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Box 863

Johannesburg, S. Africa

My dear Friends:

I have just been writing an article called "Are we Occultists?" and perhaps it will be useful if I talk a little about it here. People often address me as an occultist, but when I consider what an occultist really is I feel I cannot lay claim to any such title. The word 'occult' means hidden, very much the same meaning as the 'mysteries' conveys. It means someone who is conversant with the hidden form and laws of Nature, and can consciously wield them. Now, do we, any of us, really do that? Of course not, and it is a good thing that we do not, for to entrust the knowledge and powers of the hidden side of nature to an unprepared and undisciplined person is like giving dynamite to a child to play with.

H.P.B. in very wonderful words describes the essence of occultism. I think I have quoted them to you before. She begins with saying what occultism is not. It is not magic, nor the acquirement of psychic or intellectual powers, although all these useful attainments are its tools. Nor can we consider occultism as the pursuit of happiness, for it begins with stern renunciation and sacrifice. Somewhere else she tells us that true happiness is never to be found on earth, but only in the higher, eternal realms of man's being. Then she tells us just what occultism is: "the science of life, and the art of living." Could we, most of us, be considered exemplars even of that high definition? I expect not. So what are we all, after all?

H.P.B. again gives us the answer. She once said to her esoteric students: "You are none of you occultists yet, but preparing to become one in another life." What, another life? you will say. Let us remember the words of the Master K. H.: "The process of purification is not the work of a moment, nor of a few months, but of years, nay extending over a series of lives." The work of purification is a stern necessity. H.P.B. wrote: "One only inflexible rule has ever been binding upon the neophyte, as it is binding now--the complete subjugation of the lower nature by the higher." We may say that our preparation to become occultists consists of two things: firstly, the purifying and control of our vehicles of consciousness; and secondly, the quick exhaustion of delaying karma from the past, what I like to call 'clearing the decks for action.'

We can put the work of the first in a few words. It fundamentally means the elimination of all purely personal motives and desires in fact, the elimination of the root of all evil, in subtle or gross form, selfishness. Only the little self, with all its desires and passions, can hinder the light of the true Self shining through. Says the Voice of the Silence: "Tie the Soul's mind can understand, the bud of personality must be crushed out, the worm of sense destroyed past resurrection." And again the book tells us: "Seek in the Impersonal for the Eternal Man."

The Eternal Man in each of us is our undying Godhead. Always it shines upon us. "The Light from the one Master, the one unfading golden light of Spirit, shoots its effulgent beams on the disciple from the very first. Its rays thread through the thick, dark clouds of matter (the radiations of the lower self). And in the Third Volume of The Secret Doctrine H.P.B. Says: "To those dedicated to the Higher Life, keep ever in mind the consciousness that though you see no Master by your bedside, nor hear one audible whisper in the silence of the still night, yet the Holy Power is about you, the Holy Light is shining into your hour of spiritual need and aspiration."



And the work of the second qualification means the brave facing and exhaustion of delaying karma. Until that is done we are not so much use to the Master and to Life as we could be. To 'clear the decks' we must get rid of our enfeebling vices and foolishnesses as quickly as we know how. For that reason Dr. Besant told us that we should really regard the rude and unpleasant people and the brutally frank as our best friends, for they may make us see something we never thought of before. And the moment we begin to see a weakness it is already losing its hold on the aura. The only one without hope for the moment is he who cannot or will not see.

Do not let us ever be afraid of what Karma (which is really the Will of God in action) may bring us, for in the long run it is always our friend, the moulder of our future strength and beauty of soul. To all of us who are in earnest will be sure to come rapid changes and unceasing problems. As soon as one is solved and we think we are going to have a little peace, another will arise. This is, really, a good sign, for it shows that we are living more than one life in this present one. We may be sure that the good and spiritual man will have much trouble, for Nature leaves the 'wicked' alone a little. They are too young to learn from quick re-actions. Two forces forever matter in this world, love and courage. Never can they be defeated.

The goal is wonderful--H.P.B. said it was worth "all possible effort," but it means unceasing vigilance and hard work. It means a true power to help men. But that spiritual power does not exalt our personality, for it often makes a man appear as nothing in the eyes of his fellow-men. Will it make us happy? Of course. As Light on the Path puts it: "Try to lift a little the heavy karma of the world; give your aid to the few strong hands that hold back the powers of darkness from obtaining a complete victory. Then do you enter into a partnership of joy, which brings indeed terrible toil and profound sadness, but also a great and ever-increasing delight." The sadness is what The Voice of the Silence calls "woe for the living dead," for those countless souls who suffer blindly and are like little lost children in the vast universe. We can never suffer too much, or surrender too much, for their sakes! For we are preparing to become of the number of those who can bring light and leading to the spiritually ignorant multitudes.

Soon I shall be off to the S. African Convention which this year takes place in Cape Town. As well as Cape Town, I shall be paying a visit to George and Port Elizabeth, and later on to Durban again. So many of you write me lovely letters I am so happy to have them, but please do not mind if I take a very long time to answer them as I surely will--in time! And some of you tell me how you meet me in dreams. Of course, often and often we all meet on the other side. The bond between us is a deep and lovely one and can never, never be broken.

Your affectionate friend,

CLARA CODD

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P.S.: Your Secretary requests that you keep her informed of any changes in your address; a few letters have come back unclaimed and with no forwarding address indicated. If you value these letters you will not want to miss any.

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