

LETTER 2

Box 863, Johannesburg  
South Africa  
Sept. 21, 1945

My dear Ones:

There is one point I want to clear up. Some of you ask me to tell you just what we all do at night, and whether we always meet. Certainly we cannot always all meet. Neither would that be desirable, for many of you are already accustomed to astral plane work and continue your ordinary avocations there. I get letters from some of you telling me of memories of what we do, and say, and look like. That is very interesting, but I cannot tell you very much myself, because my own memory is spasmodic and infrequent. But if you will believe me, to me it does not matter in the very least. Try to realise what our Group is. It is a "soul" group. That is the great thing that matters. Some of you have only just joined the Theosophical Society and others have been E. S. members for many years. But because we are an affectionate and sincere group there is a corporate life which reinforces every member of it. The younger and less experienced are stimulated by the older and more experienced. I have had some very wonderful proofs of this. Some have been healed of psycho-pathic ills, and others have felt a new life and a new road opening out before them.

But there is not one who does not contribute his or her particular quota to the beauty and efficiency of the whole group. Why did I ask you to join? you may say. Did I have any particular reason or principle to go on? Only one. I thought I saw in every one of you the beginnings, even if hardly as yet developed, of the love of God and Man. We are just a band of brothers, some older, some younger, who - if you so will, any of you - will go down through the centuries together, following the same Ideal, the will of the Master, and doing the same work which is helping all we know how every living thing "in His Name," as He said, Himself, "And for the love of mankind."

There is not one of us who does not wish to do the Master's work, if we know how. We talked about this in my last letter. We must not get too formal and concrete in idea as to what is the Master's work. Since He is a Master of Life, all life is our province, all people, all living things. Remember how H. P. B. defined occultism. They are wonderful words. "Occultism," she said, "is not magic, though magic is one of its tools. Occultism is not the acquirement of powers, whether psychic or intellectual, though both are its servants. Neither is occultism the pursuit of happiness as man understands the word, for the first step is sacrifice, the second renunciation. Occultism is the Science of Life, the Art of living." So often the acquirement of powers, psychic or intellectual, produce that deadly enemy to growth in spirituality in man, egotism. As the Master K. H. puts it: "Often their possessor is misled by deceitful nature-spirits, or becomes conceited and thinks he cannot make a mistake." Now I do not wish to decry psychic powers. They are very useful in helping and understanding our fellow men if accompanied by a loving and humble spirit.

You notice H. P. B.'s words? She says the first step in occultism is sacrifice and the second renunciation. Sacrifice means living for other people and not ourselves. The Voice of the Silence says: "To live to benefit mankind is the first step." That is the first of the great qualifications for the Path, the faculty of discrimination or discernment. That gives us the right motive, without which we shall run the most awful risks. And Renunciation, the second, is the spirit of the second great qualification, Desirelessness, or Dispassion. It does not mean that we must possess



nothing and must give everything away. But we must learn and practise the habit of sitting loose about everything. When we have joy and power let us realise that we are but the agents of the Divine blessing and hold them in trust for the benefit of our fellowmen. When we have sorrow and loss, let us still be joyful. We can do as the saints did, offer them to Life on behalf of other unfortunates. Nothing teaches us so well as the sorrows and losses of life. To quote H. P. B. again: "Harmony is the Law of Life, discord its shadow, whence springs suffering, the teacher, the awakener of consciousness. Through joy and sorrow, pain and pleasure, the soul comes to a knowledge of itself; then begins the task of learning the Laws of Life, that the discords may be solved, and the harmony restored." If we are to be His one day we must be men and not children. We must be willing to meet, and to learn from, every event in life. I must finish H. P. B.'s words: "The eyes of Wisdom are like the ocean depths; there is neither joy nor sorrow in them; therefore the soul of the occultist must be stronger than joy, and greater than sorrow." We must not "hug" anything to our souls. We must be willing to let all things go with our blessing.

Next letter I want to talk about self-training and the art of meditation. Some of you practise that art, and some of you have never tried. But here again I want you not to be too formal and concrete about that whereof meditation consists. It is not merely following a routine or mental plan. These are quite useful but in using them do not forget the goal in the means. The aim of meditation, quiet thought, the uplifting of the heart heavenwards, call it what you will, is to produce a constant attitude of mind, or rather heart, one that sub-consciously looks all the time God-wards and Humanity-wards. A long time ago the Master M. outlined for us what He called the "Golden Stairs" which led to the Temple of Initiation. Each step is so clear and so wonderful, but the last is the most wonderful of all. It is "a constant eye to the ideal of human progression and perfection which the secret science depicts." That is the eternal sub-conscious attitude of heart we must aim at. Let us learn to make it colour all our outlook on life, and to let our little selves go. Does someone hurt or annoy us? We are not babies to mind being hurt or annoyed. Let us forgive him and try to understand. Does someone seem to put a spoke in our work? Do not be troubled. Right always comes uppermost. Another of the Master's "steps" was "A courageous endurance of personal injustice." When anyone of you formally reaches the Great Path, you may be sure that you will have to suffer many an unmerited injustice!

May the Master's blessing rest upon each of you. That is the continual prayer of your faithful and affectionate friend. You do not know how often every day I think of you all. As I sit in trams and trains or quietly at home, so very often you each rise up before me. So I think of you not only every day, but many times a day.

Your affectionate friend