

THE BEACON

A LITTLE PERIODICAL INTENDED FOR THEOSOPHISTS

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THE LORD BUDDHA HAS SAID

that we must not believe in a thing said merely because it is said; nor traditions because they have been handed down from antiquity; nor rumours, as such; nor writings by sages, because sages wrote them; nor fancies that we may suspect to have been inspired in us by a Deva (that is, in presumed spiritual inspiration); nor from inferences drawn from some haphazard assumption we may have made; nor because of what seems an analogical necessity; nor on the mere authority of our teachers or masters. But we are to believe when the writing, doctrine, or saying is corroborated by our own reason and consciousness. "For this," says he in concluding, "I taught you not to believe merely because you have heard, but when you believed of your consciousness, then to act accordingly and abundantly."

(Secret Doctrine, Vol. III, page 401.)

PSYCHISM IN THE T. S.

Many members of the Theosophical Society who have joined in recent years are not aware of the vital part which psychic phenomena played in the early days of the movement. One has but to read such books as the "Old Diary Leaves" and other writings of Colonel Olcott and the reminiscences of Countess Wachtmeister and "Incidents in the Life of Madame Blavatsky" by Mr. Sinnett, to become fully aware of the continuous manifestation of the psychic faculties and phenomena which were part of the daily life of H.P.B. and of the further significant fact that her chief books, *Isis Unveiled* and the *Secret Doctrine*, were written by the use of these faculties.

Whether the early identification of the Theosophical Society with psychic phenomena may or may not have been fortunate, is a matter of individual opinion but it is interesting to note that the demonstration of psychic powers and the producing of such phenomena was one of the outstanding characteristics of Madame Blavatsky and it is through these powers that the Society has always gained much of its most valuable information, this being true of the later period as well as of the earlier days.

The regrettable feature of such methods lies in the fact that such an avenue is subject to so much criticism from those who do not accept the reality of the unseen worlds and because the information so put forward is in many cases quite beyond the possibility of verification by the ordinary member. The latter point, however, carries also a most valuable opportunity and stimulant, for the student is thrown largely upon his intuition in attempting to discriminate between the true and the false. It is this struggle which inspires the few to be willing to undertake the strenuous discipline of life and sustained aspiration and effort necessary to make the contact with the Ego which alone can bring that illumination which will plant the feet of man upon the solid ground of fact recognized through experience.

Such a situation demands of the members a dispassionate and balanced attitude. On the one hand, there is the natural tendency of many to accept without even such questioning as is possible by use of lower manas, all statements which are made with regard to the conditions existing in the unseen worlds, of the laws of the higher planes and even the prophecies as to future events. This tendency is particularly increased when the statements come from individuals who have come, for various reasons, to occupy prominent positions in the Society. On the other hand, there has been the inevitable reaction from the pressure of the thought form of unquestioning faith and blind following (which is resulting in the attitude that loyal members will not question, criticise or refuse to follow such pronouncements), to the other extreme which is now being evidenced by a sectarian tendency among a small portion of the membership to condemn as untheosophical all that does not agree with their own interpretation of the *Secret Doctrine*. Mentally revolting against the psychological pressure above referred to, which has acted as a barrier to freedom of thought, there are those who would throw

overboard all that has been gained during the past three decades. This is accompanied by a violent swinging back to the "original impulses" in a manner so narrow and sectarian as to form an interesting parallel with the position of the "Fundamentalists", so called, in the recent Protestant religious controversies in the United States.

It should be apparent that either extreme falls short of the wise and balanced attitude of mind which must be attained if wise and balanced action is to be achieved. Blind following and psychic credulity are evidences of immaturity and lack of judgment and it is to be remembered that these qualities are equally present in both cases, whether the pronouncements accepted appeared between the years 1875 to 1900 or between 1900 and 1925.

Mr. Baille-Weaver, the former General Secretary of the British Section, is reported to have said in a lecture in London in April, 1922, in this connection that "The Masters want independent thinkers and judges, people who will decline to accept what purports to be Masters' teachings if it seems to them to be wrong" and this statement is quite in line with the position taken up by Colonel Olcott, who was wont to maintain that the Masters themselves were not authority beyond our questioning and that "a fact is not one whit better or weightier when associated with H.P.B., or one of our Masters, or their chelas." See the Theosophist for November, 1893.

Perhaps the saying of the Lord Buddha taken from the Secret Doctrine which appears on the front page of this issue of THE BEACON, is, after all, the wiser attitude. In any event, it would seem quite at variance with the whole history and line of development of the Theosophical movement to condemn teaching either new or old, because some psychic faculty aided in its production.

If man has subtler vehicles and if there are planes of matter and states of consciousness beyond the physical and if it is possible through study and training to develop the powers of the soul, then we can not reasonably limit our fields of investigation to what may be verified by physical plane means nor can we confine ourselves to evidence put forward by any one or two exponents of the hidden teaching, be they leaders of either the early or of the later day periods of the Society's growth. If our search is for the truth, then let us not shut the door on any portion of that truth through intolerant sectarianism or from emotional revulsion, from persons or conditions.

While it is true that much information contained in the Theosophical literature in the past few years is subject to the criticism of dependence for authority on psychic faculty, the same is equally true of most of the original literature of the Society, including specifically, the Secret Doctrine, as is well known and sufficiently set forth in the Theosophical literature.

Those who study and investigate with care will be surprised and pleased to find that in both cases there are many corroborations and physical plane proofs of much which has seemed at first unverified revelation but that, at the same time, there is also in both cases many details

of more or less importance for which as yet there is little substantiating authority.

Let us then refrain from believing simply because some leader, who is presumed to have these powers, has set forth his beliefs and conclusions for the enlightenment of his brothers, and let us equally refrain from condemning as false everything which does not fit in with our particular interpretation of such truths, as set forth by the leader who seems to us to be the greatest Messenger. Rather let us search for the truth from every source, accepting "when we have believed of our own consciousness, then to act accordingly and abundantly."

F. B.

CONSCIENCE

Mrs. Besant spoke some wise words at Benares, and the New Zealand Sectional organ quotes the following with approval:

"On the whole, I think the Society is in a very healthy state. There is a good deal of difference of opinion, in matters of doctrine, and I think it is a very healthy sign. Unless we have difference of opinion on matters of doctrine, we shall inevitably become a church or a sect. It is not our business to become either, for we are a society of students, and if all students agree there will be a very poor advance. We test all new thought, and follow or reject it, as it affects our own intelligence. We want individual thinking; we want that every member, as far as possible, should study the great truths of all religions, should use his own intelligence to judge of their value, to follow them or not to follow them. We must remember that conscience is the inheritance of the past . . . People think conscience is the voice of God. It is nothing of the kind. You may remember the story of an English Archbishop. A Puritan, brought before him for punishment for difference of opinion on religion, said he was following his conscience. 'Yes,' said the Archbishop, 'that is quite right; but take care that your conscience is not the conscience of a fool!' That was a little rough, but there is a good deal of sense in it. Conscience is the voice of past experience, and if we have not been through past experience of it, a thing does not touch our conscience at all."

ANNIE BESANT.

(From the Canadian Theosophist for December, 1922)

THE AUTHORSHIP OF MRS. BAILEY'S BOOKS

Rumours are reaching me from the most unexpected quarters by letter, and as I go about lecturing in the East, that claims are being made for the books which I have lately published, "Letters on Occult Meditation" and "Initiation, Human and Solar," which I myself do not make and never have made. I have, therefore, certain things to say which I feel to be of importance and certain things which I wish students of my books to realise clearly. This may be considered to be within my rights as the karma of writing and launching the books is mine alone.

The report as it reaches me is a two-fold one: It is being stated that a certain Master wrote or dictated the books, and secondly, that certain people are claiming to be in touch with him and know him to be the author of them. This latter point is of no evidential value as it concerns the claims of certain individuals and is therefore only of value to themselves, being unprovable by the general public. Their knowledge may be well and good as far as they are personally concerned and may serve, rightly or wrongly, to enhance to them the value of the books and their interest in reading but it is of no intrinsic worth to other people. If any person claims personally to know the author and that he has told them that he wrote these books and has authorized them so to state they are utterly duped, or self deluded for I know him personally and know his reiterated wish to remain unknown and he has approved the form of publication of both books. The first part of the rumour is however, vitally my affair.

I have never claimed that a Master is responsible for the books or has dictated them. I have always said that the Tibetan wrote them, as it is his expressed wish that his real name be withheld. It is his desire that the books be judged and valued on the basis of their own intrinsic worth and through their appeal or non-appeal to the intuition and not because any person presumes to claim authority for them.

In this particular period of the history of the Theosophical Movement it should be apparent to all careful students that much of the trouble has been brought about through two factors: the blind credulity of a certain group who accept any statement provided it is backed by a Hierarchical claim of some kind and the narrow sectarianism which would make a prophet out of H.P.B. and a Bible out of the "Secret Doctrine." It is high time therefore that occult books should be put forth and judged because of their contents and not because this, that and the other Master is supposed to be responsible for them or because they agree or disagree with the "Secret Doctrine". Only in this way will our people find their way out of the narrow rut of the credulous devotee or of the narrow sectarian follower, on to the broad road which leads a man to self-realisation.

In view therefore of this situation I have felt led to make my position clear and to state that the anonymity of the writer of these books must be preserved. My private personal knowledge as to his real identity has no bearing upon the situation and though I know who he is, I shall never state his name except with his express permission. It is common physical

plane ethics for the desired anonymity of an author to be respected and the unprovable assertions of people that a certain Master and the Tibetan are one and the same violate this standard and do not help to forward the work as the Tibetan had hoped.

The Tibetan is publishing in the fall a far more important work, entitled "A Treatise on Cosmic Fire". He has the same basic understanding with me and on me falls the responsibility of seeing his wishes respected. It is the books which should be of importance, not the personality of the writer. The spreading of the truth is of importance, not the calling of attention to any particular Master. The bandying about of Their names in this respect is very much to be deplored.

I should like to state that this trouble has apparently arisen though an idle piece of gossip. Four years ago when I first started the work with the Tibetan I had no idea to what proportions it would grow and looked upon the earlier letters as interesting but perhaps of no more value than many other literary efforts. To one or two intimate friends I spoke of the Tibetan and his imparted data. I was not then myself personally aware that a certain Master is familiarly called "The Tibetan" by His confrères. This fact was known to those to whom I spoke. They immediately jumped to the conclusion that the Tibetan who wrote through me and this particular Master were one and the same and circulated the report. As usual reports grow and are embroidered until now the thing has assumed proportions which necessitate my making this statement. I refuse, and my refusal is endorsed by the Tibetan, to put out any books based on any claims of a Hierarchical origin and thus swell the tide of credulity and sectarianism which is proving so detrimental to the Theosophical Movement.

Alice A. Bailey.

New York City,
Jan. 31st., 1923

THE OCCULT LEAGUE

Readers of THE BEACON will be interested in the announcement of the formation of a new Theosophical organization in New York City to work primarily under the third object of the Society. The Body has been incorporated under the laws of the State of New York with executive offices at 135 Broadway and local headquarters at 230 Madison Avenue, New York City.

The official name of the corporation is The Occult League and its objects are:

1. To investigate the unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in man.
2. To provide facilities for occult study and spiritual unfoldment.
3. To collect and disseminate occult truth and information.
4. To help to provide channels of expression and service for occult students and workers.

The Occult League desires not to compete with or to be a substitute for any other group or line of activity, but rather so to conduct its activities as to facilitate cooperation with all groups of similar aims and ideals. The League is entirely impersonal and unsectarian, exalting no personality, proclaiming no doctrines or dogmas, and claiming no authority.

The League welcomes as associates all persons in sympathy with its objects who may desire to register for lectures or classes, to use the League library, or to receive literature and announcements. The relation thus established signifies a mutually recognized attitude towards life requiring no obligations. There are no dues, the League being entirely supported by voluntary donations.

THE CREST-JEWEL OF WISDOM

(Continued from Page 79)

39. The great and peaceful ones live regenerating the world like the coming of spring, and after having themselves crossed the ocean of embodied existence, help those who try to do the same thing, without personal motives.

40. This desire is spontaneous, since the natural tendency of great souls is to remove the suffering of others just as the ambrosia-rayed (moon) of itself cools the earth heated by the harsh rays of the sun.

41. "O Lord, sprinkle me, heated as I am by the forest fire of birth and re-birth, gratify the ear with ambrosial words as they flow from the vessel of thy voice mingled with the essence of thy experience, of the pleasure afforded by Brahmagnyan, sacred and cooling."

42. "How shall I cross this ocean of birth and re-birth? What is my destiny, what means exist, O Lord, I know not. O Lord kindly protect me, lighten the sorrows arising from birth and re-birth."

43. The great soul, beholding with eyes moistened with mercy the refuge-seeker who, heated by the forest fire of birth and re-birth, calls upon him thus, instantly bids him fear not.

44. That wise one mercifully instructs in truth the pupil who comes to him desirous of emancipation, and practising the right means for its attainment, tranquil minded and possessed of Sama.

45. "Fear not, wise man, there is no danger for thee; there exists a means for crossing the ocean of birth and re-birth—that by which Yogis have crossed. I shall point it out to thee.

46. There is an effectual means for the destruction of birth and re-birth by which, crossing the ocean of changing life, thou wilt attain to supreme bliss."

47. By a proper comprehension of the purport of the Vedanta is produced the excellent knowledge; by that the great misery of birth and re-birth is terminated.

48. It is directly pointed out by the sayings of the Scriptures that Sraddha, Bhakti, Dhyan and Yoga, are the causes which bring about emancipation. Whoever abides by these, attains emancipation from the bondage of incarnated existence.

49. By reason of ignorance a connection between you who are Paramatma and that which is not Atma is brought about and hence this wheel of embodied existence. By the fire of wisdom arising from this discrimination the growth of ignorance is burnt up to its very roots.

Mohini M. Chatterji.

From THE THEOSOPHIST—Oct. 1885.

EIGHTEEN OUTLINE LESSONS ON THE BHAGAVAD GITA

Prepared by Alice A. Bailey

LESSON XI.

*Teachings on Wisdom, or the
Result of knowledge and action*

The fourth Discourse:—

Arjuna's thought: ".....The universe is burning, Vishnu, with Thy rays. Reveal Thyself; what awful Form art Thou? I worship Thee. Have mercy, God supreme. Thine inner Being I am fain to know; This Thy forthstreaming Life bewilders me."—XI.30.31.

(Note: The Vishnu aspect is the Wisdom aspect.)

1. *The Master of Wisdom*IV.1-11
 2. *Tis identity with all selves*IV.35.6.11
 3. *The method of acquiring wisdom.*
 - a. By discrimination between the real and the unreal....IV.17.22
 - b. By self-controlIV.21.39.27
 - c. By renunciation of actionIV.20.23.41
 - d. By sacrificeIV.25-33
 - e. By serviceIV.34
 - f. By equilibriumIV.22
 - g. By discipleshipIV.34
 - h. By investigationIV.34.42
- The resultIV.36

Topic for Meditation:—

The blessed Lord said:—"Even if thou art the most sinful of all sinners, yet shalt thou cross over all sin by the raft of wisdom."—IV.36.

.....192...

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