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THE CREST-JEWEL OF WISDOM

Being a Translation of Sankaracharya's Viveka Chudamani

By Mohini M. Chatterji

1. I prostrate myself before the true teacher—before Him who is revealed by the conclusions of all systems of Vedantic philosophy, but is Himself unknown, Govinda the supreme bliss.
2. Among sentient creatures birth as a man is difficult of attainment, among human beings manhood, among men to be a Brahmin, among Brahmins desire to follow the path of Vedic dharma, and among those learning. But the spiritual knowledge which discriminates between spirit and non-spirit, the practical realisation of the merging of oneself in Brahma-atma and final emancipation from the bonds of matter are unattainable except by the good karma of hundreds of crores of incarnations.
3. These three, so difficult of attainment, are acquired only by the favor of the Gods:—humanity, desire for emancipation, and the favour of (spiritually) great men.
4. One who, having with difficulty acquired a human incarnation and in that manhood a knowledge of the scriptures, through delusions does not labour for emancipation, is a suicide destroying himself in trying to attain illusive objects.
5. Who is there on this earth with soul more dead than he who, having obtained a human incarnation and a male body, madly strives for the attainment of selfish objects?
6. He may study the scriptures, propitiate the gods (by sacrifices), perform religious ceremonies or offer devotion to the gods, yet he will not attain salvation even during the succession of a hundred Brahma-yugas except by the knowledge of union with the spirit.
7. The immortality attained through the acquisition of any objective condition (such as that of a god) is liable to end, as it is distinctly stated in the scriptures (Sruti) that karma is never the cause of emancipation.
8. Therefore the wise man strives for his salvation, having renounced his desire for the enjoyment of external objects, and betakes

himself to a true teacher and accepts his teachings with an unshaken soul.

9. And by the practice of right discrimination attained by the path of Yoga he rescues the soul—the soul drowned in the sea of conditioned existence.

10. After giving up all karma for the purpose of removing the bonds of conditioned existence, those wise men with resolute minds should endeavour to gain a knowledge of their own atma.

11. Actions are for the purification of the heart, not for the attainment of the real substance. The substance can be attained by right discrimination, but not by any amount of karma.

12. A perception of the fact that the object seen is a rope will remove the fear and sorrow which result from the illusive idea that it is a serpent.

13. The knowledge of an object is only gained by perception, by investigation, or by instruction, but not by bathing or giving of alms, or by a hundred retentions of the breath.

14. The attainment of the object principally depends upon the qualifications of him who desires to attain; all artifices and the contingencies arising from circumstances of time and space are merely accessories.

15. Therefore he who desires to know the nature of his own atma, after having reached a guru who has got Brahmagnyam and is of a kindly disposition, should proceed with his investigation.

16. One who has a strong intellect, who is a learned man and who has powers of comprehension, is a man qualified for such an investigation.

17. He only is considered worthy to enquire into spirit who is without attachment, without desire, having Sama and the other qualifications and is desirous of obtaining emancipation.

18. For this purpose there exist four kinds of preparatory training, so say the wise; with them the attempt will be successful; without them unsuccessful.

19. The first is reckoned to be the discrimination of the eternal and the transitory; then follows renunciation of the desire to enjoy the fruits of action here and hereafter.

20. Thirdly, the six possessions beginning with Sama; and fourthly, aspiration for emancipation. Brahma is true, and transitory world is a delusion; such is the form of the final conclusion which is said to be the discrimination between the transitory and the eternal.

21. Renunciation of desire consists in giving up the pleasures of sight, hearing, etc.

22. Also in giving up all pleasures derivable from all transitory objects of enjoyment from the physical body up to Brahma the creator, after repeatedly pondering over their defects and shortcomings; the undisturbed concentration of mind upon the object of perception is called Sama.

23. Dama is said to be the confinement to their own proper sphere of organs of action and of sensual perceptions, after having turned them back from their natural course.

(To be Continued)

H. P. BLAVATSKY IN LUCIFER, OCT. 1888

Extract From an Article on Psychism

Is it profitable, moreover, to discuss the question of a Lodge receiving even theoretical instruction, until we can be sure that all the members will accept the teachings as coming from the alleged source? Occult truth cannot be absorbed by a mind that is filled with preconception, prejudice, or suspicion. It is something to be perceived by the intuition rather than by the reason; being by nature spiritual, not material. Some are so constituted as to be incapable of acquiring knowledge by the exercise of the spiritual faculty; e.g., the great majority of physicists. Such are slow, if not wholly incapable of grasping the ultimate truths behind the phenomena of existence. There are many such in the Society; and the body of the discontented are recruited from their ranks. Such persons readily persuade themselves that later teachings, received from exactly the same source as earlier ones, are either false or have been tampered with by chelas, or even third parties. Suspicion and inharmony are the result, the psychic atmosphere, so to say, is thrown into confusion, and the reaction, even upon the stauncher students, is very harmful. Sometimes vanity blinds what was at first strong intuition, the mind is effectually closed against the admission of new truth, and the aspiring student is thrown back to the point where he began. Having jumped at some particular conclusion of his own without full study of the subject, and before the teaching had been fully expounded, his tendency, when proved wrong, is to listen only to the voice of his self-adulation, and cling to his views, whether right or wrong. The Lord Buddha particularly warned his hearers against forming beliefs upon tradition or authority, and before having thoroughly inquired into the subject.

OCCULTISM

From the Tibetan Teacher

By Alice A. Bailey

Occult study, as understood in the Occident, is intellectually comprehended but not practically followed. Theoretically some glimmering may be appreciated by the man who aspires to the occult path, but the systematic working out of the involved laws has made small progress as yet.

Wherein lies the hindrance? It may be of value if we study three things:

1. The occidental hindrances to correct occult study.
2. How these hindrances may be surmounted.
3. Certain things the aspirant may safely undertake in the equipping of himself for treading the occult path, for that is the stage, and for the majority the only stage at present yet possible.

1. *Occidental hindrances to correct occult study.*

One of the main hindrances to the correct apprehension of the laws of occultism and their practical application lies in the fact of the com-

parative newness of the occident, and the rapid changes which have been the outstanding feature of European and American civilisation. The history of Europe dates back a bare three thousand years, and that of America, as we know it, barely as many centuries. Occultism flourishes in a prepared atmosphere, in a highly magnetised environment, and in a settled condition which is the result of age-long work upon the mental plane.

This is one reason why India provides such an adequate school of endeavour. There knowledge of occultism dates back tens of thousands of years and time has set its mark even upon the physique of the people, providing them with bodies which offer not that resistance which occidental bodies so oft afford. The environment has been long permeated with the strong vibrations of the great Ones who reside within its borders and who, in Their passage to and fro, and through Their proximity, continuously magnetise the environing ether. This in itself affords another line of least resistance, for this etheric magnetisation affects in a peculiar way the etheric bodies of the contacted population. These two facts, of time and of high vibration, result in that stability of rhythm which facilitates occult work, and offers a quiet field for mantric and ceremonial enterprise.

These conditions are not to be found in the West, where constant change in every branch of life is found, where frequent rapid shifting of the scene of action causes wide areas of disturbance which militate against any work of a magic nature. The amount of force required to effect certain results does not warrant their use, and time has been allowed to elapse in an effort to produce an equilibrising effect.

The climax of the disturbed condition has been passed, and a more stable state of affairs is gradually being brought about, and this may permit of definite occult work being attempted with success. The Master R. is working upon this problem, and likewise the Master of the English race,—(not the Master who occupies Himself with the Labour Movement or the betterment of social conditions). They are aided by a disciple of rare capability in Sweden, and by an initiate in the southern part of Russia, who works much on the mental levels. Their aim is so to tap the resources of force stored up by the Nirmanakayas that its downflow may sweep out much low grade matter, and thus permit the freer play of a higher vibration.

Another hindrance may be found in the strong development of the concrete mind. I would here impress upon you that this development must in no way be considered a detriment. All has been in due course of evolution, and later when the Orient and the Occident have reached a point of better understanding and interplay, their interaction will be of mutual benefit; the East will profit from the mental stimulation afforded by the strong mental vibration of its mental brother, whilst the Occidental will gain much from the abstract reasoning of the Oriental, and, through the effort to grasp that which the first subrace of the Aryan root race so easily apprehended, he will contact his *higher mind*, and thus build with greater facility the Antakarana. The two types need each other, and their effect upon each other tends to eventual synthesis.

The concrete mind, in itself, offers opportunity for a treatise of great length, but here it will suffice to point out a few of the ways in which it hinders those races who so paramouly represent it.

- a. By its intense activity and stimulated action it hinders the downflow of inspiration from on high. It acts as a dark curtain that shutteth out the higher illumination. Only through steadiness and a stable restfulness can that illumination percolate via the higher bodies to the physical brain, and so be available in practical service.
- b. The wisdom of the Triad exists for the use of the personality, but is barred by the disquisitions of the lower mind. When the fire of mind burns too fiercely it forms a current which counteracts the higher downflow, and forces the lower fire back into seclusion. Only when the three fires meet through the regulation of the middle fire of mind can full light be achieved, and the whole body be full of light, the fire from above—the triadal light—the fire of the lower self,—kundalini—and the fire of mind,—cosmic manas—must meet upon the altar. In their union comes the burning away of all that hinders and the completed emancipation.
- c. By discrimination—a faculty of the concrete mental body—the lower bodies are trained in the art of distinguished illusion from the centre of reality, the real from the unreal, the self from the notself. Then ensues, consequently, a period that must be surmounted, wherein the attention of the Ego is centred necessarily on the lower self and its vehicles and wherein therefore, the vibrations of the Triad, the laws that deal with macrocosmic evolution, and the subjugation of fire for the use of the Divine, have temporarily to be in abeyance. When a man sees quickly, the truth in all that he contacts, and automatically chooses truth or the real, then he learns next the lesson of joyful action, and the path of bliss opens before him. When this is so, the path of occultism becometh possible for him, for the concrete mind has served its purpose, and has become his instrument and not his master, his interpreter and not his hinderer.
- d. The concrete mind hinders in another and more unusual way, and one not realised by the student who attempts at first, to tread the thorny road of occult development. When the concrete mind is rampant, and dominates the entire personality (even though he may in theory, comprehend the laws that govern the evolution of the Logoic plan and the development of other solar entities besides his own Hierarchy) he cannot cooperate with these other lives and diverse evolutions until love supersedes concrete mind. Mind separates, love attracts. Mind creates a barrier betwixt a man and every suppliant deva. Love breaks down every barrier, and fuses diverse groups in union. Mind repels by a powerful, strong vibration, casting off all that is contacted as a wheel casts off all that hits its whirling periphery. Love gathers all to itself, and carries all on with itself,

welding separated units into a unified homogeneous whole. Mind repulses through its own abundant heat, scorching and burning aught that approaches to it. Love soothes and heals by the similarity of its heat to the heat in that which it contacts, and blends its warmth and flame with the warmth and flame of all other evolving lives. Finally, mind disrupts and destroys, whilst love coheres and heals.

Every change, in human life, is subject to immutable laws, if such a paradoxical statement may be permitted. In the attempt to find out those laws, in order to conform to them, the occultist begins to negate karma, and colours not the astral light. The only method whereby these laws can as yet be apprehended by the many who are interested is by a close study of the vicissitudes of daily existence, as spread over a long period of years. By the outstanding features of one cycle of ten years, for instance, as they are contrasted with the preceding or succeeding similar period, a student can approximate the trend of affairs and guide himself thereby. When the point in evolution is reached where the student can contrast preceding lives, and gain knowledge of the basic colouring of his previous life cycle, then rapid progress in adjusting the life to law is made. When succeeding lives can be likewise apprehended by the student, and their colouring seen and known, then karma (as known in the three worlds) ceases, and the adept stands master of all causes and effects as they condition and regulate his lower vehicle.

He who aspires to the occult path watches and considers changes and events in the light of all preceding events, and the longer and more accurate his memory the more he can dominate all possible situations.

(To be Continued)

ELEMENTARY PSYCHOLOGY

Extracts From Series E

1. The mass of the race is in pursuit of, or thinks it desires, mainly, money and material things and possessions, personal qualities, charm and attraction, fame, honor, worship and adulation of others, and—Sensation.

2. The unit members may delude self, and apparently intensely desire not to have these things, yet, it will later be seen that beneath the surface they are no different than the rest.

3. These three cardinal desires for money and objective possessions, love or adulation of others, and sensation, are inherently woven into the racial psychology.

4. And, incidentally, in passing, it might be remarked that they are the sole and only causes of pain among men, directly or indirectly.

5. The desires for material things and the desires for the attentions of others are to satisfy an inherent "need" for *superiority* over others. No individual of the mass lives who does not have some buried and perhaps unrealised feelings of *inferiority*. These are the driving forces which cause one to seek that which gives the sense of superiority.

6. The desire or need for "Sensation" is simply a part of the race at its immediate stage of evolution. One desires sensations of pleasure and the avoidance of the sensations of pain.

7. The mass, then, is actuated by desires—
 To avoid inferiority
 To feel superiority
 To avoid sensation of pain.
 To have sensation of pleasure.

8. And the deepest student in life, at some time, must have passed through these stages. For while in these stages, he is in the elementary class.

9. *Anything* which purports to teach one *how* to feel superior to his fellows, or *how* to have sensation of pleasure, is elementary. Yet, each must pass and learn it for himself.

Barriers

There are two states of mind which will utterly and absolutely bar one from further unfoldment, or understanding of self, or of life, or of nature.

One is that attitude which is skeptical of all lines of thought, ideas, or beliefs, which may belong to some other "school" or class, than that toward which one may lean.

For it is true that one may learn from *all* things, even if by analysis he arrives at the conclusion that another viewpoint is incorrect.

The other bar, which is the same one expressed in a different way, is that frame of mind wherein one feels that he has uncovered and discovered the last and final secrets of the mysteries of life. It is true that after each new realisation, or picture, one has this sensation for a time, yet if he clings to it he has closed to himself the pages of the books of life, and may not even peep beyond the one which he has found to be "complete."

It is true that there are various and different stopping places along the road for all, as even when you read a book you pause and put it down at some point and leave it lie. Perhaps you return to it and read beyond, perhaps you have enough and never take it up again. So it is not, necessarily, an error when one puts up the bars to unfoldment, or finds a page that portrays a picture which seems to be complete.

There are but two reasons or factors which cause one to place these bars of skepticism and "all-knowledge" between self and further growth and development.

The first possible factor is Conceit. Personal conceit because one has penetrated to a degree beyond his neighbor.

The second possible factor is—that some personality *whom you look up to* has said that certain things are true, and you think that that person is the last authority.

Either reason is wrong. Conceit bars from everything. And the personality has never walked the earth who has given to any other one the complete picture of life.

CLARENCE H. FOSTER.

This valuable series of papers on Elementary Psychology may be secured without cost by any person genuinely interested by applying to 1440 Clarkson St., Denver, Colo. See also *The Occult Press Review* for November, 1922.

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THE BEACON

EIGHTEEN OUTLINE LESSONS ON
THE BHAGAVAD GITA

Prepared by Alice A. Bailey

LESSON IX

Teaching on the three grades of humanity.

The seventeenth Discourse:—

Arjuna's thought: "Those that sacrifice full of faith but casting aside the ordinances of the Scriptures, what is verily their condition, O Krishna? Is it one of Purity, Passion, or Darkness?"

- 1. *The Three grades of human beings*.....XVII.2.3
 - a. Pure men, or spiritual men.....XVII.4
actuated by wisdom
 - b. Passionate men, or average man.....XVII.5.6
actuated by desire.
 - c. Dark folk, actuated by selfishness.....XVII.4
 - 2. *The three modes of living*.....XVII.6-10
 - 3. *The three types of action*.
 - a. The action of pure men.....XVII.11.14-17.20
 - b. The action of passionate men.....XVII.12.18.21
 - c. The action of dark men.....XVII.13.19.22
 - 4. *The Word of the Self in action*.....XVII.23-28
- Topic for meditation.*

The Blessed Lord Said: "Three-fold is by nature the inborn faith of the embodied—pure, passionate, and dark. Hear those of these.

"The faith of each is shaped to his own nature. The man consists of his faith; that which his faith is, he is even that."—XVII.2.3.

The Word, a magazine published from 1904 to 1917 by Mr. Howard W. Percival was one of the most valuable Theosophical Journals ever produced. It was continually reviewed in *The Theosophist* and was perhaps second only to H.P.B.'s own magazine *Lucifer*, in the significance of the teaching which it contained. Students will be glad to learn that complete files of this magazine, in bound volumes, can now be purchased in New York. Address *The Word*, 349 West 57th St.

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