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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
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My dear Ones:

At present I am in the city of Denver, quite close to the Rocky Mountains. The air is so electric that I have to be careful in touching any metal as I get an electric shock! One of the members took me a drive up the mountains to the "Look-Out" spot where Buffalo Bill is buried and you have no idea how lovely the mountains are, though they are now all covered with snow. We now have three English Theosophists touring the American Section, young Mr. and Mrs. Coats, whom everybody loves, and myself. We have just had a wonderful Christmas at Olcott, one of the happiest Christmases I ever remember. Mr. John Coats celebrated a midnight Eucharist on Christmas Eve, and on Christmas morning we all gathered around a Christmas tree in the Library, where everybody had endless presents. The children loved it. One little boy said: "Aren't there any more presents for me?"

This letter I want to talk about something that is very near the hearts of many of us. We would all like to be the "channel" of the Master's force, if we could. There are two things I would like to make plain about that. When anyone is the Accepted Pupil of a Great One, in a way which is so subtle that Bishop Leadbeater said it was almost impossible to describe clearly, the pupil's consciousness is included within the Master's greater one. Slowly, very slowly sometimes, because the Master never forces the pace, and has a very tender regard for what His pupil can sustain, the rapport between the two steadily increases. Of course, the pupil's little consciousness can never wholly understand or reply to the Master's so much greater and purer one. The Master K.H. uses the simile of two tanks, one empty and the other full, with a feed-pipe between. How long it takes, said He, for the knowledge and power of the Adept to flow into the chela (disciple) depends upon the size of the feed-pipe, that is to say upon the power of the pupil to assimilate and respond to the beauty which now surrounds him. The exchange, He says, is scientifically regulated by the Master. But it means that whilst on the side of the pupil, he is in touch with inexhaustible strength and beauty, the pupil, being a separate evolution and individual, also imparts something to the Master's consciousness, too. Whenever the Master has time to look in the direction of His pupil, all that pupil's thoughts, desires and actions will arise in the Master's consciousness, and also all that has happened round him to a much more minute and spacious degree than the pupil himself is personally aware of.

But we must not think, when we talk of the pupil's being a "channel" of the Master's power, that he just stays put like an automaton waiting for power to be poured through him like an empty pipe. That is not at all the idea. I remember Dr. Besant's explaining it to us. She said that the Master cannot put through his pupil anything that the pupil has not himself first initiated. The pupil himself must first be radiating peace, or sympathy or encouragement, etc., to others, and that will give the Master the opportunity, if He so wills, of enormously increasing the pupil's own radiation. He can heighten and increase it to a great degree, but He cannot do anything unless the pupil has already started radiating helpful thoughts, emotions and actions. The Master, Dr. Besant explained, uses His disciples, who are very different often in temperament and capacity, for that which they shine in, not for what they are deficient in. For example, the Master will use one disciple who is a tower of strong character to encourage and strengthen work and workers all around him. They will feel how much they can do whilst he is with them. Another whose great characteristic is a deep and loving sympathy with others, the Master will use to bless, encourage, and soothe many a weary and bewildered heart. So He uses us for what we have and are, not for those things which as yet we do not wholly possess.

We would like to be a channel of the Master's power, and through Him, or the Divine Power and Blessing. That is possible, even before a man is the officially recognised pupil of a Master. He can make it possible for the Master to use him by his own steady attitude of mind and heart, and by his complete surrender to the Divine Will as shown through the Master. The Saints knew this, especially the most wonderful of all saints, little Therese of Lisieux. Let us take her as an example. It is the secret of being what a mediaeval mystic meant when he exclaimed: "Oh! that I might be to the Almighty what a man's hand is to a man." As time went on St. Therese became aware that she was growing in her contact with the novices (for she was made at twenty the Assistant Novice Mistress), that a heavenly wisdom flashed into her heart and sometimes the most amazing insight into the thoughts and motives of her charges. When first she was appointed she thought the task beyond her strength. But she took refuge in God, and she says that "the knowledge that it was impossible to do anything of myself greatly simplified my task." Her impersonality was amazing. No personal predilection ever moved her on what she felt was God's will.

Pope Benedict XV called her "she who has become the mouth-piece of God." Even when her lot was misunderstanding, hurtful words, and she had many of them, she took it all as from the hand of God. Her first Superior was very severe with her, and she writes: "I thank you, Mother, for not having spared me. Jesus knew that His Flower was too weak to take root without the life-giving waters of humiliation." And when one of the novices said extremely rude things to her, she was filled with joy, and quotes in her autobiography the words of King David: "Yea, it is the Lord Who hath bidden him say all these things." If a soul can see Divinity coming in every little happening in life, even sad and unpleasant ones, it will not be long before Divinity begins to speak through him.

Dr. Besant once told us that if we can surrender ourselves wholly to the Master and take everything that happens to us as from His Hand, we give Him the right, not to alter our karma for that He can never do Who is "the agent and not the arbiter of karma," but to re-arrange its events so as to bring us where we will be most useful to His work. But for the Master to be able to do that we must make a complete surrender, not a partial one, keeping perhaps one little thing back. And the surrender must be for always not only for as long as it suits us.

We have no power just in ourselves to do much, but when God and the Master are with us we have all the power in the world to aid and bless. But the price we pay for that is the glad and simple acceptance of all that comes. Two of the Six Jewels of the Mind, which are the Third Qualification for Initiation, are Uparati and Titiksha, generally translated: Tolerance and Endurance (the Master K.H. calls this last, Cheerfulness). But we could translate them thus: Uparati, "letting people be what they are," and Titiksha, "letting events be what they are." A person must be what he is, as a flower stands at a certain stage of unfoldment. We would like to reform him, whereas the only person we can reform is ourselves. We would evade events, but he who is strong and unselfish enough to welcome all events gains a very heavenly wisdom.

More about this later, and next letter I would like to discuss the real nature of charity.

Your affectionate friend,

Clara Codd.