

The Place of Charity in a Democratic Community.

The remark is often made that Christianity has had a long and complete trial, but the religion of Christ is yet to be tried. The same kind of a remark might be made about that much used, much abused, but little understood word.

Democracy. The Democracy of Plato as pictured in his Republic was a government of the People by the Philosophers for the state. Like all Platonian Idealism it placed greater emphasis upon the state

that it did ~~for~~ for the ickal
than it did for the men
who are in the state. It
remained for the Rail & Glitter
President more than two
thousand years after Plato
to complete the definition
of Democracy, and give it
the term which marks ^{the culmination of} an
^{working period} ~~epoch~~ in governmental theory.
Not until the civil war had
been fought, not until the
nation had been freed from
slavery could any man of
this nation describe our govern-
ment in such terms as "A gov-
ernment of the people. By
the people. and for the people".

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Yet even now as we speak
the word Democracy, as official
to our Government, we are
conscious that the actuality
is as far below the ideal
as deck of the ship is below
the mast head from which
~~floats~~ flies the symbol of
our Freedom under the Star.
We have had great problems
to solve since the Government
of the United States was organized.
The progress towards the realiza-
tion of our ideal has been retarded
by the constant demand made
upon us to absorb and
educate countless numbers

of human beings drawn to ⁴
our shores by the alluring
dream of freedom, and liberty.
While this delay in the approach
to our true Democracy is the
cause of many grave offend-
ers on the part of some. yet it
is prophetic of a greater end,
an inclusive, rather than an
exclusive Democracy. So with
ever increasing hope we look
towards the realization of the
old Puritan Ideal of Freedom
Under the Law, and before
ourselves with the greater
zeal for citizenship in the
nation.

I have tried to trace the ¹⁵
evolution and development
of the problem of charity from
the beginnings of the modern
world at the outbreak of
the reformation to the present
In the course of these years
we have witnessed a complete
revolution in the idea of the
nature, and purpose of that which
we call charity. The very
printed sentence. Modern

Philanthropy has taught us
to look to the Heavens and
ask "not others, but a friend."
given in very concise form
the essence of this change.
Whereas in the old world

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Charity was always giving. In
the new world it is "Friendly
help." Not charity but love.

But you ask. Why should
there be any charity at
all in the modern world?
Are we not yet so living
under the domination of
that terrible law of evolution -
that law in which the survival
of the fit, and the extinction of
the unfit is the one unyielding
and inexorable law. Do not
the sufferings of the unfit,
their death, and ~~the~~ extinction.
do not they advance the
arrival of that day in which

new

we shall be judged by the ^(?)
action of God's natural law,
of the ignorant, the vicious, the
poor, and the suffering? Are
we not then interfering with
the house of God, and the divine
glory, when ever we relieve
one suffering soul?

Oh again you ask from
another point of view, how
can charity be needed, how
can there be opportunity for
it in a Democratic community
where all ~~to~~ ends and aims
point to the interest, and well
being of all the people? How
could it be possible for any
one in such a community to
be in a condition where

help and assistance would be required?

We have been accustomed to think of Charity as the very top stone of the religious life, of the good life. People who have been charitable, who have given liberally to all good causes, who have enriched institutions, and ameliorated the conditions of the poor, — such people have been pointed to as the highest examples of the practical effects of the religious life, whenever under the influence of religious emotion, or lofty enthusiasm, ~~what~~ we

have sought a channel ⁹
for the expression of our feelings
our attention has been directed
with fictitious appeals, and
heart-rending rhetoric to the
work of charity. Many a small
narrow, selfish soul has deluded
himself into the notion that
he has reached the acme of
Christian virtue, and religious
goodness, in giving charity.
Many churches joint with pride
to the amount of their charity
contributions, and brag with
loud sounding noises of the
good that they do to the sons
of men.

But charity, the much

talked of. the much lauded,
 and much worshipped doctors
 of the religious foundation, is
 after all is said and done,
 by no means the proof of
 religious virtues. One very
 very striking illustration of
 the changed attitude in regard
 to this charity, is seen in
 the abatement of the use of
 the word in that famous
 13th Chapter of Paul's first
 Epistle to the Corinthians.
 No longer we find there a
 a laudation of charity, but
 a beautiful and nobly conceived
 exposition, or revelation of the place
 of love in life. Wherever the
 old version reads "him obidith
 there there faith, hope, and love

charity, but the greatest of these"
is charity," we read in the
revised version, "now abideth
these three, Faith, hope, and love,
but the greatest of these is love."

Charity, which in any way
savors of alms giving, or
in any way implies condescen-
sion on the part of the giver
or humiliation and degradation
on the part of the receiver, such
charity is aweful right ought
to be condemned, and banished
from the life of a democratic
community. Not alone is
this excommunication of alms
giving charity being rejected
because of its disastrous in-
fluence upon the receiver, but

as well it is being excom-
municated as being a thing
unworthy of a self-respecting
person, who also respects his
fellow men. Anything that
swoke of always giving ~~the~~
belongs not to this growing
democratic people, but is rather
a weak survival of an age
that is fast passing.

When we come into a
democratic community we
meet an entirely different
point of view. However poor-
ferous, however thrifty or
industrious, however saving
or indeed wealthy a people may
be, there is always the possi-
bility, and even the probability

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and certainty that people will
find themselves often in a
position where the help of a
friend is needed. The ravages
of sickness, the changes of
the seasons, the unfortunate
results of poor judgment, the
grave ravages of a severe
colony, by fire, flood or
flood, the misfortune of
accident, the loss of the provider
of a family by death, all these
forces are constantly at work
now, and will be at work in
the days when the ideals of our
democracy are more nearly
realized, The results of these
forces will forever tend to

make real and vital that saying¹⁴
of Jesus, "The poor you have with
you always:" ~~this fortune is~~ ^{upon}
whom this misfortune very fell, we
cannot know, but it leaves a
flood in our communities, and
and even a constant demand
for financial aid, or the assistance
of a strong helping hand in
time of accident or distress.
In doing this work, there need be
there must be nothing of the
spirit of obsequiousness in it. Rather
our attitude should be one of
open frank recognition, which
carries to the distressed the aid
sympathy, and help of a friend.
Regretting the conditions which
have caused the distress, we
take delight in the opportunity of
relieving it. This is the beginning

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of the attitude of one who responds
to the deep ~~human~~ false heart of
humanity, and wishes to become
servant of all.

But by far the greater work, the
most lasting work is to get at
the conditions themselves as far
as it is possible for you to do,
and remove and alter the conditions
which bring people into positions
of temporary defenceless-ness. For
we look with great hope
upon such institutions as our
public schools, through which
we are carrying light into
dark corners of society, and
driving away the material stuff
of ignorance. The work of this
kind is slow in its effects,
and the results sometimes dis-

courage, but our schools are one of the products of the nation, and perhaps were nearly there any other institution offend the schools. Education of the people, by the people, for the people, might be the motto of our school work.

By scientific knowledge, and consecrated application of that knowledge, by healthy activity of mind and body, by a clearer insight into the causes and cures of disease, we are working great headway towards reducing to a minimum this ravager which the succession as well as the conscious breaking of ^{the} God's law life. Bring you

us.

By a still broader knowledge of the causes of crime, interference, and vice, we are removing the conditions of those feverish producing evils, and await a day when we shall be able to put our fingers on the remedy, and off by it with unfeeling results to the moral diseases which still infect our social life.

In one other way we are gradually developing public opinion so that it will recognize the right of the most weary workman to a fair wage, which shall assure to him the necessities and conveniences

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compats of life, and thus
remove him from the thol-
dow of uncertainty and
a finching existence.

But these ~~these~~ renewments
which are so characteristic
of our democratic community
are expressions of our highest
conception of life. yet each
year they are working in-
roads upon the uncultivated
fields of poverty, and
gradually passing back
the line of the frontier, so
that the field of activity
for charity and temporary
relief is becoming smaller
and smaller each year.

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So as a matter of fact the
community in which we live
does not recognize charity
as the queen of religious virtues,
but rather we recognize her
as ^a person more necessary by
the imperfect state of our de-
velopment, whose importance
we hope to decrease and relegate
to the hall of former virtues
that have had their day and
~~passed~~ taken their place of abode
among other outgrown things.
But that spirit of love which is
greater than faith, and life, which
incarnated in the work after those
under are temporarily unfortunate
will escape its prison walls of
sifting administration, and leave

the whole loaf of our lives. ²⁰
so that each thought we think
each act we do, each work
we accomplish will be one of
service for all the people. How
much sweeter, how much
finer, would be our lives, if
we could think that no act
of ours, in our selfish aims, were
either directly, or indirectly to
bring poverty upon another and
work necessary as possible
one single act of charity.
Let the love which must work
our present acts of charity
voluble for alleviating suffering
and removing sin & sin

become the dominating force
of every act of life, until
we shall diffuse and intensify
its power, and apply it to
every meanest work that
we do.

This too is the highest
expression of the duty and function
of man who believes as we
do now in the finality of
the doctrine of evolution.
When we reach the plane of
in which civilized man
has appeared upon the stage
of historic action, not only
does God work, but as Jesus
said "My Father worketh

Even ~~and~~ until now, and I
work." By virtue of the power
which are in us, the power
that enable us to think, to
reason, to discover the truths
the laws of life, we are now
become fellow workers with
God for the saving of the
Race of men, when that
condition, which makes charity
a necessity now shall be
forced away, and the spirit
of our nation shall fill to
the utmost with the power
of love, that which is ever
yet our ideal, a Government
of the people, by the people and
for the people.

and another each year.
 relief is becoming more
 for change, and therefore
 that the field of activity
 the line of the frontier, as
 gradually increasing both
 fields of activity, and
 words upon the most vital
 year they are working in
 concepts of life, yet each
 an experience of our life
 of an almost constant
 which are in character
 But the ~~the~~ movement
 a finishing existence.