

*Foul conspiracies and
blatant lies levelled against
Madame Blavatsky*



Three persons bearing the initial C, Colense–Coues–Coulomb, had a malevolent influence on Madame Blavatsky and the Theosophical Movement.

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Sir,

If my humble signature appears in your *Journal* more often of late than may seem advisable to you, the fault is really not mine, but your own. You cannot expect to fill *Light* week after week with malicious and false statements about myself and find me leaving them uncontradicted.

I do not object to any amount of even unfair criticism within the limits of fact and truth, but I do not choose to submit to be lied about in every issue. To mention only “Colenso’s” spiteful attacks. Really, if his false statements escape the law of libel (and I am not so sure of it either), it is because in your country of paradoxes, a libel, to become one, has to contain truth and fact, and because the more true it is, the more it is held libellous.

Therefore it is hardly worthwhile to notice “Colenso’s” absurd interpretation of R. Harte’s letter to *Light*, namely, that the Theosophical Society has thrown Koot-Hoomi overboard and *dethroned* me (I was not aware of ever having been dethroned);¹ nor shall I dwell upon his other spiteful attacks, the old exploded slanders and falsehoods of Madame Coulomb, her supporters and protectors — lay or clerical. The latter were disposed of long ago; the former — “Colenso’s” interpretation of Mr. Harte’s letter — I leave [to] himself to answer. The idea of an acting editor of my own *Journal*, founded by me, and of which Colonel Olcott [388] and myself are the sole proprietors, declaring that our Society has thrown the Masters and myself overboard, and that, too, in *Light*, is too gloriously absurd for anything! Mr. Harte is himself the pledged servant of the Master. However much his letter may seem involved, there is not a word in it which could possibly bear such an interpretation; and he, at any rate, is too honourable a man to be capable of turning liar or traitor. I leave his own defence to himself.

¹ [See H.P. Blavatsky’s own “Correction,” immediately following the present Letter to the Editor. — Boris de Zirkoff.]

But where, in the name of wonder, has the *veracious* “Colenso” picked up this extraordinary information about me?

And when Madame Coulomb tried to get Madame Blavatsky into the witness-box by prosecuting General Morgan for libel, *the flight of the Russian lady almost universally condemned her.*

It is true that under the advice of the good Christian missionaries of Madras the worthy Coulombs did attempt to prosecute General Morgan. But, whether because I was then lying on what was supposed by all to be my death-bed, or for some other reason, I, at any rate, have never received any summons to appear. Many were the gossips circulated in those days, and this intention of the Coulombs was one of the number. But to speak of my *flight* on account of this is an unmitigated lie, by whomsoever first uttered. It is a widely known fact that I was sent to Europe by the order of Mrs. (Dr.) Scharlieb, of Madras, who did not give me ten days more to live had I remained in India, where the climate was killing me

Unable to stand, let alone to walk, I was carried from my sickbed in an invalid chair, lowered into the boat, and then transferred in it to the steamer, like a bale of goods, hardly conscious of what was going on. There are two living witnesses to this in London, Mrs. (Dr.) Scharlieb, who saved my life at that time, and Mrs. Cooper-Oakley.

Had I been even as well in health as I am now (which is not saying much) I would not have left India on any consideration; and if I did, it was because I was forced to go away by Colonel Olcott and those who cared for my life.

What the Theosophical Society said or did at any time, I am not accountable for. Yet every member of our Society [389] who knows me intimately (Mr. Sinnett for one), will testify that, though penniless at that time (in 1885), as I am now, it is they, the members, who have had to use every means and persuasion in their power during the last four years to prevent me, in my great indignation, from seeking redress in court for the foul conspiracy, and subsequently for the lies printed against me by my enemies. There was a time when I believed in the perfect fairness and justice of the law. But since then I have realized that the women who resort to such means can only be those who have no reputation or sense of dignity to lose, or such again as have an eye to “damages” and “revenge.” If, therefore, I gave up the idea, it is not because I have anything to fear from *truth*, but because I have everything to dread from *lies*; prosecuting an enemy, moreover, being very untheosophical.

The proof of the above lies in the fact that, having been libelled hundreds of times in various papers, I have hitherto preferred to ignore all such attacks, answering only self-evident falsehoods. Those who know me will not believe fifty “Colensos”;¹ and those who don’t have not waited for his malicious inventions to fib about me on their own account, on the principle, I suppose, that no good can come out of Nazareth.

I close, consoling myself, like Sancho Panza,² with some of the wise proverbs of the East. There is a Russian saying that:

¹ [“Colenso” is a pseudonym of an inimical spiritualist.]

² [Don Quixote’s squire in the novel *Don Quixote* by Miguel de Cervantes — a short, pot-bellied peasant whose gross appetite, common sense, and vulgar wit serve as a foil to the mad idealism of his master.]

Life is too short to notice every sneeze with a “God bless you,”
and a still wiser one in Persia informs us that:

Jackasses bray,¹ and the wind carries the sound away.

H.P. BLAVATSKY



A correction

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To the Editor of *Light*

Sir,

By printing “dethroned” instead of “enthroned” in a sentence contained in my letter of your last week’s issue, the meaning becomes ridiculous nonsense and places me in an entirely false position.

The passage runs,

. . . it is hardly worth while to notice “Colenso’s” absurd interpretation of R. Harte’s letter to *Light*, namely, that the Theosophical Society has thrown Koot-Hoomi overboard and *dethroned* me (I was not aware or ever having been *dethroned*).

I wrote, however, “I was not aware of ever having been *enthroned*,” which gives quite a different meaning. I hope you will give publicity to this correction and remove the very false impression caused by this unfortunate error.

H.P. BLAVATSKY



¹ [The shared basis and exchangeability of vice and virtue can often be noticed in antithetic homonyms that are pendular movements of the action indicated by the shared root verb. For example:

“To *bless* and to *curse* have the same radical sense, which is, to send or pour out words, to drive or to strain out the voice, precisely as in the Latin *appello*, from *peppo*, whence *peal*, as of thunder or of a bell. [And in *Gr.*, too, where *απα* means prayer, vow; and conversely, curse, imprecation; cf. *απαομαι*. Also cf. *καταρω*, to pour out, to pour over *δυσσημιαν*, in Demetrius Phalereus: *Demetrius on Style*, 302. *Ερινυες* say that *απα* is their own name *γης υπαι*, in *Æschylus: Eumenides*, 417. Similarly, *καλον και κακον*, good and bad, in Cratylus 416a-e. — ED. PHIL.] The *two* senses spring from the *appropriation* of loud words to express particular acts. This depends on usage, like all other particular applications of one general signification. The sense in Scripture is to utter words either in a good or bad sense; to bless, to salute; or to rail, to scold, to *reproach*; and this very word is probably the root of reproach, as it certainly is of the Latin *precor*, used, like the Shemitic word, in both senses, *praying* and *cursing*, or deprecating. (“*Improbis urget iratis precibus*,” Horace) It is also the same word as the English *pray*, It. *pregare*, Lat. *precor*, the same as *preach*, D. *preeken*, W. *pregethu*. To the same family belong the *Gr.* *βραχω*, *βρουχω*, *βρουχαομαι*, to *bray*, to roar, to low, Lat. *rugio*. Here we see that *bray* is the same word, applied to the voice of the ass and to breaking in a mortar [pestillation], and both are radically the same word as *break*.” Webster’s *American Dictionary of the English Language* (1844).

Now, if the pious bray, can asses pray? — ED. PHIL.]



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