

THE
CENTRAL HINDU COLLEGE
AND
MRS. BESANT

THE RISE OF THE ALCYONE CULT

by

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To the Editor of *The Christian Commonwealth*, London, England

**THE CENTRAL HINDU COLLEGE
and
MRS. BESANT**

SIR, — will you kindly extend to the undersigned the fairness and courtesy of your columns to enable him to place before your readers the following, with reference to Mrs. Besant's remarks on the "Central Hindu College," which appeared in the *Christian Commonwealth* of 4th June, 1913? The nature of these makes it unavoidable to publish a full statement of facts.

To understand the situation clearly we have to bear in mind that, like every other human being, Mrs. Besant has two natures, a higher and a lower. Because of her extraordinary gifts and powers, the manifestation of these two in her are also extraordinary. Because of the high level of her intellectual development, they work in a correspondingly subtle and sublimated form. In her case, these two time-old natures, altruism and egoism, have taken on the particular forms of (1) the wish "*to save*" mankind, and (2) the wish "*to be regarded as a Saviour*" of the same. The two aspects are very subtly and very closely connected as the poles of a magnet; and yet are as wide apart and opposed.

While the former wish prevailed on the whole over the latter, from 1894 to 1907, with the help of good advice and influence, she did magnificent work: carried the torch of the Ancient Science of the Spirit from land to land in continuation of the labours of Madame Blavatsky and under the Presidency of Col. Olcott; enhanced the good influence of the Theosophical Society; won respect for true Theosophy from erstwhile scoffers; and helped India in particular by her eloquent and admirable lectures on the higher Hinduism which is the very core of Theosophy, and by helping to found and rear the Central Hindu College at Benares. By this last piece of work especially, (in which she was naturally given the *lead* because of her wonderful gifts of speech and writing combined with her profession of being a Hindu by faith and her Hindu ways of living in India,) she proved to the "tangible"-seeking portion of the public also that Theosophy is not mere day-dreaming but has a very useful practical application; and she thereby built up her own reputation, for sound and reliable public work, with the people as well as the Government of the land.

Now that the second nature in her has been unhappily dominating the first, more and more, since the passing away of Col. Olcott in 1907, under other guidance and influence, she has been unconsciously but grievously undermining and bringing confusion upon her own good work, in a manner which is a source of the greatest possible sorrow to her old friends and colleagues. These, she now says, 'hate' her and 'persecute' her, simply because they have been compelled to express dissent publicly from her recent policy and conduct of affairs in the T.S. and the Central Hindu College.

Her remarks on the Central Hindu College in your paper are illustrations of this sad change in her. This Institution, for which she has done more than any one else perhaps, she now openly and obviously tries to injure most deeply in the minds of the public by wild suggestions that it and the Hindu University, into which it is proposed to be expanded, are mixed up with political seditionists and extremists under the influence of an alliance of orthodoxy and free-thinkers and so on.

That the Hindu University movement – of which the Honorable the Maharaja of Durbhanga, K.C.I.E., (Members of the Executive Council of H.K., the Lieutenant-Governor of Behar and Orissa) and the Honorable Dr. Sundar Lal, R.B., C.I.E., Member of the Legislative Council of H.K., the Lieutenant-Governor of the U.P. of Agra and Oudh, and Vice-Chancellor of the Allahabad University), and the Honorable Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya (Member of the Imperial Legislative Council of H.E. the Viceroy and Governor-General of India), are the prominent and officially recognized workers and office-bearers, (the first and second being respectively President and Secretary of the Hindu University Society) and Ruling Chiefs like their Highnesses, the Maharajas of Bikaner, Kashmir, Jodhpur, Gwalior, Indore, Benares, Udarapore, Alwar, etc., and many Hindu leaders, ex-Justices of High Courts, Legislative Councillors and others, honoured by the Government and the public alike, are supporters and donors – that such an educational movement is in any way mixed up with seditionism and extremism is an idea as fatuously ludicrous as that the Duke of Sutherland and Lord Haldane and the Rev. J.J.Campbell, the eloquent exponent of the New Theology, are plotting together with other Lords and Commoners to blow up the House of Parliament with dynamite.

The reckless, incoherent, self-contradictory, incorrect and misleading statements that Mrs. Besant has been freely making latterly in the public press, have only injured her own reputation in India with the Government officers as well as all classes of the public.

A plain chronicle of events, condensed as much as possible; will enable your readers to judge for themselves.

The C.H.C. was founded in July 1898, in order to do for the numerous sects and sub-divisions of Hinduism what the T.S. was endeavoring to do for all views and religions. viz., to harmonize, to rationally, to liberalize and thereby to preserve essentials and promote organizing co-operations, as against disruptive blind struggle. Princes and people helped, both theosophist and non-theosophist, with lands, buildings, donations, and unremunerated work; and the Government with sympathy and good-will and the necessary sanctions and permissions, and the College grew and prospered year by year, under the Presidentship of Mrs. Besant, and won the confidence, nay, the enthusiasm, of Hindus of almost all shades of opinion, ‘ancient’ as well as ‘modern.’

But with the transfer of Mrs. Besant from Benares to Adyar in 1907, as President of the T.S., elected under very peculiar circumstances foreshadowing the coming policies, a change

began to come over the spirit of all her work and surroundings. Despite the suggestions, advice, entreaties, expostulations and warnings of her old colleagues and counsellors who had made her work in India possible, she developed more and more and beyond all due bounds, the germ of person-worship so long held in restraint. Entirely proofless claims to super-physical powers and experiences, to being an Initiate, an Arhat a Mukta and what not; claims to read Mars and Mercury and the whole Solar System, past, present and future, (but with careful avoidance of even the most easy test, such as reading a given page of a closed book); claims to be the sole authorized agent of 'the Great White Brotherhood which guides Evolution on earth' and to be in communication with 'the Supreme Director of the world' and with 'the World-Teacher' etc.; in short, all the elements of sensationalism and emotionalism – which were sub-dominant and private (confined mostly to the 'inner' E.S.T. organization within the T.S.), now began to be predominant and public. Differences with colleagues gradually grew in strength and intensity, in the T.S. as well as the Central Hindu College. Some of the oldest and best workers of the T.S., Messrs. Sinnett, Mead and others in the West; Messrs. Keightley, Bhawani Shanker, Miss Edgar and others in India, either resigned outright or retired practically.

In the spring of 1909, a 'brother Initiate' of Mrs. Besant's, 'discovered' the boy, now nicknamed Alcyone, as the future vehicle of the Coming Christ. In the winter of 1909-1910, what is now currently and variously known as the 'J. K. cult,' 'Alcyone worship,' Maitreya-Christ-Advent, etc., all comprehended (together with later developments) in the convenient word, 'neo-theosophy' was started more or less definitely.

In the winter of 1910-1911, or earlier, a small private 'Group' was formed, consisting mostly of C.H.C. staff-members and students *pledged* to devotion and loyalty and obedience and service to Mrs. Besant. The exact terms of the pledge have not been publicly disclosed, but the purport is undisputed. What should students have to do with 'private groups' and 'secret Societies' and 'confidential pledges', etc.? Fortunately a psychological law ordains that such students' groups' affairs should not long remain secret.

Shortly after, in January, 1911, was started publicly by the then Principal of the C.H.C., as the chief member of the 'Group,' an 'Order' called The Order of the Rising Sun with the idea of 'preparing for a Coming World-Teacher' as its publicly avowed central idea, and the creed that the boy J.K., (Alcyone) would be the 'vehicle' of the 'Coming Christ – Maitreya-Bodhisattva' etc., as it's privately understood creed, to spread which amongst the students was the duty of the inner 'pledged group'. Some 170 members of the C.H.C. (staff and students) were enrolled. The 'Order' began to be pushed within the C.H.C. with usual sectarian zeal. Friction began between the members of the O.R.S. and the 'Group' on the one hand, and on the other, those of the staff and students who stood out despite of pressure.

In April, 1911, on remonstrance by the older members of the managing Committee, Mrs. Besant arranged that the Order of the Rising Sun should be disbanded. But this was mere show. When the disbandment was announced to the managers, it had already been arranged

to replace the O.R.S. on a larger scale by *The Order of the Star in the East*, with the Principal, Head Master, and various Professors of the C.H.C. as the Private and other Secretaries of the boy J.K. as Head of the Order, and Mrs. Besant as Protectress of the whole.

This rejuvenated Order began to be pushed and ‘the Coming Christ’ to be advertised like a stage-play, in the most perverted and gushing language, on the principle of selling the skin before killing the bear, amongst the general public as well as in the T.S., and scarcely more quietly within the C.H.C.

In the summer of 1911, side by side with this public activity, there was started by Mrs. Besant within the E.S.T. (Eastern School, or Esoteric Section, of Theosophy, an ‘inner’ organization recruited from the members of the T.S.), **a written pledge of absolute obedience to herself without cavil or delay**. This fact, ‘private and confidential’ at the time, is now public property since the Madras law-suits.

As was naturally unavoidable where person-worship began to be so acutely emphasized, very serious differences began in all circles and departments of work with which Mrs. Besant was connected.

In the same summer of 1911, the Hindu University movement, began in 1904, but dormant in the *interim*, was taken up strongly by its promoters; a scheme of Mrs. Besant’s, first discussed amongst friends in 1907, for a ‘University of India’, on all-including Theosophical lines, having been made impracticable by the wish of Musalman leaders for a separate University. It was tacitly understood by all concerned, from the very beginning of the Hindu University movement that the C.H.C. would serve as nucleus. This was obvious – on grounds of aims, ideals, public sentiments, as also of finance. There could be no sense at all in keeping the C.H.C. out of that movement. The Hindu public could not give monetary support to the C.H.C, separately from the Hindu University, and the Hindu University could only be glad to have a ready-made first-class college to begin with. Some of the foremost supporters and workers of the Hindu University had already been long connected with the C.H.C., as Patrons, Vice-Patrons or Trustees. So the C.H.C. management and the Hindu University movement were only too anxious all along to interwork and amalgamate.

But a very great difficulty was caused by the simultaneous overzealous propagandism of Mrs. Besant and her followers in respect to the O.S.E. and ‘neo-theosophy’. The confidence of the Hindu public in the catholicity of spirit of the C.H.C. management was greatly disturbed.

In August, 1911, the trustees of the C.H.C., to allay the apprehension in the public mind that the C.H.C. was being diverted from its constitutional broad and liberal Hinduism into a bizarre and unhealthy personal-cult and bigoted Second-Adventism, passed formal resolutions to the effect that the Institution had nothing to do with any such Orders as those

of the *Rising Sun* or the *Star in the East*. But such resolutions clearly could not abolish the emotionally delicious sectarianism into which Mrs. Besant and her pledged 'Groups' had now converted their former less-immediately-sweet humanitarianism.

However, after much difficulty and discussion in the public press, caused by the vagaries going on within the C.H.C. and elsewhere, certain conditions were agreed upon in writing, as below, between the promoters of the Hindu University on the one hand and Mrs. Besant on the other, on 22nd October, 1911. The conditions were:

"1. That the name of the University shall be the Hindu University. 2. That the first governing body shall consist of representatives of the Hindu Community and Mrs. Annie Besant and representative Trustees of the Central Hindu College. 3. That the Theological faculty shall be entirely in the hands of the Hindus. 4. That the petition for a charter now before the Secretary of State for India shall be withdrawn."

Shortly after, on 24th, December, 1911, resolutions were passed by the Trustees, agreeing that the C.H.C. should become part of the Hindu University. Neither the promoters of the University nor the C.H.C. trustees have deviated from the conditions and the policy agreed to by them and Mrs. Besant; only she has changed her attitude.

The neo-theosophic propagandism within (as without) the C.H.C. continued, even after the above agreements and resolutions, in a score of evasive and elusive forms. Inner 'Groups' and 'Esoteric Section Groups' of persons formally pledged to obedience of Mrs. Besant, 'Leagues of Service' of various kinds, 'Orders of S.E.' and 'S.I.' and 'D.I.', 'Co-Masonry Lodges', 'Temple of the R. C.', and corresponding badges, bands, 'regalia', 'jewels' and 'pink' and 'blue' and 'yellow' scarfs, and 'magnetized ribbons', and 'stars' in pin-brooch and button forms, etc., multiplied and replaced one another in interest like mushrooms in the raintime, a very fever of restless sound and movement hiding back of substance and of wise purpose. Fuss of the most absurd and mischievous kind became rampant. Lectures, meetings, night-classes, outside the college rooms and buildings, took place perpetually in the neighboring T.S. premises and private residences, for expounding the doctrines of neo-theosophy and especially the book called *At the Feet of the Master* alleged to have been written down by Alcyone, [J.Krishnamurti,] as the embryonic scriptures and revelation of 'the Embryo of a New Religion' as Mrs. Besant declares the O.S. E. to be. Resident students were advised, and a number of them began, to keep photos of Alcyone, as the 'vehicle' of the 'Coming Christ' and himself an 'Initiate of the Great White Brotherhood' (and Mrs. Besant and one or two other living persons,) 'on the threshold of divinity', and to worship them with flowers, incense, etc. Old and young believers prostrating, and genuflected literally, at the feet of the living original when within reach.

Efforts were made to so allot the seats in the boarding-houses of the College that a member of the pledged 'Group' should have charge of and influence three or four Juniors and gradually lead them in the direction of the 'Group', and 'its only true faith'. The then

Principal of the College, [who had founded the O.R.S.] proclaimed in his lectures in the neighboring T.S. Hall and elsewhere, that he was a 'High Disciple of the Master'; and that the C.H.C. was 'founded only to prepare for the Advent of the World-Teacher'.

The legitimate work of the College was neglected and suffered, and lack of discipline and insubordination towards those teachers, professors and other office-bearers who did not approve of these doings, began. Yet for the sake of old friendship and past collaborations, these insubordinations and breaches of discipline were *persistently overlooked* and smothered over, by the older Trustees and Managers, instead of being 'fanned into flame,' as *Mrs. Besant most incorrectly alleges*. Even to the neglect of their plain duty, they continued to avoid taking formal steps to call to account the pledged votaries of Mrs. Besant on the C.H.C. staff who were disregarding and breaking, in the letter as well as in the spirit, the wishes and resolutions of the Trustees. No official action was ever taken with regard to any of these doings, except twice: once as already mentioned, when resolutions were passed by the Trustees, publically disassociating the College from the new and strange Orders, in August, 1911, and again in May, 1912, when the Managing Committee requested Mrs. Besant as Editor of the C.H.C. Magazine not to introduce her pet World-Teacher into the pages of that Magazine as had then recently been done.

It seems that within or without the O.S.E., there is yet another core-Order called the 'O.S.L.', about which Mrs. Besant and other friends evaded giving information when asked, but which, it seems, was formed in 1911, and consists of the *crème de la crème* from amongst the [then] C.H.C. students and others who are being specially trained for acting the part of Apostles when Alcyone receives the afflatus and takes up the role of the 'Coming Christ'!

In 1912, a public discussion was carried on in the pages of the *Theosophy in India*, as to whether the pushing of the O.S.E. with its very specific and dogmatic creed within the T.S., in the manner in which such pushing was being obviously carried on, was or was not in accordance with the Constitutional Rules and objects of the T.S. For the inception of these "discussions regarding the T.S. Policy," the undersigned was undoubtedly responsible; and hence, perhaps the special anger against him. At that time he was the General Secretary of the Indian Section of the T.S., as well as Secretary of the C.H.C. As such he felt it his duty to invite, in the pages of the Sectional Gazette, the attention of the members of the T.S., to the immanent danger of the broad and all inclusive objects of the T.S. being swamped by the clear-cut, narrow, exclusive and zealously propagated credo of the O.S.E.

As the result of these discussions, Mrs. Besant admitted publicly that the O.S.E. was "the Embryo of a New Religion" which must not be identified with the T.S. "the representative of Universal Religion," but claimed that she had the right to push it within the T.S. as much as anybody else had the right to push any other opinion. Other members differed entirely from this extreme theory and profession (which will appear in a moment, worked out very peculiarly in the hands of Mrs. Besant), and while unable to question the obviously

uncontrollable right of every one 'to think and believe' as he pleased, thought that the right to *preach and proselytise* was limited within the T.S. by the Constitution of the T.S.

In any case, the Discussions failed to change Mrs. Besant's practice in the T.S., as the Trustees' Resolution had failed to check the O.S.E. propagandism by the 'Group' within the C.H.C. She went on nourishing and developing this parent-bursting 'Embryo of a New Religion' within the womb of the T.S. in such a fashion that the father of its juvenile [figure] Head found himself compelled to go to the Civil Court to recover from Mrs. Besant the custody of his minor sons, viz., the Head of the O.S.E. and his younger brother, who were being exploited and transformed into 'shows' for no fault of their own.

Mrs. Besant, on her part found it desirable, as a tactical counterblast to go, together with another member of the Esoteric Section, to the Criminal Courts, with charges of defamation against various people; charges based on a newspaper article referring specifically to another person and published nearly two years before. She wrote at that time in one of her many journals, of her "Captains fretting under the embargo laid upon them by their General [herself], and springing out upon the enemy as soon as the prohibition was withdrawn" by her, etc.. These cases began with the winter of 1912-1913. In April and in May, 1913, both the Civil and Criminal Courts decided against Mrs. Besant. The two judgments at least ought to be perused in full by every one who would learn facts accurately. Messrs. Goodwin & Co., [Malypore, Madras] have published the proceedings of the Civil Court case, in a separate volume, entitled "Mrs. Besant and the Alcyone Case." The contents speaks for itself. Appeals and applications to higher Courts by her are now pending.

Other regrettable occurrences took place in this last winter so eventful for the T.S. and the C.H.C. ... Because the German Section, under the General Secretary-ship of Dr. Steiner, opposed the pushing of the O.S.E. within the T.S. in Germany, Mrs. Besant, as President of the T.S., in March, 1913, dischartered and expelled from the T.S. the whole of that Section with all its Branches and over two thousand members, cancelling the diplomas of all these. She so successfully worked her theory, (that anyone may *push within* the T.S. any view he pleases,) that she has *pushed out* of that T.S. all these two thousand members and more at one push – simply because they did not approve of her O.S.E. propaganda. It appears that in the course of the last few months, the two thousand have swelled to three thousand, because of resignations, in consequence of this highhanded procedure, in England, France, Italy, Switzerland, Austria, Sweden, Russia, and elsewhere, also.

Such an autocratic, unconstitutional and tactless act undoing the good work of a whole generation of laborers in the cause of Universal Brotherhood and the federation of the nations, would have been inconceivably impossible for Col. Olcott., or even for the Mrs. Besant herself of five or six years ago. The various Sections of the T.S. have always been understood to be entirely autonomous. They might make their own rules and additional conditions of membership. Individual Branches have been permitted to be denominational, even as individual members may and do have their own private creeds, without seeking

aggressively to convert others.

With a little more tact and balance, and a little less self-assertiveness and impulsive haste, with a few more of the long-sighted Counsellors whom she had 'shaken out' (in her favorite phrase) and a few less of the 'obedient' courtiers whom she had 'taken in' instead, on the General Council of the T.S., she could most easily have arranged to put the O.S.E. members of the T.S. in Germany into separate Branches and a Section of their own, and retained all the older members also intact. But as she has publicly stated, all of the members of the General Council of the T.S. now belong, with one or two exceptions perhaps, to the 'Esoteric Section,' prime condition of membership which is, **the formal written pledge of absolute obedience to Mrs. Besant**; and so while the loud profession is freedom of thought 'for all,' the practice is sedulously 'for herself,' and her pledged votaries only, while the theory is that the O.S.E., "must not be identified with the T.S.," the practice is that the T.S. must be merged in the O.S.E.

Let us turn to the C.H.C. to bring the narrative up to date. In March and April 1913, there came into the hands of another Manager and Trustee, a printed 'letter,' covering some three foolscap pages, bearing the signature of the gentleman who was then Principal of the C.H.C., the date, 20th October 1912, and the imprint of Mrs. Besant's *Vasanta Press*, Adyar, Madras, and not bearing any word like 'private' or 'personal' or 'confidential.' In this 'Letter' amazingly extravagant and fantastic statements are made as regards Mrs. Besant; she is hailed repeatedly as one who is "*to become one of the greatest Rulers of the World of Gods and men*;" mention is made of "the recognition of the *God without us* which made us members of this Group from which we draw our life today;" it is said "that her light to ours was and is as the rays of the Sun at noon-time to the rays of a lamp at night, and we did not desire to examine the Sun to see under what conditions it might possibly ray forth a more dazzling brilliance," and the members of the 'Group' are reminded that "we *pledged* ourselves in our hearts that we should strive to become *her true and loyal servants*" that "we have determined *to follow her and support her to the uttermost*, and that however much she might become discredited, even by those nearest and dearest to her, we, at least, would remain true to her, seeking only to understand her and to *help* to carry out *her plan*, whatever it might be."

Thus complete was the hypnosis and surrender of reason which was sought to be effected amongst the votaries. It was a case of emotionalism run amuck. The finest emotions, useful, beautiful, nay necessary to full and rounded life, when controlled and well-directed by a balanced wisdom, become instruments of disaster when allowed to become masters instead of servants and to run away in wrong paths. The sublime and the ridiculous, health and disease are separated only by a hair's breadth.

The trustee and manager into whose hands a copy of this astonishing document came, with the information that *it had been circulated* amongst a number of the C.H.C. Students, informed the Secretaries of the College, and sent the letter with comments on the same for

publication in a daily paper, in order to show to the public how the person-worship-creeds of Mrs. Besant's 'neo-theosophy' were being sown and grown within the C.H.C., despite the resolutions of the Trustees.

On publication of the rhapsody, a great outcry, on the lines of 'injured innocence' was raised by the members of the 'Group,' and the undersigned and others were charged with 'dishonorable persecution' and hatred of Mrs. Besant and her followers. [These words are repeated by Mrs. Besant in her article under reply.] It is not quite clear what made these persons peculiarly sensitive at this particular time; for not much less ecstatic statements had been made before, times out of number, by them and by Mrs. Besant, in public speeches and writings. Perhaps the law-suits had made the atmosphere especially tense. As to the dishonorableness of the publication, competent judges of such matters have pronounced that it was dishonorable only, if it be dishonorable to expose what cannot be called otherwise than **gross treason** to the Constitution and the ideals of the C.H.C., and to bring to light, and to the bar of public opinion, under-hand or half-concealed or openly defiant efforts to convert students to a grotesque person-worship and demoralizing and Soul-stunting blind obedience to Mrs. Besant.

After the publication of this letter on 13th April, 1913, [in the *Leader* of Allahabad,] and after the delivery of judgment against Mrs. Besant on the 15th April 1913, in the Civil Case at Madras, and with her previous approval, out of a total of about seventy members of the staff of the C.H.C. and the attached School and Girl's School, some twenty, [six honorary and the rest salaried] – all pledged members of the 'Group' and the Esoteric Section – presented an ultimatum, on the 27th April 1913, to the Trustees and the Managers, to the effect that unless the undersigned was "condemned publicly, unequivocally, and unreservedly," they would resign in a body.

Presumably the idea was that if such condemnation was made, the undersigned and a number of the other oldest workers of the C.H.C. who were opposed to the propagation of neo-theosophy, in its various forms within an institution founded for far other purposes, would naturally resign and withdraw; and then the whole College – and School – full of some one thousand impressionable youths and boys and one hundred girls would become the happy-hunting-ground and recruiting preserve of the propagandists of 'neo-theosophy,' pledged to absolute obedience of Mrs. Besant, the Protectress of the Head of the 'Embryo of a New Religion' who was the destined vehicle of the 'World-Teacher;' and if the condemnation could not be secured, then they could retire under the cover of the cry of 'dishonorable persecution' etc., from a place where their extraordinary doings were beginning to be challenged publicly. The Trustees and Managers saw no reason to condemn the undersigned as desired: and when the resignants refused to reconsider their conditions, the Managers found themselves compelled to accept their resignation and look for others to fill their places.

Mrs. Besant herself posted, to the Trustees on the evening of the 15th April 1913, from

Adyar, a printed letter bearing the previous date, in which she says, ... "I should have liked to have continued President of the Board of Trustees for the short time which remains ere the C.H.C. is merged in the Hindu University. After fourteen years of work it would have been pleasant to have worked to the end. But I appear to have lost for some reason the confidence and good will of some of my old friends. ... I therefore place my resignation ... in your hands ... If you signify your wish that the resignation should be accepted, I bid you farewell with regret ... If you say that I should remain, I will gladly do so, until our cherished charge is handed over to the Hindu University" The meeting of the Trustees which considered this letter, out of gratitude and regard for her past invaluable services to the College, requesting her to remain President.

And now we have the very painful spectacle of Mrs. Besant 'descending,' as an Indian Journal recently remarked, "from the **role** of Spiritual Teacher, to that of revengeful person." She is now endeavoring to injure the C.H.C., of which she continues President, by creating a prejudice against it in the mind of the public of England, through the pages of *The Christian Commonwealth*; (in India she has lost the confidence alike of the Indian and English) in a way which only the memory of her past good work prevents one from characterizing adequately. Yet her present policy must be publicly and unmistakably resisted by her former colleagues themselves, and in the interest of her own better-self and of the preservation of her own past good work.

Verily, Mrs. Besant's crowning blunder, in a life full of blunders (admitted by herself in her Autobiography and elsewhere) as well as of good works and generous impulses, has been the asking for, and the receiving of **the pledges of obedience to herself without cavil or delay**, etc. – an act of over-weening presumption against the God in every man, which has called down upon her the wrath of her own indwelling spirit, so that ever since she encouraged and started them, her mind has worked less and less correctly and confusion has fallen even worse and worse upon her work, losing to the T.S. many thousand of old members, alienating from her all her old co-workers and co-founders of the C.H.C., and destroying the confidence in her of the Indian public.

Such one-sided pledges of obedience to mere mortals, feeble and frequently erring, without even any adequate counterpledge of loyalty and service and rational and moral direction, have been associated in history only with that dread thing of black soul-gloom and all evil for which the English language has no other than Jesuitism.

Great, indeed, is the change in Mrs. Besant's mind. From the somewhat overeager democracy of her earlier years, through the restrained period of the golden mien of true Theosophy, she has now passed over to a grotesquely exaggerated and openly-avowed hierarchical autocracy [vide, e.g. *The Herald of the Star* for July 1912, one of her many organs].

Down to nearly the close of 1911, the undersigned was struggling, on the one hand, though

with ever-growing doubts and misgivings, in the pages of various Indian Journals, for Mrs. Besant, and against her critics; and, on the other hand, he was doing what he could by friendly private talks and remonstrances with Mrs. Besant and members of the pledged band, to check the evil growth within the T.S. and the C.H.C. But the subsequent rapid development have forced him to realize with the deepest sorrow that Mrs. Besant and her pledged votaries have justified their critics and put her older friends to shame.

The persecution of which Mrs. Besant and her votaries accuse these older friends, is indeed the same in quality with which the lamb of Esop was charged by the wolf. Fortunately, in the present case the ‘persecuting’ lamb has had, up to now, the help of a protecting Providence, so far as the C.H.C at least is concerned, in the shape of the support of the majority of the College Trustees and Managers. As to ‘**hatred**’ – to object to take a pledge of obedience to Mrs. Besant, to demand tests and proofs of her ever-expanding claims to marvelous super-physical powers, and, worse, to express dissent from her policy of booming an all unproven lad as the vehicle of an equally all-unproven 'World-Teacher' and fail to support her law-suits, is of course to ‘hate’ her and to take up “a violently hostile attitude.”

She says, “The Hon. Pandit openly declared that Theosophy would have no part in the Hindustan University .” It is not *Theosophy* which is objected to; for Theosophy is older than Mrs. Besant, and indeed is nothing else than ‘Atma-Vidya,’ the Eternal Science of the Spirit, the very heart of Hinduism and of all religions. But it is Mrs. Besant’s neo-theosophy that is objected to. At least seven of the Trustees and Managers of the C.H.C. who have disapproved of Mrs. Besant’s ways and policies in the recent controversy, are much older in the membership of the T.S. than Mrs. Besant.

Mrs. Besant’s wildly reckless statements about “the same great orthodox party” engineering the Hindu University movement and “instigating the law suit” at Madras ; about extremists joining in the attack; about “anti-English spirit” etc., are all *simply and utterly untrue*.

It is enough to say here that in her first written defence in the recent civil suit at Madras, she made practically the same statements, and Mr. Justice Bakewell characterized them as “highly scandalous” and “irrelevant,” and directed that, “the written statement is ordered to be struck out, since it is impossible to separate *the objectionable portions* from the necessary assertions,” and that a fresh and amended written statement should be filed by her.

To show how incoherently her mind has been working latterly, I will only quote one instance out of her perpetual recent self-contradictions. In her article under reply she says, “the anti-English spirit ... is most regrettable.” In a letter, dated 14th May 1913, which she addressed to all the Trustees of the C.H.C., and at the same time sent to the daily press [it appears, e.g. in the Allahabad *Leader* of the 15th May 1913,] she says, “only one thing is good in the present catastrophe – it is not a question of race. English and Indian have united to persecute English and Indian. Mr. Bertram Keightley joins hands with the Hon. Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya on the one side, and Mr. Arundale and Mr. P.K. Telang are united on the

other. That at least is well.”

As an unquestionable fact, it has always been clearly understood that the help of competent and sympathetic English workers would be engaged and welcomed on the staff and the Senate of the projected University in ample proportion in respect of all secular matters. The feeling of the H.U. Society may be inferred from the fact that it elected Mrs. Besant in the very beginning i.e., November, 1911, as one of its three Vice-Presidents, notwithstanding the immediately preceding controversies in the public press over her O.S.E. cult; and that of the C.H.C. Trustees from their requesting her to remain President despite her recent most remarkable sayings and doings.

Mrs. Besant has now started a rival THEOSOPHICAL EDUCATIONAL TRUST, as she mentions at the end of her article under reply. This is a *most misleading misnomer*. A brief Prospectus of the Trust, published in the Lucknow *advocate* of the 8th May 1913, says, “The members of the TRUST will all belong to the Esoteric Section of the T.S., and the President of the Trustees will be the Head of the Esoteric Section,” i.e. Mrs. Besant herself, with plenary “discretionary powers.” What this means will appear in its fullness only when it is remembered that MEMBERS OF THE ESOTERIC SECTION HAVE TO SIGN A WRITTEN PLEDGE OF ABSOLUTE AND UNCONDITIONED OBEDIENCE, WITHOUT CAVIL OR DELAY, TO MRS. BESANT. Can such a body be said to be Theosophical at all?

The work of the T.S. and of Theosophy is to “universalize” aspirations; that of the E.S. and neo-theosophy is expressly and acutely to “personalise” them. Indeed, the Esoteric Section as at present organized and conducted is the veritable antipodes and anticlimax of the T.S. and of Theosophy. The spirit which will pervade education guided by such a Trust may be easily inferred.

Let us conclude, when a person like Mrs. Besant, with a biography full of remarkable changes, full of fine works as well as bad blunders, having established herself, in her own belief, and that of her pledged band, as the present chief Spiritual Teacher and Saviour of Mankind, as “the God without us” now, and as the future “greatest Ruler of the World of Gods and men,” suddenly adds on the role of political Saviours of India in particular and predetermined martyr in constant danger of assassination (*mirabile dictu*) by anarchist miscreants, (for the quality of her own pacifism, see her remarks in the *Theosophist* for 1912 on miner’s strikes, suffragettes, Ulster-demonstrations, etc.,) and proclaims that those who differ from her are in league with those miscreants, – when this happens, what explanation can be offered to their own minds by her old friends, who have worked with her for almost a score of years, and served her as perhaps her own relations and children have not done, and as perhaps they have not served their own families – this means much more in India than it does in the West where customs are different – but are now classed with such miscreants?

The only sad explanation that they can postulate is that she is suffering from mental

delusions.

The following quotations from a recent small book on Psychology by Dr. B. Hart, (*Cambridge Manuals*) may be of use in throwing light upon the sorrowful problem: —

“Delusions may be of all kinds, but there are two groups which call for special mention ... **grandiose** and **persecutory**. In the former, the patient believes himself to be some exalted personage, or to possess some other attribute which raised him far above the level of his fellows ... A patient who exhibits the second ... believes that deliberate attempts are made to harm him in some way. Thus he may believe that certain people are plotting to destroy his life. Both ... are often associated with hallucinations: voices hail the patient as the rightful owner of the throne, or cover him with abuse and threaten some dire fate. The two types are frequently combined; for example, a patient may maintain that he is king, but that an organized conspiracy exists to deprive him of his birthright. In this way delusions are sometimes elaborated into an extraordinary complicated system and every fact of the patient's experience is distorted until it is capable of taking its place in the delusional scheme Delusions of grandeur are, indeed, almost invariably accompanied by delusions of persecution. The patient cannot conceal from himself that his claims to exalted rank and position are not recognized by his environment, but he rationalizes the failure of recognition by persuading himself that it is the work of a malignant and envious enemy (32, 33, 87)”

Benares, India. 17. 7. 1913.

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