anybody's books.

Of course not, seeing that you have fully adequate means placed at your disposal by confident believers for the purpose of publishing anything you may happen to fancy—books like *Three Years in Tibet*, for instance, which could be printed and advertised by your orders in your press when my *Upanishads* could not. The makeshifts of poverty are unknown at Adyar. My "*Making of the Better Man*" was only published because some 500 people subscribed it in advance. I had four annas in the house and a dead credit in the Bank when I began that book; and I found myself with exactly two pice in pocket after redeeming the Railway parcel when the first copies reached me for sale. That was at Hyderabad, by the way, of all places! Barring the accident of extra-Theosophic help (and something inside that will not 'say die') I might have gone the way of a certain individual called Keagey, who let himself die of hunger at Dindigul when you drove him out from Adyar. Does the ...devil help your opponents¹ through such tight places?...Or might it be.....*the Lord Maitreya* ? !

Why should I make an exception in your case ?

Because, O noble Dame ! I happen to be an excep-

¹ "The opponents may haply discover that they are fighting against God." (Mrs. Annie Besant, in the *Herald of the Star*.)

lional individual (though I must needs say it myself—since I have no convenient Leadbeater to astrally descry me 'on the Thershold of Divinity' and be duly tit-for-tatted in return.) I am, I say, a quite exceptional individual, and must needs bestir myself to demonstrate the fact to your satisfaction. Are you ready with a berth in the *Rents*¹ ?'

For years I tried to help you.

Well, my dear Mrs. Besant, for years I tried to help *you*. I tried and tried, and never gave up trying until the advent of the Alcyone cult. If my help was mostly unobtrusive, that must be put to the account of circumstance, not mine. *How much* I tried, the Lord Maitreya presumably knows and may be willing to tell you, if consulted. Surely, if He *can* be consulted at all, it is to save His Messenger from the sin of being unjust to a fellow-worker for the Cause of Man.

As for the patent help you rendered me, I am as willing as ever to acknowledge it :

Firstly you did get money from certain well-to

¹ *Rents in the Veil of Time*—the Romance of Previous Incarnations, chiefly of the Great Sage 'Alcyone,' investigated by Mr. C. W. Leadbeater and Mrs. Annie Besant, in which their loyal friends are usually found playing more or less gratifying parts, and other folk more or less shady ones—a convenient form of . . . shall we say 'pre-humous' flattery and libel. The key to the present identities is entrusted to various people, not necessarily as discreet as the writer of this note happens to be. The only personage whose identity remains veiled under the initials "X. Y. Z.", is Scorpio. '*Rents*' were published in the *Theosophist*, and are now anxiously expected in book-form, with considerable amplifications. I emphatically urge my intelligent reader to purchase a copy—thus willingly performing for Mrs. Besant's publications the gracious task which she so emphatically refuses to perform for mine.

do French Theosophists to defray my passage to India—33 days without a bath in a coal-tramp—with Thirlwall, who since went mad and cut his throat in Dr. Kaul's house at Lahore. You remember ?

Then you accommodated me for four months, in a manner which I cannot be too thankful for, in your pleasant house at Benares. When *that* will be repaid I simply cannot say. It seems unlikely in *this* life ; but who can tell ? That you did it all to please a certain Esoteric Gentleman whose notion it was to send me out here, and whom you fairly worshipped in those days, makes little difference. You may apportion the due shares of my gratitude between you some day, when you make friends again. Meanwhile your house and garden were undoubtedly for me the scene of quite invaluable spiritual and psychical experiences which *you* were patently ignorant of at the time, and will probably not believe in if I make up my mind to narrate them as they happened in some future book. All I can say is that my experiences seem to have differed from yours in some very essential details, since they gave me a conception of Initiation, Discipleship, Masterhood and what not, radically different from what your propaganda implies, and tending to make the latter quite unacceptable to me—spiritually nauseous, so to say. Last but not least my experiences, if and when narrated, will no more tend to create a church, or interfere with anyone's liberty of opinion as regards non-essentials, than they have interfered with mine. Whoever strives to be honest and wishes the world well is my

Comrade on that Path, whether he knows me for his friend or not.

After that I cannot see that you did anything in particular to help me, barring the gift of Rs. 600 by way of emolument (Rs. 50 *per mensem* for one year) which you decreed for me as Thesophic Branch Inspector (or Travelling Lecturer or something of the sort) one winter at Benares, and which you clean forgot until I reminded you of it a year later at Adyar (after the 1910 Convention, if I mistake not.) Then you sent me a cheque, with the mention, "A bite at a cherry." It was quite charming, if a bit indefinite. Was I expected to muffle my conscience for that much?

'You consistently tried to injure me in return.'

God—and the Lord Maitreya who presumably has *a little* power to read men's hearts—are my witnesses that I did nothing of the sort. They are my witnesses that I am doing nothing of the sort even to-day; for I am at last doing the very best that in me lies to save Mrs. Annie Besant from the worst of all possible calamities: namely, success in achieving what is not right¹.

As for consistently *opposing*—a very different affair from *injuring*—*no again*, unfortunately *no*. I did *not* (until now) oppose Mrs. Besant in any way that can veraciously be called 'consistent,' I did not oppose her when I ought to have done so. I did

¹ See my remarks on her attempted spiritual monopoly, pp. 9, 10 24, 25, above.

not oppose her because I felt a well-nigh insurmountable repugnance to that sort of business. I was too lazy to fight, profoundly though I differed. I merely gave vent to an opinion from time to time—opinion which I did not even take the trouble to circulate. (Perhaps the lack of means helped to paralyse me.) But even then, I had not clearly made up my mind to act, as I have now. I did *not* assist those who were painstakingly opposing Mrs. Besant, regarding her as a public danger. I positively refused to admit, when urged by Dr. Nanjunda Rao to do so, that she either was a serious public danger or could possibly be perverse in her motive. And *I all the time knew her for the strong obtrusive circumstance that crippled my own work.* But I considered her negative attitude to my work as a sort of test, possibly deliberate. Dr. Nanjunda Rao seemed rather disgusted, and evidently put me down as 'quite useless.' Dr. Nanjunda Rao is my witness that I did *not* consistently seek to injure Mrs. Annie Besant. Dr. Nanjunda Rao is my witness that Mrs. Annie Besant's intuition is gravely at fault in thus accusing me—at fault (fie for a Servant of the Lord of Love!) in misjudging me precisely as she accuses me of misjudging her. "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass (or are imagined to) against us." I hope Mrs. Besant will forgive me for mentioning Dr. Nanjunda Rao. I trust the Lord Maitreya gives Dr. Nanjunda Rao credit for good intentions. A thousand pities that Mrs. Annie Besant should not see her way to do likewise! It would certainly bring her nearer to the Lord Maitreya.

Straight and summary answer to the above-accusation : " No, my dear Mrs. Besant, I never *yet* consistently tried to *oppose*—still less to *injure* you. The only way to demonstrate this lies in opposing you consistently for a bit, in order that you may know the difference. It may even be that I have deprived myself of much public support by *not* assuming a sufficiently consistent attitude. The next few months may be enough to make this clear."

You quarrel with everybody and then complain that they leave you to yourself.

Now this is a specimen of Mrs. Besant's 'imaginative inexactitude.' I do not for a moment dream of denying that I have got a bit of a temper—to keep as to lose—nor do I consider myself the better for having occasionally lost it. But I would really like to make a list of the 'everybody' with whom I *have* quarrelled (in Mrs. Besant's quasi-divine Imagination), and then to try a bout with the 'everybody else' (the Lord Bishop of Madras, for instance) with whom I have not yet begun to quarrel ; so that Mrs. Besant's standing reputation for " trying to follow Truth " might be *kept* standing. Will the 'everybody' with whom I have quarrelled kindly report themselves ? How many at Peshawar ? How many at Tuticorin ? How many at Habiganj, Comilla, Noakhali ? How many in some three hundred places anywhere between ?

If only all those with whom I have quarrelled will write each a letter to *The Hindu*, I am quite sure

the Editor will willingly lend his columns, thereby returning to the state of grace from the very gates of (Mrs. Besant's) Hell.

Now there is only one word left :

<p>Sincerely, ANNIE BESANT.</p>

The only possible thing to match with this in order to restore my reader's belief in Mrs. Besant's true *underlying* greatness, is an Esoteric letter from her pen in the troublous days of 1906, when she (for a time) knew *and confessed* that there *was* something wrong, and, doubting her *psychic* experience, drew perhaps nearer to her real Soul than she has ever been before or since.

But rather, as the letter just analysed might be held to suffer from being thus cut up into bits, let us recapitulate it in full, side by side with the Esoteric Confession and Appeal of 1906, *and* Mr. Leadheater's *Adyar Album* Appeal for credulous acceptance of *her every word*. These three, exhibited side by side, will form a triptych well worth pondering. I publish it on a separate detachable sheet under the title, **THREE UTTERANCES FROM THE THRESHOLD OF DIVINITY**, so that those who need to be reminded may frame it and hang it up in their rooms.

In conscientiously opposing Mrs. Annie Besant *now*, I am but carrying out the pathetically earnest 'request' issued by Mrs. Annie Besant in 1906.

I trust that the Real Mrs. Besant, *now as then*, knows and approves.

—+—

REMARKS ON MRS. BESANT'S LETTER,
TAKEN AS A WHOLE.

I. What may first strike the casual reader most, is its tone of aggrieved innocence, of gentle injured righteousness, of childlike simplicity wantonly misunderstood.

The reader must, in order not to fall into the trap, pinch himself from time to time lest he forget that the author of this missive has profound and world-wide Esoteric Schemes in view: An Exclusive Agency-Commission from the (Astral Lord Maitreya for the guarding and training of His Chosen Body, and the preparing of the way for the wholesale control by Him of all educational, charitable and propagandist enterprise on Theosophical (*i.e.*, 'non-sectarian') lines in the near future—a truly gigantic task of Spiritual Trust Organisation requiring above all things the discountenancing and ultimate stifling out of existence of all petty 'free trade' in spiritual matters, such as I (and a few others¹) are struggling to establish and encourage. It is the battle between the 'Close Ring' and the 'Open Door.' That the 'Close Ring' should write so guilelessly to an avowed supporter of the 'Open Door,' speaks volumes for its ostrich-like² cunning. The *pledged* Esoteric Section, controlling the Theo-

¹ Such as Mr. D. N. Dunlop, editor of *The Path*—an independent Theosophical monthly now threatened with extinction.

² Deep meditation supplied this needed adjective after a considerable pause.

inity.

calling for blind

... sense that
also, would yield hope-
less. They cannot see
the infallibility of Mrs.
Antee

... or man-made cult,
or promulgated supersti-
tiously and boldly as this."
Crisis in the Theosophical

... against her will,
... been able to justify
... he deviated from

... thiness, on which

“ Believe not what you have heard, not merely
because a thing is repeated by many persons, believe not
in that to which you are attached merely by ANALYSIS A
PRINCIPLE CONFORMS TO REASON (yr.)
N.B.—And Mr. C. W. Leadbeater

sophical Society, and the Order of the Star in the East with its deliberately selected Inner Grades, are enrolled in her service *for this alone*, and are serving her with a devout zeal and energy which the lazy, careless Public has yet to realise. All she says about a 'free platform' is mere hypocritical cant by the side of her utterance about the paramountcy of the (pledged) Esoteric Section over the free Theosophical Society¹. With the vanishing (in perspective) of the 'outer Theosophical Society' as a *real and valid* entity, the 'free platform' Mrs. Besant so strenuously pretends to hold to, vanishes as well. How much more sincere than all this cant about a 'free platform' is Mrs. Besant's pious wish that "*the opponents may haply discover that they are fighting against God!*" This masking of a widespread sacerdotal scheme under a cloak of artless guilelessness breaks the spell once for all for whoever looks things in the face. It means mischief, or lunacy, or both. It calls for widespread public caution with regard to all enterprises with which Mrs. Besant is proximately or remotely associated. It calls either for a public verdict of imposture or for a private berth in an asylum.

II. The point that strikes one who knows Mrs. Besant for a towering spiritual and social figure, desirous of playing a leading part in all constructive social and political work in India and elsewhere (see the programme of her new weekly, *The Commonwealth*) is the utter lack of spirituality, of public spirit, of concern for the general Good which this letter exhibits.

¹ See 'My Heresies,' pp. 16-18.

The reader has to pinch himself to remember that this letter is addressed by a prominent religious public worker to another religious public worker, much less prominent, but certainly widely known and appreciated by the Public in a quiet way ; and that the two are members (she the President) of the *same Society*, professedly organised for the spread of enlightened Ideals and religious views. Anything more unspiritual, less public-spirited than her "Why can't you leave me alone to do my work as I leave you alone to do yours ?" is difficult to conceive. The whole letter is nothing but I and you, you and me, my work, your work, my life and teachings, why don't you do likewise (and catch 'followers' as I do, by appealing to superstition and personal sentiment —B.)? And so on, and so forth.

All I have to add here is that this is not an isolated freak, the utterance of an unguarded moment, a passing cloud. No, it is a *permanent mood in her*, warping her whole life for years and making all her Theosophical platform utterances esoterically meaningless.

For in 1905, when I first tried to bring home to her, in a most respectful and friendly letter, the fact of my independent spiritual training, based on my early reading of *Light on the Path* (a book over which she can claim no control)¹, she wrote back, curtly demanding the 'return of my papers,'—which is the official way of signifying dismissal from the Esoteric School. She would have nothing to do with an independent student. She reinstated me of

1. See *The Making of the Better Man*, pp. 239-254.

her own accord in 1907 when I (under what I confess to have been a combination of friendly illusions) spontaneously *supported* her for the Presidentship.

Later, in 1910, when I decided to push on my public work in *manifest* independence of her control, I wrote to her and frankly told her so (while I forthwith got into trouble through *not telling the public so with sufficient clearness* because I was unwilling to raise strife—for which pusillanimity amends are made herewith). I drew her attention, in my letter, to the passage concerning my spiritual independence in the Preface to *The Gospel of Life*, p. xlv, the book having been published that very year.

She wrote back (date, November 28th, 1910).

Thanks for your book. I looked at the passage to which you referred. It seems to me a pity to placard your independence in this way, as it tends to make mischievous gossip. But, after all, that is your own affair. The position seems to be that you should remain aloof, and that I should from time to time say nice things about you. It is somewhat one-sided, but may pass. I am satisfied with my share of it.

The fun of the whole thing is of course that she never did fulfil 'her share,' and never intended to. Her pretending to be satisfied with it is mere (Threshold of Divinity) playfulness. And note that the 'one-sided' share in question was simply that she, as President, Editor and what not, should make fair mention of my *Theosophical* (i. e., unsectarian) public work from time to time *without*

requiring me to subscribe myself her follower. It would of course have been left to me to give her credit, in all fairness, for her liberality, which I was most willing to do. But *she gave me no occasion to do so.* The review of my book in the *Theosophist* shortly after—the most condemnatory paragraph of which has since been acknowledged by her as ‘probably’ hers—efficiently killed its sale as far as the Theosophical Society at large was concerned, and, in conjunction with the boycott by common (accidental) consent of my lectures by leading T. S. Lodges, left me financially ‘stranded’ with an awful load of books. I am not yet afloat when writing this.

What clearly emerges from this (long withheld¹) disclosure of my personal experience of Mrs. Besant, is that Mrs. Besant's notion of responsibility is simply: “You flatter me, I flatter you. If you want me to say anything good of you, don't be a fool and waste your time impersonally working for Humanity: that is quite useless. Just you start saying good things of *me*, and especially refrain from criticising any of my moves or countenancing those who do so.” In short :

“TIT FOR TAT.”

That is Mrs. Besant's bottom view of spiritual propaganda and beneficent Public Life.

The rest is merely cant.

1. Withheld because I shrank from *formulating conclusions*, though I saw well enough *in what direction* the data with which she supplied me were pointing.

MY RESIGNATION-LETTER.

Now here is the resignation-letter which I wrote to the General Secretary, Theosophical Society in India, on receipt of Mrs. Besant's letter, analysed above.

On Tour, Dharwar, I, xii. 1918.

The General Secretary,
T. S. in India, Benares City.

Dear Sir and Brother,

The President's persistent refusal to encourage my independent study and public work, which I nevertheless regard as Theosophical and shall continue to regard as such; and the consequent attitude of Theosophical Lodges, especially when controlled by E. S. groups, in refusing all support and occasionally even obstructing me—these unfortunate circumstances leave me no choice but to resign my membership of the Theosophical Society, and to continue my work as best I can without it.

Let it be well understood that I shall be willing to rejoin if ever the Theosophical Society *officially* recognises my work as part of its own because based on the same everlasting Principles and working for the same ultimate End—the Integral Good of Man and Cosmos.

Meanwhile I shall, as independent public lecturer, be at the disposal of such T. S. Lodges (as of any other organisations) as may still care to invite me and convene the Public to my lectures.

As I have no means of knowing beforehand what the attitude of this or that Lodge may be, and do not wish to accumulate files of useless correspondence such as the sample published in the pamphlet, "My Heresies," which I have issued at the request of many enquirers, I shall be thankful if such Lodges as wish to be included in my tours will kindly communicate with me (address, 7 Mandavali Lane, Mylapore, Madras) and let me know. It will henceforth be understood that those Lodges from which I do *not* hear are not desirous of helping me and are not entitled to take offence if I organise my public work without consulting them.

With regard to the abovementioned pamphlet ("My Heresies") and any further explanatory statements I may think fit to cir-

culate, it must be borne in mind that I am as yet quite unskilled in *controversial* debate, and shall be willing to apologise for any incidental rudeness or blunders in expression as soon as I am satisfied that there is on the other side *real* Charity and goodwill towards my constructive work, and that broad willingness to make allowances which one expects from the accredited messengers of a Lord of Universal Love.

A copy of my latest book, "*The Making of the Better Man*," is herewith sent to you for favour of review.

I request you to kindly publish this letter of resignation in your official organ. I shall not trouble *Theosophy in India* with further correspondence if you will only be kind enough to accede to this.

Yours ever fraternally,
F. T. BROOKS.

I trust my reader will not reprobate this as sinning on the side of...truculence. Remember that this severs a connection of seventeen years' standing (the best years of my life, as some would say); also that the Theosophical Society professedly exists for the promotion of Theosophy, and that Theosophy avowedly means, not psychic revelations and esoteric sectarian cliques, but the highest Ideals of Simple Truth and Common Good which I shall ever be able to put before myself and you. If you, friend reader, cannot bring yourself to share my gentle feeling towards a Society which I love better than it (at present) loves me, pray shrug your shoulders pass on. The Ideals which I persist in connoting by the term "Theosophy" will stand and spread without the Theosophical Society as with it—possibly better without than with — and *we shall help them to do so.*



MY PROGRAMME.

In conclusion, it may be as well to define my programme—the lines on which I propose to work, as independent lecturer and writer, with the help of a sympathetic and discriminating Public.

I.

The much needed rehabilitation, in the Modern Mind, of revered Sanskrit Shastras (in particular the *Bhagavad Gita* and the *Upanishads*), demonstrating them to be full of a solid, wholesome, catholic inspiration to BE TRUE and LIVE WELL, and not at all (as latterly believed) charged with an other-worldly appeal (for high-caste Hindus only) to desert life and gain release for themselves.

As for my title to contribute to this, Pandit Ganganath Jha, Mahamahopadhyaya, Professor of Sanskrit, Allahabad University, author of several translations and collaborator of Dr. Thibaut, wrote as early as 1908, when I had scarcely begun lecturing :

Many thanks for the MSS. of your 'Gita'
 I have looked into it many places, and am glad to observe that while giving to your rendering a peculiar charm you have been able to preserve what I may call *absolute literalness*. In fact in many places one cannot fail to note that the absolute literalness of your renderings—specially of technical words and expressions—has been the means of bringing out the real purport of the text which generally gets lost in more 'idiomatic' translations.
 Your exposition of the Philosophy of the Gita appears to me to be clearer and more precise than that propounded by Madhusudana and other commentators

Later, in 1910, Mr. A Mahadeva Shastri, Curator, Mysore Oriental Library, a special student of

Shankaracharya and (later) of the Vedic period, author of several much appreciated translations, wrote :

I have read several parts of your rhythmical translation of the *Bhagavad Gita*, that oft-commented but ill-understood Scripture of the Hindus. I do not mean to flatter you when I say that this rendering and your lectures on the Teaching of the Gita have deeply impressed me and my follow-townsmen of light and leading.

Approached in that spirit alone, would the Gita reveal the true Vedic Law which the Lord . . . came to restore. . . He found that the many distortions it had undergone and the incrustations that had gathered deep around it had blurred, blinded and darkened the Vehicle of the Spiritual Law and Wisdom, the Veda. Hence the protest not unfrequently entered against the 'Vedas' of the time of the Lord's Avatara, not only by Himself, but by many other wise sages of the time. This is why the scholastic commentators ancient or modern, trained as they have all been in the *systems* of their day, have failed to grasp the full meaning of the Gita. My recent studies of the Vedic Law in its original uncontaminated sources, have confirmed the claims of the Gita as a reiteration of the Vedic Law as it was originally given by the Divine Teachers. But to recover the knowledge of that Law, one must study the Gita, the Vedas and the Upanishads on the lines of your expositions. As a proof of this, I need only say that your exposition has brought out more of the Gita's inner truth than one can gather from the mere scholastic commentaries and glosses now extant.

Since then my lectures have been attended with keen appreciation by scholars like the venerable Rao Bahadur Ramanujachariar, Principal, Vizianagaram College, Mr. P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar, Principal, Vizagapatam College, and many others ; and I have not the least fear of the above-quoted appreciations being reversed.



II.

The sifting out of the Essentials of Religion from non-essentials, clearly showing the polarisation of Man and Universe into two main factors—the essentials of all existence: Consciousness and Energy. Being and Doing, Knowledge and Power, Mind and Will, *Purusha* and *Prakriti*, *Shiva* and *Shakti*, etc., etc., So that *all* Scripture, sums itself up in :

- I. Instigation to TRUE BEING.
- II. Instigation to RIGHT DOING.
- III. Instigation to ORGANIC RELATIONSHIP with all other Being and Doing in COSMIC BEING and COSMIC DOING.



III.

(As natural introduction to the above.) The sifting out of the Universal Essentials of Character, on the clear grasp of which the much-needed introduction of efficient moral teaching into our poly-denominational Indian Schools absolutely depends.

This is worked out in my latest book, "*The Making of the Better Man*," which reduces human character to Mind, Heart, Body, requiring TRUTH, LOVE, HEALTH as sole conditions of growth and welfare, and threatened with ruin by Falsehood, Cruelty, Disease—the three Arch-Devils against which all sane people, of no matter what race or cult, must ultimately combine. All shallower bonds of union (and separation) must some day give way to *this*.



IV.

The spreading of these Right Universal Ideals, religious and ethical, both ancient and modern because *eternal*—by means of readable literature and such simple, straightforward organisations as the League of the Helping Hand, the Students' Brotherhood and all other such movements as are free from fantastic 'occult' claims and from personal esoteric manipulation.

 CONVOCATION.

(of sorts.)

Will all who agree with my aims and are willing to betoken sympathy kindly send their names and addresses to 7, Mandavali Lane, Mylapore, Madras, and (if possible) assist in popularising my work by ordering a book or two? To those who hesitate, I would commend *The Making of the Better Man* to start with.

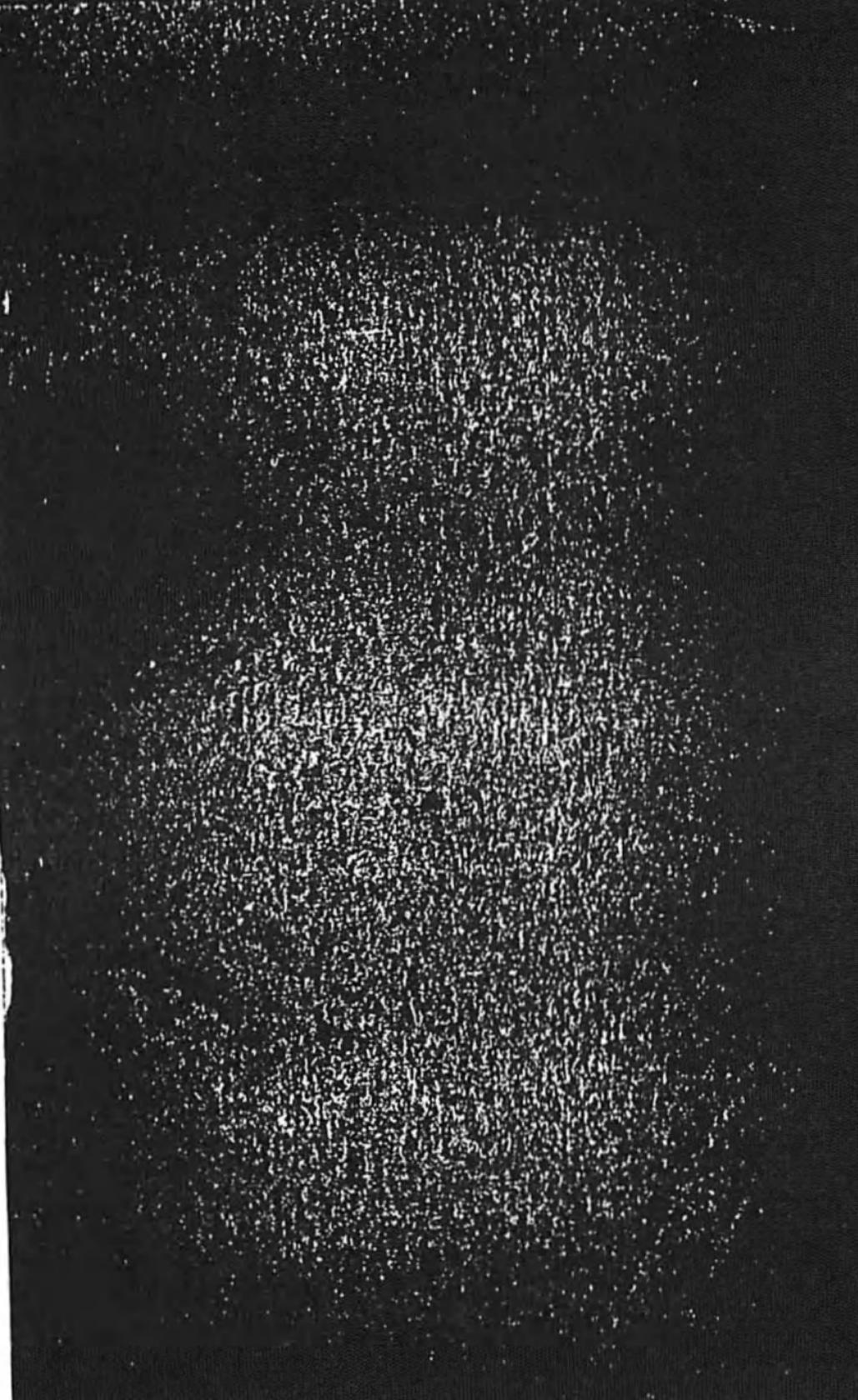
Will any gentlemen of standing intimate their willingness to help in organising lectures in their several towns?

Donations will be thankfully received.

N. B.—I do not propose to counter-organise in any hard and fast sense, but simply to spread healthy suggestions and to make THEOSOPHY (in its *true* sense) *a free gift to the Public*, and no longer the (imaginary) monopoly of a strait sect.

OM SHANTIH.—PEACE!

(which means neither idleness, nor the amiable acceptance of adulterated goods.)



Three Utterances from the Threshold of Divinity.

I

Mrs. Annie Besant rebuking Mr. F. T. Brooks for having rebuked her, in 1918.

I wrote you a perfectly frank and straightforward note. You charge me with deliberate falsehood and pretence. By all means do so, if you choose, but it shows a very unworthy spirit. I have never made any suggestion to any T.S. or E.S. group or person, discouraging their invitation to you to lecture. I have never interfered with any person's lecturing, and do not propose to do so. I believe in a free platform and have invariably said so, publicly and privately.

On the other hand, I cannot force anyone on other people. People must be free to go to a lecture or not, as they please; and if you talk about me as rudely and unfairly as you write, people who respect me may prefer to stay away. Why are you always so disagreeable and hostile? I do not attack you, or blame you for all your unjust and unkind writings. I do not publicly

II

Mrs. Annie Besant praying to be rebuked when her turn comes to go astray, in 1906.

I have blundered badly in my judgment and my insight, and must bear the Karma of it. I dare not believe that the White Lodge could ignore such ill thoughts and deeds in the Temple open only to the pure in heart.

If the day of my fall should come, I ask those who love me not to shrink from condemning my fault, not to attenuate it or say that black is white; but rather let them lighten my heavy Karma, as I am trying to lighten the Karma of my friend and brother, by proclaiming the unshaken purity of the ideal, and by declaring that the fall of an individual leaves unshattered their trust in the Masters of Purity and Compassion.

We ought not to confuse what proceeds from the Masters of Wisdom with what we feeble human beings do. The Masters know how to guide us in such a way that they turn everything to the good of human evolution. A man may fall, but even his fall is turned to his advantage. Leadbeater has fallen, Judge has fallen, I shall probably fall too. But I will not

III

Mr. C. W. Leadbeater calling for blind acceptance of Mrs. Besant's every word (including the previous two columns) in the Adyar Album.

What can I say to you of your President that you do not know already? Her colossal intellect, her unflinching wisdom, her unrivalled eloquence, her splendid forgetfulness of self [in column I—II.], her untiring devotion to work for others—all these are familiar to you. Yet these qualities, these powers, are but a small part of her greatness; they are on the surface, they may be seen by all, they leap to the eye. But there are other qualities, other powers, of which you cannot know, because they pertain to the secrets of Initiation. She is a pupil of our Masters; from the fount of Their archaic wisdom she derives her own; the plans which she is carrying out are Their plans for the welfare of the world. Think, therefore, how great an honour it is for you that you should be permitted to work under her, for in doing so you are virtually working under Them. Think how watchful you should be to miss no hint which falls from her lips, to carry out exactly whatever instructions she may give you. Remember that because of her position as an Initiate she knows far more than you do; and precisely because her knowledge is occult, aim...

the Lord Buddha.

ause they have been transmitted through many generations; believe not merely own you the work of a very ancient sage; believe not in conjectures; believe not f your Masters and elders; WHEN UPON OBSERVATION AND ANALYSIS A ELFARE OF ALL, accept it and hold to it." (Buddha, Angulitura Nikaya.)

charge you with publicly writing one thing and privately insinuating the reverse. Why can't you leave me alone to do my work, as I leave you alone to do yours? Why constantly nag at me? It is paltry and discreditable.

If people love and respect me it is because I have won their love and respect by my life and teachings. Why do not you do the same, instead of sneering at and belittling me?

I see no reason why I should ask people to subscribe in advance to your books. I do not ask anyone to subscribe in advance to anybody's books. Why should I make an exception in your case? For years I tried to help you; you consistently tried to injure me in return. You quarrel with everybody and then complain that they leave you to yourself.

render Leadbeater's karma more difficult by calling black white and white black. And I request all those who love me not to fall in calling black black and white white if I fall.

[Quoted from *The Mitteilungen*—Transactions of the German Section (now Anthroposophical Society), March, 1913.]

Note the disciple's slippery footing, remember that "Great Ones fall back, even from the very threshold, unable to pass on, unable to bear the weight of their responsibility." (*Light on the Path*—words ascribed to a *Master*) and then refer to the Gospel of the New Cult (*At the Feet of the Master*, by Alcyone) where it is said that the disciple *can always test the rightness (or otherwise) of his thought by referring it back to the Master's mind, with which his own is permanently in touch.* And of course *the Master cannot make mistakes, since he "knows all."* This leads up to the cocksureness of the next column.

under the seal of Initiation, she cannot share it with you. Therefore her actions must certainly be governed by considerations of which you have no conception. There will be times when you cannot understand her motives, for she is taking into account many things which you cannot see and of which she must not tell you. But whether you understand or not, you will be wise to follow her implicitly, just because she knows. This is no mere supposition on my part, no mere flight of the imagination; I have stood beside your President in the presence of the Supreme Director of Evolution on this globe, and I know whereof I speak. Let the wise hear my words, and act accordingly.

After quoting the above, Mr. Eugene Levy adds: "It is easy to see how minds not gifted with a highly developed critical faculty, or the instinctive sense that discriminates the true from the false, would yield hopelessly to such a formidable assault. They cannot see that he who thus guarantees the infallibility of Mrs. Besant has himself need of guarantee . . ."

I do not think that any religion or man-made cult, even in the earliest ages, has ever promulgated superstition in its grossest form so openly and boldly as this." (*Mrs. Besant and the Present Crisis in the Theosophical Society*, pp 80-91.)

One Utterance from the Madras High-Court Bench.

She made a pretence of having complied with plaintiff's wishes and taken the boys to Europe against her will when thereby she was really effecting the object she had in mind from the beginning. She may have been able to justify this conduct to herself in the light of her great enthusiasm. But, judged by ordinary standards, she deviated from common honesty.

And this is material . . . also as regards the presumption in favour of her trustworthiness, on which we have been invited to act in other connections.

One Utterance of

"Believe not what you have heard said; believe not in traditions merely because a thing is repeated by many persons; believe not solely because some one has said in that to which you are attached merely by habit; believe not solely upon the authority of a PRINCIPLE CONFORMS TO REASON AND LEADS TO THE BENEFIT AND WELFARE OF MANKIND."
N.B.—And Mr. C. W. Leadbeater is a professed Buddhist! ! ! !