

THE DISCIPLE

August - 1934

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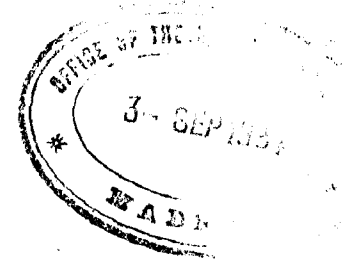
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THE DISCIPLE



ISSUED BY THE O. H.

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For use in the ESOTERIC SCHOOL only

THE DISCIPLE



VOL. I

AUGUST, 1934

No. 2

MEDITATION

A LARGE number of members, particularly in Western countries, find meditation very difficult. Some have asked to be excused from this part of their obligations.

I hope slowly to add ideas concerning meditation, which may make more clear what Dr. Besant has written on the matter. This, however, will take time. I desire in the meantime to explain the significance of meditation, and how it should *not* be looked upon as something not fundamental in occult training.

The process of meditation has several objectives in view, of which three are specially important. They are:

1. *Control of the mind-body as an instrument of the Ego.* This is one of the hardest tasks, because the mind-body has a life of its own, and much practice is required to work only along the lines intended by the dweller in the mind-body. In part, some of this training is given in education, in schools, colleges, etc. The mental training given by education is intended to organize the mind-body to provide for the Ego a more coherent

ALL articles in this number may be read out to
Shrāvakas and Candidates.

instrument. Any member who has studied hard knows the difficulty of concentration, but as the years pass, he knows the value of a trained mind. Of course those who have had the advantage of University studies have already acquired some ability in meditation. Unfortunately, however, a large number of the members of the School have not had this training, and therefore find the process of clear and hard thinking difficult. But sooner or later, whether in this life or in a future one, the student must learn to dominate his mind, and make it an instrument under his control.

2. *To enable the personality working on earth and the Ego on his plane to grasp new aspects of Truth.* Our working life depends not merely on our good intentions and aspirations, but upon a clear understanding of the Plan of God and the Wisdom which is manifest in the Plan. Part of this Wisdom has already been given to us as Theosophy, *but it is only a part*; there are many aspects of the Divine Wisdom which are awaiting to be revealed as mankind progresses, and the student of Occultism must hasten to discover this by his mental training. The teachings of Theosophy have many layers of significance underlying the outer words and expressions; even such a simple truth as Reincarnation has many more interpretations than are those which are obvious. All the deeper aspects of Truth, whether of Science, Religions, Art, etc., must be discovered by the mind, with the help of the faculty of Buddhi. If there is no meditation, obviously this part of the training of the occultist remains unaccomplished, and the student thereby loses in his development.

3. *Another objective is to keep open the path between the Ego and the personality*, and as time passes, to make the path wider and perfectly free of obstruction. The

occultist has to bring about the unification of the lower and the higher, so that his work is done, not as the lower representing the higher, but as the higher utilizing the lower as a willing instrument.

The faculty of Buddhi, or Intuition, provides one way of sensing what is the standpoint of the Ego. But Buddhi does not readily manifest itself, particularly when swift and sudden action is necessary. It is on such occasions of crisis, when Buddhi does not speak, that it is necessary to have an unobstructed communication open between the lower and the higher mind. If there has been no meditation, the personality may react wrongly, and the Ego will not be able to influence it in the right direction. We little realise how quickly our mind-body gets set in grooves, and how the mental elemental prevents us from breaking through the limitation.

It has been said that the Path of Occultism is strewn with wrecks, and one reason for this wreckage is that the personality has gone along a path according to *old* ideas, when the Ego desired that those ideas should be changed in the light of new circumstances. Like a horse that runs away, the personality gets out of control of the Ego, because of the former's fixed ideas.

Since the path of the occultist consists of progress made by passing through one crisis after another, his judgment must always act in the right direction. But without meditation there is a great danger that it may act in the wrong way.

We must separate the two problems of goodness and mental ability. A student may be greatly devoted, full of affection, and intuitive, and yet be lacking in mental ability. He will progress up to a certain point, but the time will come when his mind must be organised.

If he fails to organise his mind body, he loses thereby in efficiency as a worker. And when the inevitable crisis comes in his life, he may decide wrongly, because he has not made the lower mind a clear mirror of the higher mind, through meditation.

This is the reason why meditation is part of the discipline of the School, and if this discipline is omitted, obviously the particular results which meditation gives do not follow. A member may be a useful member, up to a certain point, without meditation; but he becomes more efficient with meditation.

However much one may fail in meditation, or even when it is omitted as a discipline, each member should *invariably consecrate himself* each morning, before he leaves his bedroom or begins his day's work. He must set swinging, so to say, the rate of vibration for the day. He can do this with some short prayer or phrase, of dedication or invocation.

C. J.

THE E. S. IDEAL

BY ANNIE BESANT¹

First: The Inner School is intended only for those who are prepared to submit themselves to that most misunderstood discipline, called "occult training," in which knowledge is gained not by outer teaching but by life and meditation. It is meant for men and women who will strive to walk, not for children who ask to be

¹ This was written by her long ago evidently in connection with the formation at that time of an inner Group within the E. S., but all that is said applies to E. S. members generally.

carried; and for those who, if they do not make "progress," will blame themselves and redouble their efforts, and not complain that help is withheld. To come into it means deliberately to face the discipline of life as manipulated from "behind the veil," and to bear its strain with as little complaint as may be, upheld by the unshakable conviction that along this hard and rugged road have travelled in the past those who have become Masters of Wisdom, and that success is sure for the undaunted heart and iron will, no matter what may be the failures and the weaknesses of the moment.

Secondly: The Inner School is intended only for those who enter it for the sake of giving, not for the sake of receiving. The members come to help the Masters' work in the world, and the privilege of helping is their reward. If that work is helped, they must be content, whether they feel helped or not. Their success is to be the success of the Masters' work, and not their personal success, and they must also try to see through the *māya* of phenomena, and accept the Masters' guidance of events, realising that physical failure may be occult success, and that we are working for a far-off, not an immediate, aim. Only as members shew this spirit do they become susceptible of occult training. Let the Masters have in us a small band of workers, who serve freely for love's sake, and not with an eye to the wages that may be gained in Their service. Let us resolve to ask for nothing, to expect nothing, but let us seek to love and to serve.

Thirdly: In this Inner School there will be no outer degrees, no outer rules, no formal pledge; all is left to the Inner Ruler. Members will naturally belong to one of the Degrees in the disciplines of the Outer School, and will set an example of loyal obedience to the rules

of their degree in that discipline, for the sake of others; but they must understand that occult training is one, all the world over, and knows nothing of these external differences of method; herein is no "eastern" and "western," those words belong wholly to the preparatory stages. Only those should enter into this Inner School who *need* no outer rules or pledge to keep them loyal, devoted, strenuous. They must already have proved themselves to possess positive qualifications. Negative ones will not suffice for admission here.

Fourthly: It must be distinctly understood that the "occult training" spoken of lies in the hands of the Masters, who alone can give it, and that I am as much a pupil under training as any one of you can be. The only difference between myself and you lies in the fact that I have been appointed by Them as a centre round which a band of those offering themselves for such training may gather, and that having been myself long under this training, I understand its conditions better than most of you can do, and can therefore help a little to prepare those who are younger in it than myself. It must also be understood that no occult training can be given by the Masters except to those who are fit to be pupils, and that as soon as the pupil is fit the teaching will be given. Only the pupil can make himself fit; this is his task, and, until he has performed it, his cries for a Teacher will fall back fruitlessly to earth. Useless to fret and complain; useless to be impatient and reproachful; the ear must be ready ere the Teacher can speak into it.

Fifthly: It must always be remembered by those who enter that the non-inclusion of anyone in this School does not imply personal inferiority, but only a possibly temporary non-fulfilment of some necessary

condition. For instance, a person otherwise qualified may be temporarily inharmonious with several others, who are harmonious with each other. In that case the one inharmonious person would not be admitted for the time. There are some very good members, in close relation with myself, who for this reason only will not, at present, be admitted as members. Again, only those whom I know personally will be admitted, and there may be many, as good as any who are admitted, who are not well known to me personally, and are therefore not able to join the body which is to be a unity on the physical plane as well as elsewhere. Again, none will be admitted who has not a clear intellectual conception of Theosophical teachings, unless such a person is of such marked moral superiority as to make his co-operation priceless, the intellectual weakness being only apparent and due to the physical brain alone.

Sixthly: The unity sought being of spirit, it must be clearly understood that variety of opinions, of methods, of action, is desirable, not undesirable. A wide and magnanimous tolerance is the watchword of the School; no forced friendships or artificial ties should be made, but there should be a generous interpretation of the conduct of fellow-members, an abstinence from unnecessary criticism and especially of imputations of evil motives, a cordial recognition of the good intent of others, and of the truth that the Self in each, though one in essence, manifests in many ways, and each "according to the Word". Members must realise that spirituality ~~shows~~ itself in an ever-increasing inclusiveness, and in sympathy with diversity of manifestations. At the same time the opposite error of not exercising a reasonable and sane judgment must be avoided; an occultist is

not to call white black, nor black white; he is not to remain silent and passive if he sees the weak injured and the truthful deceived; he is not, by weak acquiescence, to allow wrong to be done, if it is in his power to prevent it; his charity is to be clear-eyed, not blind; his judgment is to be impartial and just; he is to avoid malevolence, but not to be foolish and weak. The path is as the edge of a razor, and it is easy to fall on either side. But it has to be trodden, and all excesses must be avoided. The deficiency or the excess of a quality is a vice.

Seventhly. Membership in the School on the physical plane being only useful while members are harmonious and can work with each other and myself, it is an honourable understanding among us that a member should withdraw who feels that he can no longer conscientiously fulfil these conditions.

THE WORTH OF THE ESOTERIC SCHOOL

I SHOULD like to lay stress on the importance of taking our membership of the Esoteric School very seriously. After the first thrill of joining is over—and I hope every one of us has at least had a first thrill—we sometimes tend to settle down into a kind of humdrum life in the School, obeying the rules no doubt, attending the meetings regularly, but in a large measure behaving like babies. We go to sleep and waken just to receive, at meetings, the food offered to us; and then we go to sleep again.

We vegetate in the School, and then wonder why we do not make the progress the School is designed to

help us to achieve. The fact is that though we may be members of the School, and though no fault can be found with us from the point of view of the discipline, we do not really share the life of the School. We do not really make use of the School.

Membership of the School gives direct touch with its Inner Head, and through Him with the whole of the great Inner Government of the world. We become in a measure free of the Brotherhood. We are recognised as aspirants for membership of this Brotherhood, for by joining the School we offer ourselves as its servants in the outer world.

This wonderful privilege is thrilling to us as we first contact it on joining the School. But, as ever, familiarity tends to breed indifference, and our link with this life-giving reality becomes not a little attenuated. And there are not many steps between this condition and the feeling that after all the School does not in fact bring about the results expected.

From dissatisfaction with the School we proceed to dissatisfaction with the Theosophical Society, and the great opportunity recedes as once it drew near.

Either we hold or we let go. There is no mean. And in order to hold we must have the power both to mean business and to mean business constantly. What are we to understand by "meaning business"? First, a very real and constant devotion to the Elder Brethren, and an ever-increasing desire to be of use to Them in so far as our powers allow. Second, an ever-increasing desire to make ourselves more worthy of proximity to Them and more efficient to serve Them, and therefore to take the fullest advantage of every opportunity to these ends that comes our way. This also means an unquenchable desire to know more and more, and to

explore all avenues which seem to lead to increased knowledge. When and in so far as these two objectives dominate us at all times we may be said to mean business.

It will be noticed that there is no third objective such as the desire for personal progress. I think that such an objective is very dangerous, for generally we imagine ourselves to be capable of more rapid progress than is in fact possible to us, and disappointment arises because we do not seem to make the progress on which we counted. And there is not much between this and blaming other people or the movements to which we belong for having failed us. We expected clairvoyant powers. We expected discipleship. We expected this, that, the other. Nothing seems to have happened, even though we have been particularly regular in our meditations, in our study, in our attendance at meetings.

But something must always happen as a result of forces set in motion. When we joined the School we entered as it were a new kingdom. We were given the entree to the kingdom. But it depended upon us as to whether we fell asleep in the new kingdom or became kings of it. And some of us, going to sleep in it through lethargy, inertia, or for whatever cause, wonder why we have not become kings in it. Mere membership of the School gave us admission to the realm it was in our power to conquer. We earned that privilege through good work done in the past. But the past is not enough. There is the present which we have to help to become in its own due time a past even finer than that which brought us to the threshold of the School. We must so live in the present that it becomes a past upon the foundations of which we build another storey of that

palace in which some day the King—our Higher Self—will dwell unchallenged.

We must look to the present to help us to conquer this new kingdom. In other words, we must extract from the School every ounce of that power which is available to all members who will take the trouble to extract it. But we must act as grown-up people, not as babies expecting to be fed. The School can do little or nothing for those who require everything to be done for them, and are willing to take no trouble themselves.

If we are intent upon conquest we shall be indifferent to results, but if we are intent upon results we shall fail to conquer. We must work for our conquering just as we know full well that we have to work for our living. And the kind of work required from us is to spread far and wide a knowledge of the kingdom on the threshold of which we ourselves have begun to stand—the kingdom of Theosophy, the kingdom of the Elder Brethren, the kingdom of Happiness, the kingship of the Higher Self. We must unceasingly support the Theosophical movement before the world, stand up for the Theosophical Society at all times, draw attention constantly to the splendours of Theosophy. We must be active in so doing. We must become known for our ardent devotion to the cause of Theosophy and the Theosophical Society. We must become stalwarts, blowers of the winds, not straws.

To do this effectively we must of course be students of Theosophy and of that heart of Theosophy which gradually becomes disclosed to us as our membership of the Esoteric School becomes more and more fruitful. In order to serve wisely we must know. And it is not enough to know at second hand. Authority, elders, books, messages—all these may or may not be sign-posts.

They can be no more than sign-posts. They can never take the place of experience, though they may be short cuts to it. The whole purpose of the Esoteric School, as I understand it, is to offer a short cut which others have trodden before us and have found to be such. They say to us: This is a short cut. Try it.

But they are not going to wheel us in perambulators. We must walk on our own feet and tread every inch of the way—be it hard or easy—ourselves. And we must do this happily and eagerly, not haltingly and reluctantly. We are more or less on the Path of Holiness, and that Way is a way of splendid adventure. Obstacles there are—all of our own making. Defeats there will be—of our own fashioning. But victory there will be, too, for we are Gods in the becoming and have willed the triumph which is at the end of the Way.

We must persevere. We must refuse to be downcast by difficulties. We must avoid the weakness of giving up. And we must utilize to the full the help which membership of the Esoteric School confers upon us. Each rule, each form of meditation, each course of study, is designed by those who have proved their value to help us. In fulfilling the rules, the meditations, the study, we are taking the fullest advantage of all the School has to give. Maybe we shall in due course find other methods to be of even greater value; but we shall only find these other methods as we have strengthened ourselves by the use of the exercises of the School. The School trains us to be athletes. When we have become athletes, we shall know what kind of training suits best our particular type of individuality. But the training of the School will lead us to the discovery of ourselves, and to the time when knowing ourselves we can be laws unto ourselves. And when we are laws unto ourselves,

these laws will be the real laws, the laws of the Eternal Life.

The Esoteric School is a wonderful gift to those who are ready to use it, and every member of the Society who is permitted to join the School is ready to use it. He would not knock at the door were he not ready to enter. But will he stay just inside the door, leaning up against it, or will he leave the door behind him and go onwards on the way to which it opens? I am afraid that some members of the School do but remain just inside the doorway, and some are waiting for the door to open once more, not inwards to admit, but outwards to exclude.

There is a story told of Saint Teresa that she wanted to build a great orphanage, and those around her asked her how much she had wherewith to build it. "I have three ducats . . ." she began, and they broke in derisively: "Three ducats! And how much of the orphanage do you expect to be able to build with a paltry three ducats?" But she replied: "When you interrupted me I was going to say—'and God'." And in due course she built her orphanage.

So is it with us. We have three ducats worth of ourselves—and the help of the Esoteric School; and there are not by any means a small number of members of the School who bear witness to the fact that the School has proved a true sign-post indeed not merely to the Way of Holiness, but no less on the Way itself.

If it be used rightly, as a means to an end, the School will prove such to every member.

G. S. A.

THE E. S. AS AN INSTRUMENT¹

C. J.:

I have lately thought of the great importance of a matter on which I want our Brother here (C. W. L.) to give a little more information. During the last few years there has been now and then the use of a phrase with regard to the E. S., that the E. S. was intended to be an instrument for the Masters, the idea of the E. S. being a collective body which the Masters desired to have.

In the main, we have thought of the work of the E. S. as related to the Society. H. P. B. once called the E. S. the "soul," not only the "heart," of the Society. In the statement which she issued when the E. S. was organised (published in the H. P. B. number of the *Theosophist*) she uses these words: "The Esoteric Section is thus 'set apart' for the salvation of the whole Society." She explains how, without it, the Society had done very little; it had not been really a brotherhood; and so the Masters desired that the Society should be strengthened and purified. The whole manifesto by H. P. B. deals with the relation of the E. S. to the Society.

However, there is a new thought which is very, very striking; and that is the use of the E. S. as an instrument by the Inner Head and the other Masters, for certain purposes that the Hierarchy have in mind. It is because of this attempt, if I might so put it, the using of the E. S. in connection with the world's work generally, that, after the E. S. was resumed, our O. H. brought about certain changes, particularly laying down

as a need for those who could be utilized as part of the instrument a strictness of diet that had not been absolutely obligatory, as you know, in other Disciplines than the Raja Yoga. She explained the reason why all should be vegetarians, because the purity of the physical vehicles is essential for welding them together into this instrument.

My particular need for the moment is to understand what is meant by this "instrument" in connection with the world's work; and to realise a little if one can the mechanism, the *modus operandi*, of it. There are one or two traditions that may help us a little. For instance, we have in the Christian Church the Ordination of priests in a particular way, and the statement is made (and it has its occult basis) that the Ordination of every priest is done really by the Lord Christ and not by the Bishop. No one can ordain a man as a priest unless he has the rank of a Bishop; and actually at the time of the Ordination, his hands are laid upon the priest, but it is the Head of the Religion Himself that actually does it. From that it follows that all so ordained have a kind of unity which makes them members of a spiritual body, of which the centre is the Christ Himself.

Something of the same kind occurs in Buddhism in rather a curious fashion, because Buddhism is not really a religion. Yet from the oldest days the members who sat around the Lord as His personal followers, those who put on the Yellow Robe, have been called the Sangha, which has been made one of the Three Refuges or Gems. But it is very carefully described in ancient books, that the members of the Sangha are those wearers of the Yellow Robe *who have entered upon the Path*.

¹ Notes of an E. S. address given by our late O. H. at Adyar on May 14, 1933, in answer to a question by C. J.

Similarly we are beginning to find out that in connection with Masonry, whose head is the Master Rakoczi, He is trying to use Masonry as a body in its various grades as an instrument. How? That is the question. This point has come up because the Inner Head referred to an instrument which They were trying to make, and He thanked those who offered themselves to be members of it.

Now will you please say something about *how* the Masters use this collection of members as an instrument? Are they united, though everywhere?

C. W. L.:

It is not a matter which is at all easy to explain to the physical brain, as it were. One has to have a good deal of intuition in order to see something of the working. I am bound to say that even then what we can see down here is only a part, and the lower part, of the work that is being done. Some of you, the older members at any rate, may remember Mr. Prime, who used to do a good deal of travelling and lecturing for the Society. He was not a highly educated person, but he had a very sound belief in the advantage of diagrams to help people to understand. So he used to take with him a roll of big coloured diagrams and to hang them up before his audience. One of these was a suggestion as to the unity, how we could all be one even though we were so different in so many ways.

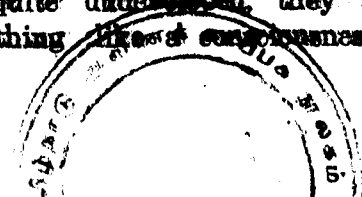
Well, the thing looked like a sun or star and was divided into layers, the central part being solid and the outer parts coming out in points. Each division was clear. The extreme point of each ray was the physical body, and these were distinct one from the other. The next band was the astral body. These were quite distinct, but they came a little nearer because the ray

was broadening. Then the mental bodies were in another ring, a brotherhood but still quite distinct. And then you came to the band which represented the Ego. Of course you will understand that these bands represent the planes.

The band that represented the Egos was just where the star part ran into the solid part. If you could think of a big star hanging in the air before you, you would see the points grow wider and wider till they joined. The Ego was represented as just at the point of junction, and then there was the solid ring to represent the next stage, the Buddhic plane. Inside that another for the Nirvanic plane. All the rest were one. That was intended to symbolise the very curious unity, which is so hard for us to grasp. It was not at all a bad symbol.

You are far enough apart here on the physical plane. You may learn to be brotherly, but you do not become one. In the astral plane you are still individual and separate, but you are nearer together. It is easier to understand one another. Go to the mental plane; there you come to a very pronounced difficulty, because that is the stage of our evolution just now, we are developing the lower mental, the discriminative faculty; but you are a little nearer together here, and when you transcend the lower mental and come to the Ego, then there is a definite connection just at the very corner.

When you get one step beyond, to the Buddhic, you come into a region where the actual vehicles are all one. That sounds nonsense, but it is a fact. In your Buddhic body, you sort of permeate the whole plane. You can find the individuals in it. Very oddly, if the people are quite undeveloped, they are not represented by anything like a consciousness. You



look for some one, and you find a hole. As you look down it, you say: "Oh, yes, that is my friend"; but he is not represented on the Buddhic plane.

Now here are our Masters standing very near the centre of that star, all of Them having consciousness on the Nirvanic plane, many of Them on the next higher plane, the Paranirvanic—that means nothing to us, it is a general glory which is unperceivable to us. More and more are They one as They ascend. You have sometimes very striking little examples of it, coming even down to the physical plane.

I remember very well the first time I went to consult Madame Blavatsky about a letter I had received from the Master. I said: "Will you read it?" She replied: "No, these things are private; I must not read a letter addressed to you." I had to say: "But I do not know how to answer it except through you." She withdrew her bluff a little at that. "If you put it that way, I will read it." I said: "I want to give my answer to a certain point in it." She replied: "You need not do that because He has already heard it through me." So you see she had the power to make such a unity with her Master that the words spoken in her presence were spoken in His presence. And that very frequently, I think always, was so with your Outer Head; so you had better be careful what you say when near her.

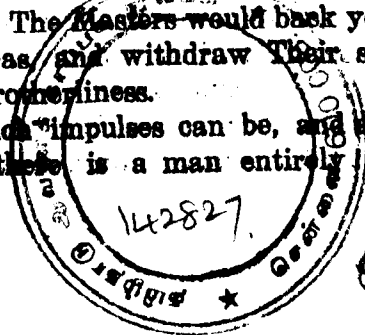
Anyway, you can understand this, that the Masters—let us put it the Adepts, because there are many others in the work besides those who act as our Masters—are always working for evolution. They know exactly, far more exactly than we can, what can be used for the benefit of evolution. You know down here people take up, naturally, necessarily, all sorts of partial ideas. Some will tell you the best thing to forward evolution is

sanitation; some say political freedom is the only way. None of these is the only answer, but all help. The Masters know, and we do not, which of these is the most necessary.

One of Their methods of working, and They have many, is to try gradually to influence public opinion. There are vast crowds of people whose co-operation is necessary before you can introduce reforms. This can be done by influencing vast masses of people, sometimes their thoughts, sometimes their feelings. Among many other things They are doing, our Masters are always pouring out force, which They use to strengthen any movement They see to be useful. There are many movements which tend to run to extremes; that is always our way, you know. They never encourage that, but They will put Their force behind anything that They see to be doing good. If there be evil in what is being done, then They will withdraw Their strength from that which goes too far or is evil; but will continue to press forward that part which is doing well.

They have a very wonderful discrimination. They will support some wild ideas up to a certain point, but no farther. You see that in political matters and other things. In many religious matters you see it, because people—you in this country, as well as we—are liable to run some religious idea much too far, farther than it is useful. You have the caste system. It was instituted by the Manu, and unquestionably had its meaning and object; but in many cases I should think you have run it too far. The Masters would back you up in the right kind of ideas, and withdraw Their support when you showed unbrottherliness.

Now such impulses can be, and are, sent out at all levels. If there is a man entirely devoted to Their



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service, who is not only willing but glad to allow Them to use him in that way, you can easily see how They will use him. But what we have not perhaps realised is how much nearer we come to one another when rising towards the centre of that star. If anything can be sent out from the Buddhic part of you, then it is one movement that comes through the whole. If therefore you can make a close union—take this body of the Esoteric School here—suppose you really feel brotherhood and affection for one another, then you are to that extent, and just to that extent, an instrument for the Masters.

Remember They are pouring out force all the time. It is like water in a tank; if you open the tap, it comes rushing out. So wherever an individual makes himself a vehicle, to whatever extent he can be used, used he will be. If, on the other hand, there is a member who cannot feel utter brotherliness, he drops aside for the moment. He would be a leak, instead of a part of the conductor.

In just so much as you can make yourselves at this level part of that instrument, to that extent you can be used; if you are a little advanced, at the next level you can be used for higher and higher outpourings. At all these different levels this force of Theirs is pressing through. Those who are veritably one can be used at very high levels indeed. The Adepts are such a unity, the true Sangha. Those who are really on the Path have made some progress and belong to that great Brotherhood. They are one; and that higher part of their consciousness is being used all the time, even though they on the physical plane would know nothing about it. This unity on the higher planes is to us down here a kind of myth; but it is a grand reality, and the more we

can realise it, the more we can make ourselves utilizable by Them.

Then you might say: "What difference to the use of our vehicles on the higher planes would be made by the things we do on the physical plane, even though we poison our bodies with alcohol, tobacco and sex-indulgence?" To every physical thing there is a counterpart. All the way up the thing shows itself. You have to use your intuition to try to grasp it. If your physical life is impure, you cannot be part of that inner vehicle.

You are told to meditate on the One—"I am That, that Self am I". When you do that, for the time being you perhaps do really realize that Inner Self. When you all do it simultaneously, then there should be a few moments when the whole group could be used as an instrument for the helping of other men. I have known cases where it has been used for a single person in some trouble or stress, some great necessity. Then he becomes a wonderful hero. You do not hear so much about that here as we do in Europe. We have many rough men, colliers and workers in mines, people without education; and yet when a great emergency arises, these people will show the most wonderful feeling of self-sacrifice, because for the moment they lay themselves open to a higher influence, and it is always ready to pour in.

You are at a different level from that, but you can be and will be used just to the extent to which you can make yourselves fit for it. It is so much a matter of your brotherly feeling. The Sangha is a Brotherhood. There will be many monks in it not highly educated in their religion, and who certainly stand at very different levels; yet they are all one because they have all passed through a certain dedication which opens them out to this higher influence. That is what Ordination does in

Christianity; it opens a man out to higher influences. He may take advantage of it or may not, but the way is open.

C. J.:

The chief point which seems not to have penetrated into some of our members is how physical purity affects the instrument. They think: "I am a spiritual man; what does it matter if I eat meat, smoke and drink?"

C. W. L.:

It matters because you coarsen the physical vehicle, and you cannot do that without affecting all the other vehicles.

You may see an example in the case of our Masters Themselves. They keep Their vehicles utterly pure always; but also when They are working on Buddhic levels, the lower vehicles must be absolutely still—He who is working on such a plane must have quietness around himself. You will often see, some of you have seen, the Master sitting quietly absorbed in meditation. If any sudden disturbance should arise, some wretched person started a quarrel, that would make for the time the Master's work on these higher planes impossible. I say "impossible," but He has the power (which He would probably exercise) to cut it off; but it would be quite an effort. Therefore there must be silence, no rough disturbance, in His neighborhood.

So in the same way, you might be doing all sorts of good things on higher levels; but if you make yourselves coarse on the lower levels, you cannot work there in the same way.

Besides, all these things on the physical plane are as dust under your feet. Why do people cling to these little things?

THE WORLD MOTHER

PEOPLE sometimes ask me why the World Mother became an angel, and did not remain a woman. In becoming an angel she still kept the qualities of a woman. We should not consider the human world as more important than the angelic. There is an extraordinary link between the angelic and the human kingdoms, and we can do little or nothing without the help of the angels, we depend upon them and their co-operation. They are as near to us as our own mind and our own emotions; in a way they are our higher selves. They comprise the music, the arts of the world—everything that has brought culture to humanity has come through the co-operation of the angels.

In order to try to understand the World Mother you should try to expand your consciousness. I do not trouble much about book knowledge, but I do know for myself that this is most important. I am not willing to say that you know nothing about the Masters, but I am willing to say you do know something about the Masters, even if you think you do not. Because the Masters are so near the Theosophical Society, that brings Them very close to us, and us to Them. Their consciousness is surrounding us all the time, and so to contact Them is within our possibility. The same idea applies to the World Mother. She is an eternal Principle, an eternal Being, and her work is very near to the world and to those of us who desire to do her work.

If there were no Theosophical Society the World Mother and Her work would exist just the same. The World Mother exists in some form or other in all world-religions. The feminine aspect of the Divine has been represented to some extent by "our Lady," the Mother

of Jesus Christ. In the worship of Her in the Roman Catholic Church, men, women and children all come to Her. There is not a single secret sorrow which cannot be brought to Her. She is close to everyone, everyone is close to her. The Roman Catholic pours out his whole heart to her, and She comes in equal abundance to him and to all who so pour out their hearts.

Among the Chinese people the worship of Kwan Yin is one of the most beautiful aspects of Chinese life, and without that worship of Kwan Yin there would be a less beautiful China. For every girl, every woman, to feel that there is one Being of mercy to whom she can go, can you not imagine what a blessing there is in that conception, that aspect of the World Mother? Can you not imagine the need of some one who can come so close into our personal life in order to bring comfort, to bring happiness, even in small every day happenings?

I realize how much more effective the principle of the World Mother is because she is an angel even more than she is a woman. What I mean is that if you will forget yourselves, your bodies, if all who are women forget you are women, and all who are men forget you are men, and instead think of yourselves as Egos, then you will realize that the actual aspect of womanhood is one that is intricately woven with that of the angelic kingdom, and that the true woman in her highest aspect, not woman in her body, but woman in principle, is the aspect of beauty, is the aspect of art. A woman is in reality an artist. I am speaking of what is incident to womanhood, and I see how extraordinarily she is the beauty of life, the inspirer of music, of the arts. I can see the joy she can bring into physical and spiritual life, the grace she can bring into the life of the painter, the vision of beauty she can give through

every artist. Now all that is as much and even more than mere work for the cause of womanhood or the work of the woman who is the mother of the physical child. I wish you would try to realize all this in its highest, biggest aspect.

I am not an educationalist in any sense of the word. I am very fond of children. There is nothing I enjoy more than to be with them, for I love them. But the fact remains that however important the proper upbringing of children may be it is not the only work of the World Mother. She has many lines of work. She gives to the whole world in its physical, emotional and mental aspects, and far beyond the world because she represents the "Motherhood of God," the cosmic aspect of Motherhood. Remember that She is the very essence of Nature itself; Her quality pervades every creature in the world. When a wild animal shows warmth of love and protection towards its young, that is as much and as beautiful an aspect of the World Mother as any other aspect She shows forth, for She is the mother to those young animals. She is one with the wild creatures which are cruel perhaps, ferocious perhaps, in the beauty of their motherhood. That is something human beings have to learn. We can learn so much from Nature. As the gentle animal becomes ferocious in the defence of its young, so have we to become strong and brave if it is to protect some one. That is one of the aspects of the World Mother.

I am trying to give you the greatness of the idea of the World Mother. But that does not mean She is not near to us personally. There is no being nearer to us on the physical plane than She is. I know this, not from my own experience, because I very rarely

call upon Her for help, but I have seen this nearness in others. I have seen how when some one is really unhappy She consoles him; or, when some one in the world has done great work, and suddenly is misunderstood, suddenly is bereft of friends, even if that person never thought about the World Mother, yet he finds that She comes to him and helps him.

I know many non-Theosophists who have heard about the World Mother, and who have made rather fun of the idea, but who have had moments when they needed Her. They did not believe in Her, but having heard of the idea of the World Mother, the thought came into their minds: "I wish I could be near to Her," and the very desire to be nearer has brought the World Mother closer to them and they have been flooded with Her compassion.

There are very few people who, in the very secret corners of their hearts, are non-believers. To the World Mother belief in Her is not necessary. But belief in the power of women, belief that women can bring great and beautiful thoughts into the world, that they can promote true chivalry, can protect the young, can bring the compassion of motherhood to the very animals, to every kingdom of nature, that in itself is sufficient, that is all she expects women to believe; not to believe in Her, but to believe in their real selves. We do not talk about the World Mother in Her many aspects, we do not even try to use the sympathy and love of the World Mother necessarily, but we appeal to the imagination of people that they may know what they can be, or what visions of beauty and development lie before them which they can follow. That is, I think, the best way we can present the World Mother to the world as a whole. So, when you think of Her, it

would be well if you would not have a narrow point of view about Her.

There are two fundamental attributes of the World Mother—as far as I know—Beauty and Compassion. Of course She has always that quality of Power, expressed in the Samskrit word *Shakti*, the feminine aspect, called often the Mother aspect. *Shakti* means Power. When you talk about the *Shakti* of God it means the feminine aspect of God, the Power of God.

When the Lord Buddha went out into the world and saw so much unhappiness and disease, His whole heart went out to suffering humanity. He left His palace, His kingdom and all His riches to find illumination, that He might bring true wisdom into the lives of others, that He might solve the problem of sorrow. In like manner the World Mother loves the whole world and wishes to help it.

If we can really understand the unity of life and can come to the stage of development where we are responsible for the happiness of others, not only of human beings but of sub-human beings as well, and if we will make a point of bringing joy, not by weeping with those who weep, but by being happy, radiantly happy beings, we will far more quickly be able to comfort those who are in sorrow. Most people's idea of compassion is of being very unhappy themselves. If a woman comes to me and says: "Help me," I do not start to weep. One cannot then help. The Lord Buddha always appeared with a smile on His face.

The World Mother, Who in Christian terminology is called the "Mother of Sorrows" comes as a shining angel, radiating light and color, and shows you the joy of the world, the joy of conduct. If you want to have

sunshine in a dark room you do not close the windows, you open them.

We should have greater joy, more light-ness, to shed upon the world around us, instead of concentrating upon the serious side of life. Instead of discovering all the sorrowful things of life, let us remember light-ness is an angelic quality which the World Mother needs. Think of Her as brimming over with beauty and joy. She is extraordinary sweetness and quietness, tenderness and compassion, so that no sorrow, no grief, no depression, no clash in the world can occur without Her coming personally into touch with it.

Naturally, if we realize these great things, we will see how the training of children and the understanding of them is one of the most important lines of work. Because these qualities are needed for the future it is in our hands as women to bring up children into the citizenship of the new era. Is there to be peace in the next generation, is there to be no cruelty to animals, is there to be a better kind of world, will the next generation be more beautiful in its expression, is there to be more art, dancing, music, painting, culture? All this is in your hands and mine, because it entirely depends upon us how the children of the world are to be brought up. We shall never do this, never properly educate the children, nor shall we ever become anything in the world unless we ourselves express the necessary qualities in every day life. I think, perhaps, the most important work at the present time, if you are working for the World Mother, is to immerse yourself into the very essence of Her being and to become so much one with Her that everything you do or say is a reflection of Her beauty and grace. That is what we must be thinking about. You may give a wonderfully eloquent speech,

but anybody can see through that. But if you are living that beauty, if you can to a certain extent experience that quality, if you are trying to express it in words as well as in other ways, then your words will have some meaning. Before you speak people must know what you are. People do not express their real being in words. If you are talking about the World Mother, then your listeners must know the World Mother before you speak of Her, in a subtle way they must feel something of Her through you.

As a foremost quality in the Theosophical life I would mention joy. Gloominess is a terrible thing. It is not a matter of talking about joy, one must radiate it.

I know there are plenty of difficulties, but I realize more and more strongly that all the most beautiful and marvellous things in life are one with the most joyful things of life.

For me, personally, there is only one source and that is the World Mother; so, whether I talk to you about a tree or a stone or about the World Mother, or about anything beautiful, it is always connected in my mind with Her, because I have that particular line of work, and because I instinctively and naturally feel it.

She Herself does not particularly care what you think about. It does not matter to Her how many movements you know about. It does not matter how many books you have read. It does not even matter what achievements you have made in the world, nor how clever, how learned or accomplished you are. What really matters is that you have an inward and an outward appreciation of all that is true and beautiful.

A working man, because of one act of hospitality, one look of chivalry, works for the World Mother;

or, if some poor, hard-working woman, drudging all her life, yet amid her many every day troubles helps the poor, thinks of them tenderly, helps an animal because she feels for it, she is working for the World Mother. If you are a learned person and have something at least of the spirit of a desire to understand others which is the real outcome of love; if for a moment you can catch a glimpse of the real and the beautiful and try to express it; if, in your aspiration, your meditation, you can reach a great height never before experienced; if in the grace of your speech, of your action, in the culture of your being, you can weave in a loving touch; if you can go to everything and everyone in understanding and love, that is what distinguishes you as a spiritual person; that is enough to bring Her close to you.

Yet, on the other hand, if you know little, if you have not anything beautiful in you, not even a spark of beauty in you, if you have gone into the very depths of cruelty, if you feel life is hard, if you see no light at all before you, and are lost, so to speak, in the world, then also you are near the World Mother, because in Her compassion She brings light into your darkness.

All the people in the world who have made mistakes, who are in prison, in difficulties, who have no other friend, those people have Her more abundantly than we can ever know. We have forgotten them. She has not. In other words, She is absolutely near even to the most hopeless person, the lost child, the greatest criminal. One of Her very special qualities is to go to those in need. She is on earth to help and protect them through Her love. She is the embodiment of all fine qualities. She is indeed the Mother

not to us only but to all Nature, to the Devas, and if I may say so, to the Masters Themselves. All these things I have spoken of are the World Mother, and much, much more. One cannot really put it into words, but one can feel it and think about it, and more than anything else we can *be* it.

RUKMINI

The O. H. writes as follows from Rio de Janeiro :

The matter of vegetarianism : There are a certain number of *old* members who have asked for exemption. If they have been faithful workers—old, not so much in age, as by service—they can remain in the E.S. But they must not belong to, or attend, any Group meeting, or any General Meeting, except one called by the O.H. himself. The Inner Head desires a particular type of magnetism at all meetings. I do not desire to exclude these old workers; on the other hand, I have my instructions. These members can receive the *Disciple*, and *general* papers, but not Instructions issued to Disciplines.

I desire that the time limit¹ be raised once again to three years' membership in the Society. This is to be the general rule, but, as hitherto, Secretaries can make exceptions at their discretion. Once again, the candidate must have *served*, not merely studied.

I hope to be in Adyar about the first week in December.

¹ For admission to the E.S.

ADYAR AS A SPIRITUAL CENTRE

IT is essential for the individual member and for the Society that Adyar, as a great spiritual centre, should be maintained worthy and dignified. The importance of this is so obvious that few can doubt it. Adyar is, and always has been, a spiritual oasis to which the weary traveller looks for comfort and repose. Though it may not be the privilege of each member in the Society to go there from the world of wilderness, yet the mere existence of such a centre gives hope and encouragement.

I have visited many a wonderful land and seen many a famous sight, but there is none to equal the extraordinary intangible something of our Adyar. There is an atmosphere there that does not exist in many a church and temple, and there is a presence there that we expect to perceive in a sacred shrine. One can become either a God or a pitiful sinner at Adyar. It is a wondrous spot, and it must be maintained as though it were a holy temple.

J. KRISHNAMURTI (in a letter dated January, 1924.)

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