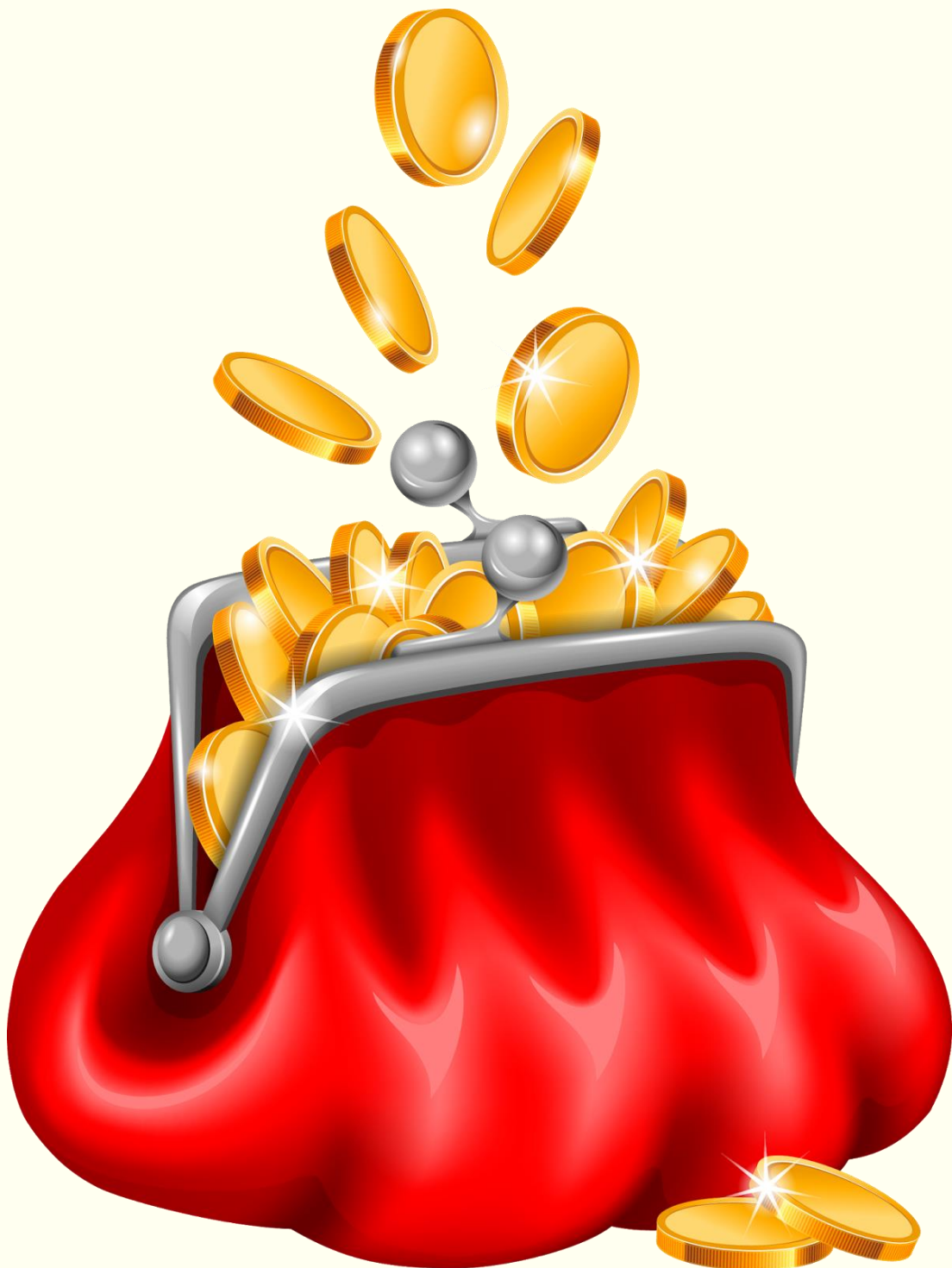


*Charity empties her purse
with an invisible hand.*



Abstract and train of thoughts

Charity empties her purse with an invisible hand.

Prometheus is not a criminal; on the contrary, he is a god Himself, the real Philanthropist and revealer of the great mysteries to the innermost perceptions which never deceive. 4

Wrong and unjust are those who think that it is selfishness that erects a Chinese wall between the custodians of the Secrets of Nature and the common man, without making any distinction between the curious profane, and the ardent seeker of Truth. 5

On the contrary, the silence of those who damned themselves forever in order to save man from himself, is prompted by a far-seeing universal philanthropy. 5

Good works may exist without actuating saving principles, but saving principles never did exist without good works.

The Churches have failed to supply the intellectual light, and the true wisdom which are needed to make practical philanthropy carried out, by the true and earnest followers of Christ, a reality. 6

Can works of charity that will be known among men be accomplished without money? Certainly not. 7

Practical charity is not one of the declared objects of the Theosophical Society. Yet Theosophy creates the charity which afterwards, and of its own accord, makes itself manifest in good works. 7

Theosophy proclaims the spirit of non-separateness, exposes the futility of creeds and dogma, and inculcates universal love and charity for all sentient beings.

Therefore, Theosophy is pre-eminently fit to alleviate the woes and sufferings of man since he began cherishing in his bosom the desire of a higher freedom and knowledge. 8

The religious philanthropist who hopes to gain salvation by good works has merely exchanged worldliness for other-worldliness. The secular philanthropist is really at heart a socialist, and nothing else; he hopes to make men happy and good by bettering their worldly position. 9

Practical philanthropists, after long and bitter experience, will arrive at a conclusion which, to an Occultist, is from the first a working hypothesis — that misery is not only endurable, but agreeable to many who endure it. 10

Religious and secular philanthropists compared and contrasted.

The religious philanthropist holds a position of his own, which cannot in any way concern or affect the Theosophist. He does not do good merely for the sake of doing good, but also as a means towards his own salvation. 11

The secular philanthropist is really at heart a socialist, and nothing else; he hopes to make men happy and good by bettering their physical position. 11

Alas! More mischief has been done by emotional charity than sentimentalists care to face.

Though no nobler sentiment than that which animates the unselfish philanthropist is conceivable, the practical results of his labours have to be examined. 11

Physical philanthropy, apart from the infusion of new influences and ennobling conceptions of life into the minds of the masses, is worthless. The gradual assimilation of the great spiritual truths will alone revolutionize the face of civilization, and ultimately result in a far more effective panacea for evil, than the mere tinkering of superficial misery. Prevention is not only “better than cure,” it is the only cure. 12

Better unwise activity, than an overdose of too wise inactivity, apathy, or indifference, which are always the death of an undertaking. 13

Those who, amidst the present wholesale dominion of the worship of matter, material interests, and bare selfishness, will have bravely fought for human rights and man’s divine nature, will become the teachers of the masses and their benefactors. 15

The Protectors and Saviours of the now resurrecting human thought and spirit are those who will have learnt to express and put into practice the aspirations as well as the physical needs of the rising generations, and of the now trampled-down masses. 15

In order that one should fully comprehend individual life, with its physiological, psychic, and spiritual mysteries, he has to devote himself with all the fervour of unselfish philanthropy and love for his brothers and sisters. 15

And by studying and knowing collective life, i.e., mankind, he has to decipher, understand, and remember the tender feelings and aspirations of the poor people’s suffering heart: 15

1. By attuning his soul with that of humanity at large, as the old philosophy teaches; and 15

2. By mastering the meaning of every line and word in the rapidly turning pages of the Book of Life in the secure knowledge that his Self is inseparable from all Selves. 15

How many profound readers of life may be found in our boasted age of sciences and culture?

The unrecognized philanthropists of our age are the people’s true friends and unselfish lovers, the defenders of the human right to the freedom of spirit. 16

Non-resistance to evil, forgiveness, and charity, are the first rules of discipleship.

The Theosophist, if he contemplates adeptship, must not revenge himself. He must suffer in silence rather than excite in someone else evil passions, or the desire to revenge himself in his turn. 17

Theosophical charity, warming the heart of every true Theosophist, must urge him to eschew reprisals and never to return evil for evil, so long as truth damaging to his enemies can be withheld without danger to the Cause. 18

Charity is the scope of all theosophical teachings, and the synthesis of all and every virtue.

True charity opens her purse with an invisible hand.

And finishing her act, exists no more — she shuns fame, and is never ostentatious. 20



Charity empties her purse with an invisible hand.

Prometheus is not a criminal; on the contrary, he is a god Himself, the real Philanthropist and revealer of the great mysteries to the innermost perceptions which never deceive.¹

From *The Secret Doctrine*, II pp. 525-26.

That which is revolting in the explanations that follow, is the one-sided view taken of this grandest of all the myths. The most intuitional among modern writers cannot or will not rise in their conceptions above the level of the Earth and Cosmic phenomena. It is not denied that the moral idea in the myth, as presented in the *Theogony* of Hesiod, plays a certain part in the primitive Greek conception. The Titan is more than a thief of the celestial fire. He is the representation of humanity — active, industrious, intelligent, but at the same time ambitious, which aims at equalling divine powers. Therefore it is humanity punished in the person of Prometheus, but it is only so with the Greeks. With the latter, Prometheus is not a [526] criminal, save in the eyes of the gods. In his relation with the Earth, he is, on the contrary, a god himself, a friend of mankind (φιλανθρωπος), which he has raised to civilization and initiated into the knowledge of all the arts; a conception which found its most poetical expounder in Æschylus.

¹ [Cf. Man or Anthrōpos and humanity are one and the same. Men are sparks of a heavenly Noetic Fire. Socrates explains to Hermogenes that man, anthrōpos (ανθρωπος) is a contraction of a three-word sentence, i.e., αναθρων α σιωπε, namely “contemplating what he beholds” (Plato: *Cratylus*, 399c). Commenting upon the meaning of the ansated cross, H.P. Blavatsky quotes Professor Seyffarth saying “the Tanis stone translates it repeatedly by anthrōpos (man), and this very word is alphabetically written [Egyptian] ank.” (*Blavatsky Collected Writings*, CLASSIFICATION OF “PRINCIPLES” VII p. 297). Prometheus, or “Pra-Ma-Tha-Issa,” is the divine Son of Issa in Sanskrit, he who brought fire from heaven. (Cf. *ibid.*, ZOROASTER IN “HISTORY” AND ZARATHUSHTRA IN THE SECRET RECORDS III p. 462). Elsewhere, Blavatsky explains that Prometheus, “he who sees before him” comes from προ μητις, “forethought,” and quotes from Swanwick’s *Dramas of Æschylus* that the Titan’s name “derived from the Sanskrit word Pramantha, the instrument used for kindling fire. The root mand, or manth, implies rotatory motion, and the word manthami, used to denote the process of fire-kindling.” (Cf. *Secret Doctrine*, II p. 413 fn. & quoting Professor Kuhn.) Blavatsky then adds that “the word manthami passed into the Greek language and became the word manthanō [μανθανω], to learn; that is to say, to appropriate knowledge; whence prometheia [προμηθεια], foreknowledge, forethought”; (*ibid.*) Sanskrit manth is μοθος in Greek. Cf. μανθανω, μανια, μανιεια, μανιης, μουσα. — From *Compassion: the Spirit of Truth*, 2009]

Wrong and unjust are those who think that it is selfishness that erects a Chinese wall between the custodians of the Secrets of Nature and the common man, without making any distinction between the curious profane, and the ardent seeker of Truth.

On the contrary, the silence of those who damned themselves forever in order to save man from himself, is prompted by a far-seeing universal philanthropy.

From *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (REPLY TO AN ENGLISH F.T.S.), Answers, V pp.143-44.

It was not in contemplation, at the outset of the work begun in *Fragments [of Occult Truth]*,¹ to deal as fully with the scientific problems of cosmic evolution, as now seems expected. A distinct promise was made, as Mr. Sinnett is well aware, to acquaint the readers of this Journal with the outlines of Esoteric doctrines and — no more. A good deal would be given, much more kept back, especially from the columns of a magazine which reaches a promiscuous public.

This seeming unwillingness to share with the world some of nature's secrets that may have come into the possession of the few, arises from causes quite different from the one generally assigned. It is not SELFISHNESS erecting a Chinese wall between occult science and those who would know more of it, without making any distinction between the simply curious profane, and the earnest, ardent seeker after truth. Wrong, and unjust are those who think so; who attribute to indifference for other people's welfare a policy necessitated, on the contrary, by a far-seeing universal philanthropy; who accuse the custodians of lofty physical and spiritual though long rejected truths, of holding them high above the people's heads. In truth, the inability to reach them lies entirely with the seekers. Indeed, the chief reason among many others for such a reticence, at any rate, with regard to secrets pertaining to physical sciences is to be sought elsewhere.² It rests entirely on the *impossibility* of imparting that the nature of which is, [144] at the present stage of the world's development, beyond the comprehension of the would-be learners, however intellectual and however scientifically trained may be the latter. This tremendous difficulty is now explained to the few, who, besides having read *Esoteric Buddhism*, have studied and *understood* the several occult axioms approached in it. It is safe to say that it will not be even vaguely realized by the general reader, but will offer the pretext for sheer abuse. Nay, it has already.

¹ [Note by Boris de Zirkoff: "This series of articles was started in the October 1881 issue of *The Theosophist*, the second instalment appearing in March 1882, and the third in September of the same year. From various statements in *The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett* and several of H.P. Blavatsky's own letters, it can be conclusively demonstrated that these three instalments were written by A.O. Hume, even though they exhibit here and there a few characteristics of Madame Blavatsky's style. Later instalments under the same title are by A.P. Sinnett." — *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, Vol. III p. 384 fn.]

² Needless to remind our correspondent that what is said here, applies only to secrets the nature of which when revealed will not be turned into a weapon against humanity in general, or its units — men. Secrets of such class could not be given to any one but a regular chela of many years' standing and during his successive initiations; mankind as a whole has first to come of age, to reach its majority, which will happen but toward the beginning of its sixth race — before such mysteries can be safely revealed to it. The *vril* is not altogether a fiction, as some chelas and even "lay" chelas know. [Consult "Vril and Bovril," in our *Confusing Words Series*. — ED. PHIL.]

Good works may exist without actuating saving principles, but saving principles never did exist without good works.

First published in *Lucifer*, Vol. I (3), November 1887, pp. 161-69. Excerpt below from *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (“LET EVERY MAN PROVE HIS OWN WORK”) VIII pp. 161-67.

Truly said Coleridge that:

Good Works may exist *without* saving Principles, and therefore *cannot* contain in themselves the Principle of Salvation; but saving Principles never did, never can, exist without good Works.¹

Theosophists admit the definition, and disagree with the Christians only as to the nature of these “saving principles.” The Church (or churches) maintain that [162] the only saving principle is belief in Jesus, or the carnalised Christ of the soul-killing dogma; Theosophy, undogmatic and unsectarian, answers, it is not so. The only *saving* principle dwells in man himself, and has never dwelt outside of his immortal divine self; *i.e.*, it is the true Christos, as it is the true Buddha, the divine inward light which proceeds from the eternal unmanifesting unknown ALL. And this light *can only be made known by its works* — *faith* in it having to remain ever blind in all, save in the man himself who feels that light within his soul.

The Churches have failed to supply the intellectual light, and the true wisdom which are needed to make practical philanthropy carried out, by the true and earnest followers of Christ, a reality.

Therefore, the tacit admission of the author of the above letter² covers another point of great importance. The writer seems to have felt that which many, among those who strive to help the suffering, have felt and expressed. The creeds of the churches fail to supply the *intellectual* light, and the true wisdom which are needed to make the practical philanthropy carried out, by the true and earnest followers of Christ, a *reality*. The “practical” people either go on “doing good” unintelligently, and thus often do harm instead; or, appalled by the awful problem before them, and failing to find in their “churches” any clue, or a hope of solution, they retire from the battlefield and let themselves be drifted blindly by the current in which they happen to be born.

Of late it has become the fashion for friends, as well as for foes, to reproach the Theosophical Society with doing no practical work, but losing itself in the clouds of metaphysics. Metaphysicians, we are told, by those who like to repeat stale arguments, have been learning their lesson for the last few thousand years; and it is now high time that they should begin to do some practical work. Agreed; but

¹ [Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Friend: A series of Essays*, London: Printed for Gale and Curtis, Paternoster Row, 1812; pp. 376-77]

² [Letter to the Editors of *Lucifer*, by L.F. FF, 25th October 1887]

- Considering that the Christian churches count nearly nineteen centuries of existence, and that the Theosophical Society and Brotherhood is a body hardly twelve years old;¹
- Considering again that the Christian churches roll in fabulous wealth, and number their adherents by hundreds of millions, whereas the Theosophical Brotherhood is but a few thousand strong, and that it has no fund, or funds, at its disposal, but that [163] 98% of its members are as poor and as uninfluential as the aristocracy of the Christian church is rich and powerful;

Taking all this into consideration, there would be much to say if the Theosophists would only choose to press the matter upon the public notice.

Can works of charity that will be known among men be accomplished without money? Certainly not.

Meanwhile, as the bitterest critics of the “leaders” of the Theosophical Society are by no means only outsiders, but as there are members of that society who always find a pretext to be dissatisfied, we ask: Can works of charity that will be known among men be accomplished without money? Certainly not. And yet, notwithstanding all this, none of its (European) members, except a few devoted officers in charge of societies, will do *practical* work; but some of them, those especially who have never lifted a finger to relieve suffering, and help their outside, poorer brothers, are those who talk the most loudly, and are the bitterest in their denunciations of the *unspirituality* and the unfitness of the “leaders of Theosophy.” By this they remove themselves into the outer ring of critics, like those spectators at the play who laugh at an actor passably representing Hamlet, while they themselves could not walk on to the stage with a letter on a salver. While in India, comparatively poor Theosophists have opened gratuitous dispensaries for the sick, hospitals, schools, and everything they could think of, asking no returns from the poor, as the missionaries do, no abandonment of one’s forefathers’ religion, as a heavy price for favours received, have the English Theosophists, as a rule, done a single thing for those suffering multitudes, whose pitiful cry rings throughout the whole Heavens as a protest against the actual state of things in Christendom?

Practical charity is not one of the declared objects of the Theosophical Society. Yet Theosophy creates the charity which afterwards, and of its own accord, makes itself manifest in good works.

We take this opportunity of saying, in reply to others as much as to our correspondent, that, up till now, the energies of the Society have been chiefly occupied in organizing, extending, and solidifying the Society itself, which work has taxed its time, energies, and resources to such an extent as to leave it far less powerful for practical charity than we would have wished. But, even so, compared with the influence and the funds at the disposal of the Society, its work in practical charity, if less widely [164] known, will certainly bear favourable comparison with that of professing Christians, with their enormous resources in money, workers, and opportunities of all kinds. It must not be forgotten that practical charity is not one of the *declared* ob-

¹ [In 1887, when this article was published.]

jects of the Society. It goes without saying, and needs no “declaration,” that every member of the Society must be practically philanthropic if he be a Theosophist at all; and our declared work is, in reality, more important and more efficacious than work in the every-day plane which bears more evident and immediate fruit, for the direct effect of an appreciation of Theosophy is to make those charitable who were not so before. Theosophy creates the charity which afterwards, and of its own accord, makes itself manifest in works.

Theosophy is correctly — though in this particular case, it is rather ironically — termed “a high and Heaven-born religion.” It is argued that since it professes

. . . to receive its advanced knowledge and Light from “those more learned in the Science of Life,”

the latter ought and *must*,

. . . if appealed to by their votaries [the Theosophists], aid them in discovering ways and means . . . in organizing some great fraternal scheme, *etc.*

Theosophy proclaims the spirit of non-separateness, exposes the futility of creeds and dogma, and inculcates universal love and charity for all sentient beings.

Therefore, Theosophy is pre-eminently fit to alleviate the woes and sufferings of man since he began cherishing in his bosom the desire of a higher freedom and knowledge.

The scheme was planned, and the rules and laws to guide such a practical brotherhood, have been given by “those more learned in the Science of [practical, daily, *altruistic*] Life,” aye, verily “more learned” in it than any other men since the days of Gautama Buddha and the Gnostic Essenes. The “scheme” dates back to the year when the Theosophical Society was founded. Let anyone read its wise and noble laws embodied to this day in the Statutes of the Fraternity, and judge for himself whether, if carried out rigorously and applied to practical life, the “scheme” would not have proved the most beneficent to mankind in general, and especially to our poorer brethren, of “the starving multitudes.” Theosophy teaches the spirit of “non-separateness,” the evanescence and illusion of human creeds and dogma, hence, inculcates *universal love and charity for all mankind “without distinction of race, colour, caste or creed,”* is it not therefore the fittest to alleviate the sufferings of mankind? [165] No true Theosophist would refuse admission into a hospital, or any charitable establishment, to any man, woman, or child, under the pretext that he is *not* a Theosophist, as a Roman Catholic would when dealing with a Protestant, and *vice versa*. No true Theosophist of the original rules would fail to put into practice the parable of the “Good Samaritan,” or proffer help only to entice the unwary who, he hopes, will become a pervert from his god and the gods of his forefathers. None would slander his brother, none let a needy man go unhelped, none offer fine talk instead of practical love and charity.

Is it then the fault of Theosophy, any more than it is the fault of the Christ-teachings, if the majority of the members of the Theosophical Society, often changing

their philosophical and religious views upon entering our Body, have yet remained practically the same as they were when professing *lip* Christianity? Our laws and rules are the same as given to us from the beginning; it is the general members of the Society who have allowed them to become virtually *obsolete*. Those few who are ever ready to sacrifice their time and labour to work for the poor, and who do, unrecognized and unthanked for it, good work wherever they can, are often too poor themselves to put their larger schemes of charity into objective practical form, however willing they may be.

“The fault I find with the Theosophical Society,” said one of the most eminent surgeons in London to one of the editors, quite recently, “is that I cannot discover that any of its members really lead the Christ-life.” This seemed a very serious accusation from a man who is not only in the front rank of his profession, and valued for his kindly nature, by his patients, and by society, and well known as a quiet doer of many good deeds. The only possible answer to be made was that the Christ-life is undeniably the ideal of every one worthy in any sense of the name of a Theosophist, and that if it is not lived it is because there are none strong enough to carry it out. Only a few days later the same complaint was put in a more graphic form by a celebrated lady-artist.



The religious philanthropist who hopes to gain salvation by good works has merely exchanged worldliness for other-worldliness. The secular philanthropist is really at heart a socialist, and nothing else; he hopes to make men happy and good by bettering their worldly position.

The point of difference between the Theosophists¹ and the practical philanthropists, religious or secular, is a very serious one, and the answer, that probably none of them are strong enough yet to lead the “Christ-life,” is only a portion of the truth. The situation can be put very plainly, in so many words. The religious philanthropist holds a position of his own, which cannot in any way concern or affect the Theosophist. He does not do good merely for the sake of doing good, but also as a means towards his own salvation. This is the outcome of the selfish and personal side of man’s nature, which has so coloured and affected a grand religion that its devotees are little better than the idol-worshippers who ask their deity of clay to bring them luck in business, and the payment of debts.

- The religious philanthropist who hopes to gain salvation by good works has simply, to quote a well-worn yet ever fresh witticism, exchanged worldliness for other-worldliness. [167]
- The secular philanthropist is really at heart a socialist, and nothing else; he hopes to make men happy and good by bettering their physical position. No serious student of human nature can believe in this theory for a moment.

¹ When we use this term we mean, not members of the Society, but people who are really using the organization as a method of learning more of the true wisdom-religion which exists as a vital and eternal fact behind all such efforts.

There is no doubt that it is a very agreeable one, because if it is accepted there is immediate, straightforward work to undertake. “The poor ye have always with you.” The causation which produced human nature itself produced poverty, misery, pain, degradation, at the same time that it produced wealth, and comfort, and joy and glory.

Practical philanthropists, after long and bitter experience, will arrive at a conclusion which, to an Occultist, is from the first a working hypothesis — that misery is not only endurable, but agreeable to many who endure it.

Lifelong philanthropists, who have started on the work with a joyous youthful conviction that it is possible to “do good,” have, though never relaxing the habit of charity, confessed to the present writer that, as a matter of fact, misery cannot be relieved. It is a vital element in human nature, and is as necessary to some lives as pleasure is to others.

It is a strange thing to observe how practical philanthropists will eventually, after long and bitter experience, arrive at a conclusion which, to an occultist, is from the first a working hypothesis. This is, that misery is not only endurable, but agreeable to many who endure it. A noble woman, whose life has been given to the rescue of the lowest class of wretched girls, those who seem to be driven to vice by want, said, only a few days since, that with many of these outcasts it is not possible to raise them to any apparently happier lot. And this she distinctly stated,¹ is not so much from any love of vice, but from love of that very state which the wealthy classes call misery. They prefer the savage life of a bare-foot, half-clad creature, with no roof at night and no food by day, to any comforts which can be offered them. By comforts, we do not mean the workhouse or the reformatory, but the comforts of a quiet home; and we can give chapter and verse, so to speak, to show that this is the case, not merely with the children of outcasts, who might be supposed to have a savage heredity, but with the children of gentle, cultivated, and Christian people.

¹ And she can speak with authority, having spent her life literally among them, and studied them thoroughly.

Religious and secular philanthropists compared and contrasted.

The religious philanthropist holds a position of his own, which cannot in any way concern or affect the Theosophist. He does not do good merely for the sake of doing good, but also as a means towards his own salvation.

The secular philanthropist is really at heart a socialist, and nothing else; he hopes to make men happy and good by bettering their physical position.

First published in *Lucifer*, Vol. I (4), December 1887, pp. 325-28. Excerpt below from *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (ANSWERS TO QUERIES) VIII pp. 295-98.

We have received several communications for publication, bearing on the subjects discussed in the editorial of our last issue, "Let every man prove his own work."¹ A few brief remarks may be made, not in reply to any of the letters — *which, being anonymous, and containing no card from the writers, cannot be published* (nor are such noticed, as a general rule) — but to the ideas and accusations contained in one of them, a letter signed "M." Its author takes up the cudgels on behalf of the Church. He objects to the statement that this institution lacks the enlightenment necessary to carry out a true system of philanthropy. He appears, also, to demur to the view that "the practical people either go on doing good unintentionally and often do harm" and points to the workers amid our slums as a vindication of Christianity — which, by-the-by, was in no sense attacked in the editorial so criticized.

Alas! More mischief has been done by emotional charity than sentimentalists care to face.

Though no nobler sentiment than that which animates the unselfish philanthropist is conceivable, the practical results of his labours have to be examined.

To this, repeating what was said, we maintain that more mischief has been done by emotional charity than sentimentalists care to face. Any student of political economy is familiar with this fact, which passes for a truism with all those who have devoted attention to the problem. No nobler sentiment than that which animates the unselfish philanthropist is conceivable; but the question at issue is not summed up in the recognition of this truth. The practical results of his labours have to be examined. We have to see whether he does not sow the seeds of a greater — while relieving a lesser — evil. [296]

The fact that "thousands are making great efforts in all the cities throughout our land" to meet want, reflects immense credit on the character of such workers. It does not affect their creed, for such natures would remain the same, whatever the prevailing dogmas chanced to be. It is certainly a very poor illustration of the fruits of centuries of dogmatic Christianity that England should be so honey-combed with misery and poverty as she is — especially on the biblical ground that a tree must be judged

¹ [Consult full text in our Living the Life Series. — ED. PHIL.]

by its fruits! It might, also, be argued, that the past history of the Churches, stained as it is with persecutions, the suppression of knowledge, crime and brutality, necessitates the turning over of a new leaf. The difficulties in the way are insuperable. “Churchianity” has, indeed, done its best to keep up with the age by assimilating the teachings of, and making veiled truces with, science, but it is incapable of affording a true spiritual ideal to the world.

Physical philanthropy, apart from the infusion of new influences and ennobling conceptions of life into the minds of the masses, is worthless. The gradual assimilation of the great spiritual truths will alone revolutionize the face of civilization, and ultimately result in a far more effective panacea for evil, than the mere tinkering of superficial misery. Prevention is not only “better than cure,” it is the only cure.

The same Church-Christianity assails with fruitless pertinacity, the ever-growing host of Agnostics and Materialists, but is *as absolutely ignorant, as the latter, of the mysteries beyond the tomb*. The great necessity for the Church, according to Professor Flint,¹ is to keep the leaders of European thought within its fold. By such men it is, however, regarded as an anachronism. The Church is eaten up with scepticism within its own walls; free-thinking clergymen being now very common. This constant drain of vitality has reduced the true religion to a very low ebb, and it is to infuse a new current of ideas and aspirations into modern thought, in short, to supply a logical basis for an elevated morality, a science and philosophy which is suited to the knowledge of the day, that Theosophy comes before the world. Mere physical philanthropy, apart from the infusion of new influences and ennobling conceptions of life into the minds of the masses, is worthless. The gradual assimilation by mankind of great spiritual truths will alone revolutionize the face of civilization, and ultimately result in a far more effective panacea for evil, than the mere tinkering of superficial misery. Prevention is better than cure. Society [297] creates its own outcasts, criminals, and profligates, and then condemns and punishes its own Frankensteins, sentencing its own progeny, the “bone of its bone, and the flesh of its flesh,” to a life of damnation on earth. Yet that society recognizes and enforces most hypocritically Christianity — *i.e.*, “Churchianity.” Shall we then, or shall we not, infer that the latter is unequal to the requirements of mankind? Evidently the former, and most painfully and obviously so, in its present dogmatic form, which makes of the beautiful ethics preached on the Mount, a Dead Sea fruit, a whited sepulchre, and no better.

Furthermore, the same “M,” alluding to Jesus as one with regard to whom there could be only two alternatives, writes that he “was either the Son of God or the vilest impostor who ever trod this earth.” We answer, not at all.

¹ [Robert Flint, FRSE, FBA, 1838–1910, Scottish theologian and philosopher.]

Whether the Jesus of the New Testament ever lived or not, whether he existed as an historical personage, or was simply a lay figure around which the Bible allegories clustered — the Jesus of Nazareth of Matthew and John is the ideal for every would-be sage and Western candidate-Theosophist to follow. That such an one as he, was a “Son of God,” is as undeniable as that he was neither the *only* “Son of God,” nor the first one, nor even the last who closed the series of the “Sons of God,” or the children of Divine Wisdom, on this earth. Nor is that other statement that in “His life he [Jesus] has ever spoken of himself as co-existent with Jehovah, the Supreme, the Centre of the Universe,” correct, whether in its dead letter, or hidden mystic sense. In no place does Jesus ever allude to “*Jehovah*”; but, on the contrary, attacking the Mosaic laws and the alleged Commandments given on Mount Sinai, he disconnects himself and his “Father” most distinctly and emphatically from the Sinaitic tribal God. The whole of Chapter V, in the *Gospel of Matthew*, is a passionate protest of the “man of peace, love and charity,” against the cruel, stern, and selfish commandments of “the man of war,” the “Lord” of Moses.¹ “Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old times” — so and so — “But I say [298] unto you,” quite the reverse. Christians who still hold to the Old Testament and the Jehovah of the Israelites, are at best *schismatic Jews*. Let them be that, by all means, if they will so have it; but they have no right to call themselves even *Chrēstians*, let alone *Christians*.²

Better unwise activity, than an overdose of too wise inactivity, apathy, or indifference, which are always the death of an undertaking.

From *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, [“ORIGINAL PROGRAMME” MANUSCRIPT] VII pp. 165-66.

That which was generated through and founded by the “High Masters” and under their authority if not their instruction — MUST AND WILL LIVE. Each of us and all will receive his or her *Karma* in it, but the *vehicle* of Theosophy will stand indestructible and undestroyed by the hand of whether man or fiend. No; “truth does not depend on show of hands”; but in the case of the much-abused President-Founder it must depend on the show of *facts*. Thorny and full of pitfalls was the steep path he had to climb up alone and unaided for the first years. Terrible was the opposition outside the Society he had to build — sickening and disheartening the treachery he often encountered within the Head-Quarters. Enemies gnashing their teeth in his face around, those whom he regarded as his staunchest friends and co-workers betraying him and the Cause on the slightest provocation. Still, where hundreds in his place would have collapsed and given up the whole undertaking in despair, he, unmoved and unmovable, went on climbing up and toiling as before, unrelenting and undismayed, supported by that one thought and conviction that he was doing his duty. What other inducement has the Founder ever had, but his theosophical pledge and the sense of his duty toward THOSE he had promised to serve to the end of his life? There was but one beacon for him — the hand that had first pointed to him his way up: the hand of the MASTER he loves and reveres so well, and serves so devotedly

¹ *Exodus* xv, 3. [Consult “The real Christ is Buddhi-Manas, the glorified Divine Ego,” in our Buddhas and Initiates Series. — ED. PHIL.]

² See “The Esoteric Character of the Gospels,” in this number.

though occasionally perhaps, unwisely. President elected for life, he has nevertheless offered more than once to resign in favour of any one found worthier than him, but was never permitted to do so by the majority — not of “show of hands” but *show of hearts*, literally — as few are more beloved than he is even by most of those, who may criticise occasionally his actions. And this is only natural: for cleverer in administrative capacities, more learned in philosophy, subtler in casuistry, in metaphysics or daily life policy, there may be many around him; but the whole globe may be searched through and through and no one found stauncher to his friends, truer to his word, or more devoted to real, [166] practical Theosophy — than the President-Founder; and these are the chief requisites in a leader of such a movement — one that aims to become a Brotherhood of men. The Society needs no Loyolas; it has to shun anything approaching casuistry; nor ought we to tolerate too subtle casuists. There, where every individual has to work out his own Karma, the judgment of a casuist who takes upon himself the duty of pronouncing upon the state of a brother’s soul, or guide his conscience is of no use, and may become positively injurious. The Founder claims no more rights than everyone else in the Society: the *right of private judgment*, which, whenever it is found to disagree with Branches or individuals are quietly set aside and *ignored* — *as shown by the complainants themselves*. This then, is the sole crime of the would-be culprit, and no worse than this can be laid at his door. And yet what is the reward of that kind man? He, who has never refused a service, outside what he considers his official duties — to any living being; he who has redeemed dozens of men, young and old from dissipated, often immoral lives and saved others from terrible scrapes by giving them a safe refuge in the Society; he, who has placed others again, on the pinnacle of Saintship *through their status in that Society*, when otherwise they would have indeed found themselves now in the meshes of “worldliness” and perhaps worse; — he, that true friend of every Theosophist, and verily “the readiest to serve and as unconscious of the service” — he is now taken to task for what? — for insignificant blunders, for useless “special orders,” a *childish*, rather than untheosophical love of display, out of pure devotion to his Society. Is then *human nature* to be viewed so uncharitably by us, as to call *untheosophical*, worldly and sinful the natural impulse of a mother to dress up her child and parade it to the best advantages? The comparison may be laughed at, but if it is, it will be only by him who would, like the fanatical Christian of old, or the naked, dishevelled Yogi of India — have no more charity for the smallest human weakness. Yet, the simile is quite correct, since the Society is the child, the beloved creation of the Founder; [167] he may be well forgiven for this too exaggerated love for that for which he has suffered and toiled more than all other Theosophists put together. He is called “worldly,” “ambitious of power” and *untheosophical* for it. Very well; let then any impartial judge compare the life of the Founder with those of most of his critics, and see which was *the most theosophical* ever since the Society sprang into existence. If no better results have been achieved, it is not the President who ought to be taken to task for it, but the Members themselves, as he has been ever trying to promote its growth, and the majority of “Fellows” have either done nothing, or created obstacles in the way of its progress through sins of omission as of commission. Better *unwise activity*, than an overdose of too wise *inactivity*, apathy or indifference which are always the death of an undertaking.

Those who, amidst the present wholesale dominion of the worship of matter, material interests, and bare selfishness, will have bravely fought for human rights and man's divine nature, will become the teachers of the masses and their benefactors.

First published in *Lucifer*, Vol. V (27), November 1889, pp. 173-78. Excerpt below from *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (THE TIDAL WAVE) XII pp. 3-5.

A new era has begun in literature, this is certain. New thoughts and new interests have created new intellectual needs; hence a new race of authors is springing up. And this new species will gradually and imperceptibly shut out the old one, those fogies of yore who, though they still reign nominally, are allowed to do so rather by force of habit than predilection. It is not he who repeats obstinately and parrot-like the old literary formulæ and holds desperately [4] to publishers' traditions, who will find himself answering to the new needs; not the man who prefers his narrow party discipline to the search for the long-exiled Spirit of man and the now lost TRUTHS; not these, but verily he who, parting company with his beloved "authority," lifts boldly and carries on unflinchingly the standard of the *Future Man*. It is finally those who, amidst the present wholesale dominion of the worship of matter, material interests and SELFISHNESS, will have bravely fought for human rights and *man's divine nature*, who will become, if they only win, the teachers of the masses in the coming century, and so their benefactors.

The Protectors and Saviours of the now resurrecting human thought and spirit are those who will have learnt to express and put into practice the aspirations as well as the physical needs of the rising generations, and of the now trampled-down masses.

In order that one should fully comprehend individual life, with its physiological, psychic, and spiritual mysteries, he has to devote himself with all the fervour of unselfish philanthropy and love for his brothers and sisters.

And by studying and knowing collective life, i.e., mankind, he has to decipher, understand, and remember the tender feelings and aspirations of the poor people's suffering heart:

- 1. By attuning his soul with that of humanity at large, as the old philosophy teaches; and**
- 2. By mastering the meaning of every line and word in the rapidly turning pages of the Book of Life in the secure knowledge that his Self is inseparable from all Selves.**

But woe to the XXth century if the now reigning school of thought prevails, for Spirit would once more be made captive and silenced till the end of the now coming age. It is not the fanatics of the dead letter in general, nor the iconoclasts and Vandals who fight the new Spirit of thought, nor yet the modern Roundheads, supporters of the old Puritan religious and social traditions, who will ever become the protectors and Saviours of the now resurrecting human thought and Spirit. It is not these too willing supporters of the old cult, and the mediæval heresies of those who guard like a relic every error of their sect or party, who jealously watch over their own thought lest it should, growing out of its teens, assimilate some fresher and more beneficent idea — not these who are the wise men of the future. It is not for them that the hour of the

new historical era will have struck, but for those who will have learnt to express and put into practice the aspirations as well as the physical needs of the rising generations and of the now trampled-down masses. In order that one should fully comprehend *individual* life with its physiological, psychic and spiritual mysteries, he has to devote himself with all the fervour of unselfish philanthropy and love for his brother men, to studying and knowing *collective* life, or Mankind. Without preconceptions or prejudice, as also without the least fear of possible results in one or another direction, he has to decipher, understand and *remember* the deep and innermost feelings and the aspirations of the poor people's great and suffering [5] heart. To do this he has first "to attune his soul with that of Humanity," as the old philosophy teaches; to thoroughly master the correct meaning of every line and word in the rapidly turning pages of the Book of Life of MANKIND and to be thoroughly saturated with the truism that the latter is a whole inseparable from his own SELF.

How many profound readers of life may be found in our boasted age of sciences and culture?

The unrecognized philanthropists of our age are the people's true friends and unselfish lovers, the defenders of the human right to the freedom of spirit.

How many of such profound readers of life may be found in our boasted age of sciences and culture? Of course we do not mean authors alone, but rather the practical and still unrecognized, though well known, philanthropists and altruists of our age; the people's friends, the unselfish lovers of man, and the defenders of human right to the freedom of Spirit. Few indeed are such; for they are the rare blossoms of the age, and generally the martyrs to prejudiced mobs and timeservers. Like those wonderful "Snow Flowers" of Northern Siberia, which, in order to shoot forth from the cold frozen soil, have to pierce through a thick layer of hard, icy snow, so these rare characters have to fight their battles all their life with cold indifference and human harshness, and with the selfish ever-mocking world of wealth. Yet, it is only they who can carry out the task of perseverance. To them alone is given the mission of turning the "Upper Ten"¹ of social circles from the broad and easy highway of wealth, vanity and empty pleasures into the arduous and thorny path of higher moral problems, and the perception of loftier moral duties than they are now pursuing. It is also those who, already themselves awakened to a higher Soul activity, are being endowed at the same time with literary talent, whose duty it is to undertake the part of awakening the sleeping Beauty and the Beast, in their enchanted Castle of Frivolity, to real life and light. Let all those who can proceed fearlessly with this idea uppermost in their mind, and they will succeed. It is the rich who have first to be regenerated, if we would do good to the poor; for it is in the former that lies the root of evil of which the

¹ [Or "Upper ten thousand," a phrase coined in 1852 by American poet Nathaniel Parker Willis to describe the upper circles of New York, and hence of other major cities. In 1875, both Adam Bissett Thom and Kelly's Directory published books entitled *The Upper Ten Thousand*, which listed members of the aristocracy, the gentry, officers in the British Army and Navy, members of Parliament, Colonial administrators, and members of the Church of England. The usage of this term was a response to the broadening of the British ruling class which had been caused by the Industrial Revolution. — *Wikipedia*.]

“disinherited” classes are but the too luxuriant growth. This may seem at first sight paradoxical, yet it is true, as may be shown.

Non-resistance to evil, forgiveness, and charity, are the first rules of discipleship.

The Theosophist, if he contemplates adeptship, must not revenge himself. He must suffer in silence rather than excite in someone else evil passions, or the desire to revenge himself in his turn.

First published in *Le Lotus*, Paris, Vol. I (6), September 1887, pp. 321-38. Translation of the original French text as published by Boris de Zirkoff in his *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (MISCONCEPTIONS),¹ a reply to the article “Révolution” by Aleph, VIII pp. 80-81.

“Aleph” recognizes the need of keeping secret dangerous sciences — chemistry for instance — and not disclosing to the crowd, even in civilized countries, the mystery of [81] certain death-dealing combinations. Why should he then refuse to see in the law of silence forced upon Adepts, in connection with occult revelations, an act of wisdom, necessitated by the experience of the human heart?

I suspect, however, that it is precisely the intelligent and rich classes which would abuse occult powers for their own benefit and profit, much more than the ignorant and poor ones. The first law of the Sacred Science is never to use one’s knowledge for one’s own interest, but to work with and for others. But how many people could one find in Europe and America ready to sacrifice themselves for their fellowmen? An Adept who is sick has no right to use his magnetic force to lessen his personal suffering as long as there is, to his knowledge, a single creature that suffers and whose physical or mental pain he can lessen, if not heal. It is so to speak the exaltation of the suffering of one’s self, for the benefit of the health and happiness of others. A Theosophist, if he contemplates Adeptship, must not revenge himself. He must suffer in silence rather than excite in someone else evil passions, or the desire to revenge himself in his turn. Non-resistance to evil, forgiveness, and charity, are the first rules of discipleship.

However, no one is expected to become a Theosophist and even less to make himself accepted as a candidate for Adeptship and occult initiation.

¹ [This essay from H.P. Blavatsky’s pen was also issued in pamphlet form under the title: *Fausse Conceptions, Réponse à diverses critiques* (Tours: Imp. de E. Arrault, 1887; 8°, 20pp. 2 fr.). According to the Bibliographer Albert L. Caillet, “Aleph” was Charles Limousin, Editor of the Journal *Acacia*. This pamphlet is very difficult to obtain, but can be consulted in the holdings of the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris (8°R. Pièce 3782). Madame Blavatsky’s text is preceded therein by the following editorial notice:

“In order to reply to various criticisms which we receive from time to time, and which are due to the ignorance, rather excusable, of our critics, and to the secret slander of our enemies — former Fellows expelled from the Society or priests of idolatry in science as well as religion — we think it useful to publish separately the following essay of Madame Blavatsky, which appeared in No. 6 of *Le Lotus*. One could think of ALEPH as representing the public in general, and of Madame Blavatsky as representing The Theosophical Society, at least as far as the general tendency and the goal are concerned.”

— Boris de Zirkoff.]

Theosophical charity, warming the heart of every true Theosophist, must urge him to eschew reprisals and never to return evil for evil, so long as truth damaging to his enemies can be withheld without danger to the Cause.

From *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (TO ALL THEOSOPHISTS “THE ESOTERIC SECTION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY” AND ITS ENEMIES)¹ XI pp. 306-7.

This is neither a *private* nor a *confidential* document, and thus will not be productive of treachery. The undersigned — save a few occult truths which she is pledged not to reveal — has no secrets, no desire to create mysteries, and is willing to let the whole world see her private and inner life. She fears nothing, and is ready to face every enemy and slanderer of hers, and bids him or her, to do his worst. She has nothing to dread *from truth*.

As it has now become evident that our most dangerous enemies are *within* not *without* the Theosophical Society, it is time to put an end to this.

Nor is it less evident that Professor Elliott Coues, though the President of the Gnostic Branch of the T.S., calling himself a Theosophist — yet seeks by all means, fair or foul, to upset the “Esoteric Section of the Theosophical Society” — the only legitimate and legal Occult Body in the Society — by trying to discredit the “Head” of that Section, the undersigned. It is useless for the present to explain *why* Dr. Coues does it, though his motives are quite plain to many and especially to the writer of this. Theosophical charity in the heart of every *true* Theosophist must urge him to eschew reprisals and never to return evil for evil, so long as truth damaging to his enemies can be withheld without danger [307] to the Cause. *Full* explanation is, therefore, postponed. I will speak only of his last letter to me further on, which will perhaps explain such a sudden persecution of me by Dr. Coues, who professed friendship in all his letters *up to a few days before the Convention of the T.S. (American Section) in Chicago*.²

¹ [This text was published as a separate pamphlet of 16 pages, dated London, June 21st, 1889; the type and format are identical with those of the magazine *Lucifer*. Only a couple of copies of this pamphlet are known to exist, and they are in private hands. The present reprint has been reproduced from one of them. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

² [Consult the following titles in our Down to Earth Series:

- “Foul conspiracies and blatant lies levelled against Madame Blavatsky”
- “Prometheus, the Light-bringer, hurled down to the bowels of the earth”
- “The Religio-Philosophical Journal is neither religious nor philosophical”
- “The sparkle of Light on the Path, has been dimmed by a dark stain”
- “Truth is exiled from the press because it is not as beguiling as falsehood”

— ED. PHIL.]

Charity is the scope of all theosophical teachings, and the synthesis of all and every virtue.

First published in *Lucifer*, Vol. II (13), September 1888, pp. 1-3. Excerpt below from *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (OUR THIRD VOLUME), *Lucifer*, X p. 95.

If there is one thing that *Lucifer* proposes to preach and enforce throughout the next year, more than any other subject, it is — CHARITY; unrelenting charity toward the shortcomings of one's neighbour, untiring charity with regard to the wants of one poorer than oneself. Charity is the scope of all theosophical teachings, the synthesis of all and every virtue. A person who exercises charity under this dual aspect, cannot be a bad man or woman, do what he may. We think with a certain philosopher that,

It is proper that charity should flow out of a little purse, as well as out of a great sack,

And with another writer, that,

One ought not to defer his charities till death.

For, says Bacon,

He who does so is rather liberal of another man's substance than his own.

And how true and great these words of the eminent American poet, Joaquin Miller:

All you can hold in your cold dead hand;
Is what you have given away.

Apart from this — the future lines of *Lucifer* will be but a prolongation of those of the Past. We do not wish to persuade a single additional subscriber to register himself under any promise of occult teaching that is barred by the rules of mystical training. We shall not utter the last or even the penultimate word of mystery, nor give any pocket *Vade Mecum*¹ which shall serve as a super-terrestrial Bradshaw to excursionists in the Astral Light. Whosoever would

. . . trace

The secrets of that starry race

— must travel first along the lines of true Theosophy; and then only can he expect to break through the region of Mystery and the Supreme Knowledge.

We stand at the parting of the ways, where the one path leads down the acclivity to the dark valley of ignorance, and the other climbs upward toward the pure celestial level of being. For us, it is to utter the cry of warning and the word of encouragement; *he that hath ears to hear, let him hear* — AND BE WISE.

¹ [Latin for "go with me," referring to a manual sufficiently compact to be carried in a deep pocket.]

True charity opens her purse with an invisible hand.

First published in *Lucifer*, Vol. IV (21), May 1889, pp. 177-88. Excerpt below from *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (CYCLE AND THE NEXT) XI pp. 195-96.

Who, asks E. Young,¹ gave in antiquity

. . . twenty millions, not at the bidding of an imperious monarch, or a tyrannical priesthood, but at the spontaneous call of the national conscience and by the immediate instrumentality of the national will.

The writer adding, that:

There is a moral grandeur in this “*money grant*,” that sinks the Pyramids into littleness.²

O, the pride and the conceit of this, our age!

And finishing her act, exists no more — she shuns fame, and is never ostentatious.

We do not know. Had each of the subscribers to this “*money grant*” given his “*widow’s two mites*,” they might claim collectively to have *cast* “*more than all*,” more than any other nation, and await their reward. England being, however, the wealthiest nation in the world, the intrinsic merits of the case seem slightly altered. Twenty millions in a lump represent indeed a mighty engine for good. But such a “*money grant*” could only gain in Karma, were it to pander less to national pride, and were the nation not to feel itself so exalted for it, in the four quarters of the globe, by hundred-voiced [196] fame trumpeted by public organs. *True* charity opens her purse strings with an invisible hand and:

Finishing its act, exists no more . . .

It shuns Fame, and is never ostentatious. Besides which, everything is relative. One million in specie, 3,000 years ago, represented tenfold more than twenty million today. Twenty million are a Niagara inundating with Titanic force some popular want, and creating, for the time being, as great a commotion. But, while helping for a certain lapse of time tens of thousands of hungry wretches, even such an enormous sum leaves ten times as many unfortunate, starving wretches still unrelieved.

To such munificent bounties we prefer countries where there are no needy people at all, *e.g.*, those small communities, the remnants of once mighty races, which allow no beggars among their co-religionists — we mean the Parsis. Under the Indian and

¹ [Rev. Edward Young, 1683–1765, English poet, best remembered for *Night-Thoughts*, a series of philosophical writings in blank verse, reflecting his state of mind following several bereavements. It was one of the most popular poems of the century, influencing Goethe and Edmund Burke, among many others, with its notable illustrations by William Blake. The quotation below is from his *Pre-Raffaellitism; or, a Popular Enquiry into some Newly-Asserted Principles connected with the Philosophy, Poetry, Religion, and Revolution of Art*. London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, and Roberts, 1857; p. 153.]

² [The original text reads:

Show me the equivalent to a money-loving people putting its hand into its *own* pocket, not to build proud towers, but to emancipate degraded savages; giving twenty millions, not at the bidding of an imperious monarch, or a tyrannical priesthood, but at the spontaneous call of the national conscience, and by the immediate instrumentality of the national will. There is a moral grandeur in this “*money grant*,” that sinks the Pyramids into littleness.

op. cit. — ED. PHIL.]

Buddhist Kings, like Chandragupta and Aśoka, people did not wait, as they do now, for a national calamity to throw the surplus of their overflowing wealth at the head of a portion of the starving and the homeless, but worked steadily on, century after century, building *rest-houses*, digging wells and planting fruit trees along the roads, wherein the weary pilgrim and the penniless traveller could always find rest and shelter, be fed and *receive* hospitality at the national expense. A little clear stream of cold, healthy water which runs steadily, and is ever ready to refresh parched lips, is more beneficent than the sudden torrent that breaks the dam of national indifference, now and then, by fits and starts.

