

Box 863, Johannesburg, S. Africa
Dec.-Jan., 1951-2

My dear Friends:

As usual, let me send you all my affectionate greetings and the best of all good wishes for Christmas and the New Year. Directly after Christmas this time I shall be off with Mr. and Mrs. Stakesby-Lewis to the Cape for a month's work there. We shall be arriving very near the time for the celebration of the van Riebeck festival, and one of our very honored members there, the famous conductor, Mr. Albert Coates, has composed a special opera for the occasion which will be performed there. All South Africa will be participating, more or less.

I said that this time I would like to discuss the question of the way to greet and use retributive karma coming from the past. What gave me the idea of this subject was reading a most delightful little book called "The Youngest Disciple" by an author whose name has escaped my memory. It is about the life of a disciple of the Lord Buddha. And one of its tales describes how one day a famous robber was so struck by the atmosphere and words of the Lord that he at once abandoned his evil ways and asked to be admitted among the brotherhood of the Lord's monks. As we can imagine, the other monks did not at first relish the idea, but the Lord was right in His divine insight, for the robber became a very excellent monk. One day the thought of all the evil he had wrought plunged the robber, turned monk, into great despair. "Mine was the path of evil livelihood, Lord," he cried, "and I know that the cruel deeds I did are now seeking me by night and day. There is no escape for me, in this life or the next." And he cried out aloud in his anguish.

The Blessed One laid a hand upon him to calm his spirit. "Yes, they are seeking thee, these evil deeds of thine! But there is this comfort for thee that thou art now seeking them! These evil deeds of thine, when they come upon thee at last, will come upon no fugitive crying to the forests to hide him, but upon an ascetic wearing the saffron robe of harmlessness and happiness and peace." And the Blessed One sent a young disciple who had just done a spiteful deed, to atone for it, whilst it was still young, by a month's servitude to the one he had injured. And when he was ill-treated, the young disciple said to himself: "This is my own evil deed which the Lord said would grow gentle if I faced it boldly." Silent in sorrow for him the Blessed One said: "Yet must he wrestle with his own evil action until he has conquered." And the cruel man he served became so impressed by his servant's life that he also became a disciple of the Buddha.

Does not this little story remind us of the words of the Christ to "agree with our adversary quickly, whilst we are in the way with him." And also of the words of St. Paul not to let "the sun go down upon our wrath?"

The thought of the young disciple who repeated to himself the words of his Lord that the retributive karma would grow gentle if he faced it boldly, is all in line with the discoveries of the psychologists, that if we run away from a thing it will follow us, and that the right way to deal with it is by bravely and boldly facing it. In fact we must seek them, instead of letting such effects from the past hunt after us. This is what a disciple of our Masters always tries to do. "Take it as honor," says the Master K. H. to Krishnaji, "that suffering comes to you, because it shows that the Lords of Karma think you worth helping." A Master of the Wisdom never takes away any karmic result from His pupil, though He will send Him thoughts of strength and endurance. Mr. Sinnett once thought that his Holy Friend would prevent anything disagreeable coming to him. "Ah! my friend," the Master wrote, "that is just what I would not do." And once, when H. P. B. was

going through a very difficult time, her Master wrote: "Alas! I am unable to help her." And He explained that up to the Supreme and last Initiation a chela or disciple is left to fight his own battles, and to come out victorious by his own might. How otherwise, my friends, would we grow in experience and learn the great laws of Life? The Master does not desire a baby He must carry, but a wise and strong helper in His work for men.

I remember too, at one great camp at Ommen, hearing Krishnaji say that most of us ran away from sorrow, but that if we could only open our arms to it, how we would grow and learn! This also reminds me of the way St. Therese of Lisieux expressed it. "Suffering stretched forth her arms to me from the very first, and I clasped her hand with love."

So let you and me go forth boldly and courageously to meet whatever fate be ours. Do not fear "bad karma." There is no such thing. All karma shapes us for our final good and bliss. "Here sits he shaping wings to fly." How could we learn compassion, sympathy, understanding, if we never suffered? I can just picture what a shallow, callous creature one would be without it. St. Theresa of Avila wrote a lovely little reminder for her nuns:

"Let nothing disturb thee,
Nothing affright thee,
All things are passing,
God never changeth;
Patient endurance
Attaineth to all things;
Who God possesses
In nothing is wanting,
Alone God sufficeth."

He who has wholly surrendered his life to the Heart of the Universe, and has found the Great Way thereto, is indifferent as to his personal fate, knowing that Life, which is God in action, has him in hand, and he can utterly trust that Great Life. In his knowledge and strength he would rather suffer life's ills than watch his weaker brethren bear them, for they are yet children and know not. He has glimpsed the mighty and beneficent purpose of all life. "Trust yourself to Life," wrote the Master K. H. to Mr. Judge, "as a bird trusts itself to the air, undoubtedly." In almost similar words, the poet of hope, Robert Browning, wrote: "He guides me and the bird, in His good time."

That is really the essence of Saintship; to take everything that happens, and every person who comes, as sent from God, the Voice of His blessed Will. Consequently, the reverse effect takes place. The Saint becomes the "mouthpiece and the channel of God."

One Member wishes me to tell you how to become a good lecturer. Well, I will do my best about that next time. And another asks me what we shall do when I leave this plane. I will also try to answer that query too next time. I have had several letters recently. Thank you all so much. And I hope to be able to write to many of you this Christmas time.

Your affectionate friend,

Clara Codd

CC:mp

FS: Your secretary sends you holiday greetings and best wishes for a very Merry Christmas and an inspirational and successful New Year. She wishes also to inform you of her new address. Please keep her informed of any changes in yours, After Dec. 1, 1951: Mrs. Mary G. Patterson, 1275 Xanthia Street, Denver, Colorado