

HPB to Countess Wachtmeister on the Mahatma Letters

[This is a letter by H. P. Blavatsky of 24 January 1886 to Countess Constance Wachtmeister.* Excerpts of it were first published by W. Q. Judge in *The Path* (March 1893). In 1923, C. Jinarājādāsa published other excerpts of it in his Introduction to *The Early Teachings of the Masters*, edited by him. These were taken from a partial copy of the original letter in the handwriting of Mrs Mary Gebhard. The whole letter, reproduced below, was finally published in the March-April 1982 issue (#68), p. 6, of *The Eclectic Theosophist* from the original letter in HPB's handwriting. The letter was found by Jean-Paul Guignette (Montreuil, France) folded and enclosed in a copy of the first edition of Countess Wachtmeister's *Reminiscences of H. P. Blavatsky and The Secret Doctrine*, that he had bought in an "occult" bookshop in Paris. The book, which had belonged to Jacques Heugel, and the original letter were donated by Mr Guignette to the United Lodge of Theosophists in Paris (according to a letter to the Editor published in *The Eclectic Theosophist*, #70, July-Aug. 1982, p. 11).

PABLO SENDER]

MY dear Countess,

In the "Coulomb: Blavatsky" letters (first series of Sept. 1884) there is one addressed by me to that woman from Paris, *the only one* which, with the exception of *mispunctuation* and two or three words that change the sense and make me utter thus *a fib*, instead of making it what it is — a quotation from *her* letter — I say (as far as I remember the words) "If *to save the Society* (i.e. the *work* of the Masters, *their* creation), and do it good, I had to go in a public square and declare publicly and to the hearing of the whole world, that I AM AN IMPOSTOR and FRAUD, I *would do so without one moment of hesitation*. So would I now, at any day.

Now, what you advise me to do, I have for the last three or four years attempted most seriously. Dozens of times have I declared that I *shall not* put the Masters any worldly questions, or submit before them, family and other private matters personal for the most part. I must have sent back to the writers dozens and dozens of letters addressed to the Masters, and many a time have I declared — I will not ask them so and so. Well, what was the consequence? People still worried me "Please, do please ask the Masters" only ask and tell them and draw their attention to so and so. When I refused doing it, Olcott would come up and bother, or Damodar, or someone else. Now it so happens that

*Due to printing technicalities, the words underlined by HPB are given here in *italics*, and those doubly underlined by her, are here in SMALL CAPITAL LETTERS. — Eds

you do not seem to be aware of the occult law — to which even the Masters are subject themselves: *Whenever* an *intense desire* is concentrated on their personalities; whenever the appeal comes from a man of even an average good morality, and the desire is intense and sincere even in matters of trifles (and to them what is *not* a trifle!), They are disturbed by it, and the *desire* takes a material form and would *haunt* them (the word *is* ridiculous, but I know of no other), if They did not create an impassable barrier, an *akasic* wall, between that desire (or thought, or prayer) and so isolate themselves. The result of this extreme measure is that They find themselves isolated, at the same time from all those who willingly or unwillingly, consciously or otherwise, are made to come within the circle of that thought or desire. I do not know whether you will understand me; I hope you will. And finding themselves [cut off] from *me*, for instance, many were the mistakes made and dangers *realized* that could have been averted had They not often found themselves *outside* the circle of theosophical events. Such is the case ever since, owing to Mr Sinnett's suicidal (for all of us) desire to make their existence, names, and deeds public, he wrote *The Occult World*; and that Olcott, like a horse getting rid of the bit in his mouth, threw their names right and left, *poured in torrents* on the public, so to say, their personalities, powers, and so on, until the world (the outsiders, not only Theosophists) *deseccrated* their names indeed

from the North to the South Pole. Has not the Maha Chohan put HIS foot [down] on that from the first? Has He not forbidden Mahatma KH to write to anyone? (Mr Sinnett knows well all this.) And have not since then *waves* of supplications, torrents of desires and prayers poured unto them? This is one of the *chief* reasons *why* their names and personalities ought to have been kept *secret* and inviolable. They *were* deseccrated in every possible way by believer and unbeliever; by the former when he would *critically* and from *his* worldly standpoint examine them (the Beings beyond and outside every *worldly*, if not human, law!), and when the latter positively slandered, *dirtied*, dragged their names in the mud! O powers of heaven! what *I* have suffered — there are *no* words to express it. This is my chief, my greatest crime, for having brought their personalities to public notice unwillingly, reluctantly, and forced into it by Mr Sinnett and Olcott. Well, now to other things.

You and the Theosophists have come to the conclusion that in every case where a message was found couched in words or sentiments *unworthy* of Mahatmas [it] was produced either by *elementals* or *my own fabrication*. Believing the latter, Countess, no honest men and women ought for one moment to permit *me* such A FRAUD to remain any longer in the Society. It is not a piece of repentance and a promise that "I shall do so no longer" that you need, but *to kick me out* — if you really think so. You believe, you say, in the Masters, and at the same

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time you can credit the idea that THEY should permit or even know of it and still *use me*? Why, if They are the exalted beings you rightly suppose them to be, how could they permit or tolerate for one moment such a deception and fraud? Ah, poor Theosophists — little *you do* know the occult laws I see. And here Bawajee and others *are* right. Before you volunteer to serve the Masters, you should learn *their* philosophy, for otherwise you shall always sin grievously, though unconsciously and involuntarily, against them and those who serve them, *soul, body, and spirit*, aye — to spiritual and *moral*, not only physical, death. Do you suppose for one moment that what you write to me now I did not know it for years? Do you think that any person even endowed with simple sagacity, let alone occult powers, could ever fail to perceive each time *suspicion* when there was one, especially when it generated in the minds of honest, sincere people, unaccustomed to and incapable of hypocrisy? It is just that which killed me, which tortured and broke my heart inch by inch for years, for I had to bear *it in silence* and had no right to explain things unless permitted by Masters, and *They commanded me to remain silent*. To find myself day after day facing those I loved and respected best, between the two horns of the dilemma — either to appear cruel, selfish, unfeeling, by *refusing* to satisfy their hearts' desire, or, by consenting to it, to run the chance (9 out of 10) that they shall immediately feel suspicion lurking in their minds for the Master's answers

and notes (“the red and blue spook-like messages”, as Bawajee truly calls them) were *sure*, [in their eyes] — again 9 times out of 10, unless relating to some philosophical highly serious question — to be of that *spook* character. Why? Was it *fraud*? *Certainly not*. Was it written by and produced by elementals? NEVER. It was delivered, and the *physical* phenomena are produced by elementals used for the purpose, but what have they, those *senseless* beings, to do with the intelligent portions of the smallest and most foolish message? Simply this, *as this morning, before the receipt of your letter*, at 6 o'clock, I was permitted and told by Master to make you understand at last; you, and all the sincere, truly devoted Theosophists: “*as you sow, so you will reap*”; to personal and private questions and prayers, answers framed in the mind of those whom such matters can yet interest, whose minds are not yet entirely blank to such worldly terrestrial questions, answers by chelas and novices, often something reflected from *my own mind*, for the Masters would not stoop for one moment to give a thought to *individual* private matters relating but to one or even ten persons, their welfare, woes, and blisses in *this* world of Maya, to nothing except questions of really universal importance. It is ALL YOU, Theosophists, who have dragged down in your minds the ideals of our MASTERS; *you*, who have unconsciously and with the best of intentions, and full sincerity of good purpose, DESECRATED them, by thinking for one moment, and believing

that THEY would trouble themselves with your business matters, sons to be born, daughters to be married, houses to be built, and so on and so forth. And yet, all those who have received such communications, being nearly *all* sincere (those who were *not* have been dealt with according to other special laws), you had a right, knowing of the existence of Beings who you thought could easily help you, to seek help from them, to address them, once that a monotheist addresses his *personal* god, desecrating the GREAT UNKNOWN a million of times *above* the Masters, by asking him (*or* IT) to help him with a good crop, to slay his enemy, and to send him a son or daughter; and having such a right in the abstract sense, They could not spurn you off, and refuse answering you if not themselves, then by ordering a chela to satisfy the addresser to the best of his or her (the chela's) ability. How many a time was I, no Mahatma, shocked and startled, burning with shame when shown notes written in their (two) handwritings (a form of writing adopted for the TS and used by chelas, only NEVER *without their special permission or order* to that effect), exhibiting mistakes in science, grammar, and thoughts, expressed in such language that it perverted entirely the meaning originally intended, and sometimes expressions that in Tibetan Sanskrit or any other Asiatic language had quite a different sense, as in one instance I will give. In answer to Mr Sinnett's letter referring to some apparent contradictions in *Isis*, the chela who was made to precipitate

Mahatma KH's reply put: "I had to exercise all my *ingenuity* to reconcile the two things." The term "ingenuity", used for and meaning candour, fairness, an *obsolete* word in this sense and never used now, but once meaning this perfectly as even I find in Webster, was misconstrued by Massey, Hume, and I believe even Mr Sinnett, to mean "cunning", "cleverness", "acuteness", to form a new combination so as to prove there was no contradiction. Hence: "the Mahatma confesses most unblushingly to ingenuity, to using *craft* to reconcile things, like an astute tricky lawyer", and so on. Had I been commissioned to write or precipitate the letter, I would have translated the Master's thought by using the word "ingenuousness", or openness of heart, frankness, fairness, freedom from reserve, and dissimulation", as Webster gives it, and opprobrium thrown on Mahatma KH's character would have been avoided. It is not *I* who would have used *carbolic* acid instead of "carbonic acid", and so forth. It is very rarely that Mahatma KH *dictated verbatim*, and when He did, there remained the few sublime passages found in Mr Sinnett's letters from him. The rest, He would say, write so and so, and the chela wrote, often without knowing one word of English, as I am now made to write Hebrew and Greek and Latin, and so on.

Therefore the only thing I can be reproached with — a reproach I am ever ready to bear though I have not *deserved it*, having been simply the obedient and blind tool of our occult laws and

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regulations — is of having (1) used Master's name when I thought my authority would go for nought, and when I sincerely believed acting agreeably to Master's intentions,¹ and for the good of the cause; and (2) of having *concealed that* which the laws and regulations of my pledges did not permit me so far to reveal; (3) PERHAPS (again for the same reason), of having insisted that such and such a note was from Master, written in *his own handwriting*, all the time thinking JESUITICALLY, I confess: "Well, it is written by *his* order and *in* his handwriting, after all, why shall I go and explain to those, who *do not, cannot* understand the truth, and perhaps only make matters worse." Two or three times, perhaps more, letters were precipitated in *my presence*, by chelas who could not speak English, and who took ideas and expressions out of my head. The phenomena, in *truth* and *solemn* reality, were greater at those times than ever! Yet they often appeared the most suspicious, and *I had to hold my tongue*, to see suspicion creeping into the minds of those I loved best and respected, *unable* to justify myself, or to say one word! What I suffered, *Masters alone knew!* Think only (a case with Solovioff at Elberfeld) I sick in my bed; a letter of his, *an old letter*, received in London and torn by me, *rematerialized* in my own sight, I looking at the thing; five or six lines in the *Russian language*, in Mahatma *KH's handwriting* in blue, the words TAKEN FROM MY HEAD, the letter, old and crumpled, travelling slowly

alone (even I could not see the astral hand of the chela performing the operation) across the bedroom, then slipping into and among Solovioff's papers, who was writing in the little drawing room, correcting my manuscript; Olcott standing close by him and having just handled the papers looking over them with Solovioff. The latter finding it, and like a flash I see in his head, *in Russian*, the thought: "The old impostor (meaning Olcott) must have put it there!", and such things by hundreds.

Well, this will do. I have told you the truth, the whole truth and *nothing but the truth*, so far as I am allowed to give it. Many are the things I have *no* right to explain, if *I had to be hung for it*. Now think for one moment, suppose Bawajee receives an order from his Master to precipitate a letter to the Gebhard family, only a general idea being given to him about what he has to write. Tibetan paper and envelope are *materialized* before him, and he has only to form and shape the ideas into *his* English and precipitate them in Master's handwriting. What shall the result be? Why *his* English, his "ethics" and philosophy — *Bawajian* style all-round — a *fraud*, a *transparent FRAUD!*, people would cry out; and if anyone happened to *see such a paper before him* or in his possession *after it was formed*, what should be the consequences? Another instance — I cannot help it, it is *so* suggestive. A man, *now dead*, implored me for three days to ask Master's advice on some business matter, for he was going to become a bankrupt

and dishonour his family, a *serious* thing. He gave me a letter for Master “to send on”. I went into the back parlour, and he went downstairs to wait for the answer. To *send on* a letter two or three processes are used: (1) To put the envelope sealed on my forehead and then, warning the Master to be ready for a communication, have the contents reflected by my brain, carried off to his perception by the *current* formed by him. This, if the letter is in a language I know; otherwise (2) to unseal it, read it *physically* with my eyes without understanding even the words, and that which *my eyes see* is carried off to Master’s perception and reflected in it in his *own* language; after which, to be sure, no mistake is made, I have to burn the letter with a stone I have (matches and common fire would *never do*), and the ashes caught by the current, becoming more minute than atoms, would be *rematerialized* at any distance where Master was. Well, I put the letter on the forehead *opened*, for it was in *Bashya*, of which I know not one word, and when Master had seized its contents I was ordered to burn and send it on. It so happened that I had to go in my bedroom and get the “stone” there from a drawer it was locked in. That minute I was away, the addresser, impatient and anxious, had silently approached the door, entered the drawing room, not seeing me there, and seen his own letter opened on the table.

He was *horror-struck*, he told me later; *disgusted*, ready to commit suicide, for he was a bankrupt not only in fortune, but all his *hopes*, his *faith*, his heart’s creed, were crushed and gone. I returned, burnt the letter, and an hour after, gave him the answer, also in *Bashya*. He read it with dull, staring eyes, but thinking, as he told me, that, if there were no Masters, *I was* a Mahatma, did what [he] was told, and his fortune and honour were saved. Three days later he came to me and frankly told me all — did not conceal his doubts for the sake of *gratitude*, as others did — and was rewarded. By order of the Master I showed him *how* it was done and he understood it. Had he not told me, and had his business gone wrong, *advice* notwithstanding, would not he have died believing me the *greatest impostor* on Earth? And so it goes.

It is my *heart’s desire to be rid for ever* of any phenomena but my own mental and personal communication with Masters. I shall no more have anything to do whatever with letters or phenomenal occurrences. This I swear, on Masters’ Holy Names, and shall write a circular letter to that effect. Please read the present to all, even to Bawajee. FINIS all, and now, theosophists who will come and ask me to tell them so and so *from Masters*, *may the Karma fall* on THEIR heads. I AM FREE. Master has *just promised me this blessing!!*

Yours, H. P. BLAVATSKY

1. Found myself several times *mistaken* and now am punished for it with daily and hourly crucifixion. Pick up stones, theosophists, pick them up, brothers and kind sisters, and stone me *to death* with them for trying to make you happy with a word from Masters!