

My dear Friends,

We are in the process of getting settled in our new home. It is very beautiful here, with quantities of lovely old trees and woods. And we are surrounded by so many friends. I feel it is a very happy move. Many visitors from all over the world come here for short stays. Quite recently we had a visit from our President, Bro. Sri Ram, and also from Dr. Henry Smith, the American President, and his wife. I was so delighted to see them both again.

This centre of Theosophists is certainly growing fast. Not only do a number of members live here permanently, but it is increasingly visited by members from other Sections. Study week-ends, children's camps, as well as lectures are held here. They have recently built on an extension to the Guest House, called "The Dormy House", and enlarged the dining hall and added a lecture hall. The whole estate is called Tekels Park, and it is indeed a lovely park. It is within easy reach of London by car. Otherwise a train or coach journey is necessary. The English sage, as I call him, Mr. E. L. Gardner, is still with us, I am glad to say. Despite his over ninety years he still is quite upright, though frailer than he used to be. Of course everybody comes to see him.

I promised that I would continue the question of preparation for discipleship. You will remember that I described the first most necessary qualification, "the voice that can be heard in the Master's world," as a genuine and heart-felt love of men. I think there is another, and that is a real living intelligence. A would-be disciple must also be an intelligent person. To quote the Master's own words, he must not only possess a "pure heart", already described, but also an "eager intellect," leading on to "an unveiled spiritual perception." I have often commented upon the difference between mere intellectuality and intelligence. A merely intellectual person often means someone who has a good memory and can amass facts, arrange them in orderly fashion in his brain, and be able to trot them out when required. Intelligence is not an industry, it is a living power. It is the result of honest, free, and deep native thinking, one's own thinking, free and unafraid.

But let us be careful here. So many people take destructive criticism for free thought. Destructive criticism is the result of known or unrealised frustrations and inhibited personal desires. The wise man never "criticises." Nor is he dishonest. Without either praise or blame, he tries to judge impartially and kindly, and mostly keeps his decisions to himself, unless they are required in the direction of affairs. He tries to "understand." I have sometimes described the occultist as the super-psychologist. He knows what makes men "tick." But he does not praise or blame them for it. One can always tell when anyone is suffering from frustrated personal desire. They resent recognising the truth. With a quality sticking out a mile they will loudly declare that they have nothing of the sort. I remember a lady telling me that she had never in her whole life suffered from the very common and universal feeling of jealousy. And all the time it was sticking out of her a mile!

I remember Dr. Besant telling us that if one could see a failing in oneself, or even dimly suspect it, it was already beginning to go. The only people for whom there was no immediate hope were the people who could not really see themselves. Of course if one does not see or suspect a failing, for heaven's sake, my dear friends, do not castigate yourself, or anybody else for it. We are all of us imperfect, on the road to perfection, and we all suffer from exactly the same human frailties. I could paraphrase a Biblical text which says that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and say Understanding is the beginning of wisdom, or as Krishnaji put it, "Let Understanding be the Law."

Without fear of praise or blame it behoves us to be honest. Never say anything which you do not really think, but which you think you ought to say, or express an opinion which you think you ought to hold, but do not in reality. Quite sweetly, quite humbly, quite naturally be yourself.

This is the result of real intelligence. The Master does not want you to be other than yourself. He writes of a member who had no sense of reverence. He did not

mind at all. He said it would come in time. All that mattered was that she was a good worker.

Do think, my dear friends, and do think for yourself. Do not think that it is up to you to quote an authority or adopt opinions that are not truly yours. And if someone says something which conflicts with our own cherished convictions, do not mentally consign them to a very unpleasant place! I remember another thing Krishnaji said about us: "If Theosophists really thought and were honest they could become an extraordinary body in the world." But being honest does not mean that we are to shout and argue and try to impose our opinions upon other people. There is much in that saying from Shakespeare: "Methinks the lady doth protest too much." A man's honest, unselfish, unegotistic convictions never need protestation or argument. I think a man who tried hard to convince other people is really trying to assure himself.

We ought to be able to discuss, muse and think out together without excited feeling. The Master says in the last letter He ever wrote to us: "At favourable times we let loose elevating influences which strike various persons in various ways. It is the collective aspect of many such thoughts that can give the correct note of action. We show no favours. The best corrective of error is an honest and open-minded examination of all facts subjective and objective."

I know what the ideal is, I can see it. I wish we could attain it, but we must have patience knowing what "human nature" is. That is another wise thing H.P.B. said: "Everything in this world has its time, and truth, however based upon unimpeachable evidence, will not root or grow, unless, like a plant, it is thrown into soil in its proper season."

She also said that "An association of 'affinities' of strong magnetic yet dissimilar forces and polarities centred round one dominant idea is necessary for successful achievements in occult science. What one will fail to do, the combined many will achieve." And she told Mr. Sinnett that the magnetism of himself and his wife were too similar. I remember an old pupil of H.P.B. telling me about her occult group where she placed him. He said that she always made them sit in the same place, having arranged them according to the play of their auras upon each other. We evolve more by conversation with people who do not agree with us than by repeating together our common agreements. I remember Dr. Besant telling us that the Masters are very individual people, that they have not at all the same outlook or ideas, and in council they freely say exactly what they think. But once a plan of action is agreed upon they all loyally cooperate, whether they thought it wise or not. Isn't that a lesson to all of us? Let us all learn to think, and to express our thoughts bravely, wisely and kindly. And do not let us only think about what is in the books. Think more often about life and its succeeding events. That is the way to become intelligent. For the events of life, sometimes, as H.B.P. said, even the most insignificant, are pregnant with meaning. Life, which is God, is always speaking to us but we do not hear. "For life itself has speech and is never silent. And its utterance is not, as you that are deaf may suppose, a cry: it is a song. Learn from it that you are a part of the harmony; learn from it to obey the laws of the harmony!" The way to wisdom is the understanding of life and of all living things. To understand and to love, that is the Great Way. And to understand is also to have the patience of eternity, just as life itself has. So we can always trust ourselves to life as a bird trusts itself to the air. And let life lead us by the hand for it is the greatest teacher of all.

Your affectionate friend,

Clara Codd

From your secretary: Several have asked if our fund is still necessary, now that Miss Codd has returned to England. The answer is YES -- it makes all the difference in the world to her. Her postscript to us in the April-May letter expressed her gratitude for the assurance that she would continue to receive this from us. --R.D.