

118 August-September 1965

"Way's End," Beech Ave., Camberley  
Surrey, England

My dear Friends,

I have just come back from Iceland, where we had a most interesting time. It was a little colder there than in England, and I found that it was continual daylight all through the night. I hoped to see the Midnight Sun which they tell me just dips into the sea and then rises again, but it was always too cloudy. Iceland is very volcanic and has hot springs. Indeed all Reykjavik is supplied with hot water from the hot springs. They have funny little bearded ponies and very shaggy sheep. There are no railways, and as they have never had a war, there are no soldiers. They became a republic at the time of the first world war. They used to belong to Denmark. Many are descended from the ancient Vikings and are so kind and simple and friendly, like the Norwegians.

There were three speakers at the Summer School which was held in a big girls' school, (the children go to school all the winter and have three months' holiday in the summer) Mr. Slater and me from England, and Frau Annliese Stephan from Germany. We all had to be translated sentence by sentence, and our translator was a young man who had been to school in England, and I fear he was terribly hard worked! Very soon now I am off to another Summer School in Denmark, but that will be the last for this incarnation. I think I am getting too old. I would like to write one more book to be called "Trust Yourself to Life." I got the title from the letter of the Master K.H. to Mr. Judge: "Let faith, which is the soul's unlearned knowledge, (isn't that a wonderful definition of faith?) carry you through your life as a bird flies in the air, undoubtingly."

At last I have got to the subject of sin and suffering. Long years ago I wondered about "sin." I felt it was not humanity's fault that there was sin in the world. When I was living in the Manor in Australia, Bishop Leadbeater let me borrow his books, and I found Dr. Hasting's Dictionary of the Bible there. I looked up the word "sin" and Dr. Hasting says: "Three cognate forms in Hebrew with no distinction of meaning express sin as missing one's aim, and correspond to the Greek and its cognates in the New Testament. The etymology does not suggest a person against whom the sin is committed, and does not necessarily imply intentional wrong-doing. The form translated "iniquity" literally means perversion or distortion and indicates a quality of action rather than an act itself. Again in the New Testament the two Greek words translated as sin presuppose the existence of a law." Hence it is clear that sin is a violation of natural law, a transgression, a movement across the flow of the evolutionary tide, instead of a progression, a movement forward with it. To sin is to miss the true aim of life, the furthering of the increasing purpose by the co-operative movement towards truth and beauty. Only by repeated choosings can the true power of choice emerge, under the operation of a law which says that what a man sows so shall he surely reap, that the measure he metes out to other men shall be measured to him again.

The East calls this law of action and re-action, equal and opposite, the law of Karma. This great Law rules the universe, and begins when first differentiation begins at the dawn of a universe, which means the separation of parts. The laws of the universe are the true Commandments of God, which H.P.B. said were "the impress of the Divine Mind upon matter." Now why does man act against the Law and thus "sin"? Because he is ignorant, and does not yet know any better. The Christians say he is born with the taint of original sin inherited from Adam and Eve. The more metaphysical East says that he is born with A-Vidya, which means being without the true knowledge.

We may say that it is not fair that he should be thus created. But it is an evolutionary law. Before there is an evolution, there is an involution. Is it not a miracle of Nature that everything begins with a tiny container, a cell, a seed, an atom? Yet within that tiny beginning is held the full promise and potency of that which is afterwards fulfilled. Who, if he did not know it, would see in a tiny acorn the future giant of the forest? Or see in a Baby the future genius or leader? And another miracle, it can never be otherwise than it is. So we are each of us a unique being and can never become otherwise than what we fundamentally are. So St. Ambrose is reported to have said: "Become that which you are."

H.P.B. describes this evolutionary growth in the Proem of the Secret Doctrine. The Son of God in us, she says, acquires individuality and then ascends, "first by natural impulse, and then by self-induced and self-devised efforts, checked by its Karma, thus ascending through all degrees of intelligence, from the lowest to the highest Manas, from mineral and plant, up to the holiest Archangel." So the only thing original in man is being without the divine knowledge, primeval ignorance, in fact. But he will lose that by experience as he "grows up". So we can now see what is called "sin." I never did believe in the customary idea of it. And H.P.B. says that after years of right meditation we gain the perception in all embodied beings of limitation only, and therefore criticism without praise or blame. Krishnamurti tells us the same thing. He says that as long as we praise or blame either ourselves or others we shall never understand them. The Voice of the Silence tells us, too, that our divinity is unaffected by either praise or blame. And it tells us to shun praise for it leads to self-delusion.

So "sin" as we used to understand it does not exist. It is a mistaken step and its inevitable result is suffering. But that we must consider next time. And also the existence of evil and its meaning. The Karmic results which bring pain are curative, Nature's heavenly surgeon. H.P.B. called pain the Teacher, the Awakener of consciousness. Imagine a world where there was no sin, no pain, no suffering, no frustration, where we had everything we wanted by just asking for it like spoilt children. Would it not be a very dull world, and also a very immature world, and an extraordinarily selfish one too? I remember something Mrs. Besant once said to me. She said: "When I look back over a long life, I would willingly surrender all my joys but not one of my sorrows, for I learnt the most by them." And another time she also said to me: "When you can be just as happy when the one you love best is not here, you have learnt how to love."

Well, friends, as they used to say in our magazines, "to be continued in our next!"  
My best wishes to all of you from

Your affectionate friend,

Clara Codd

From your secretary:

For efficient mail service, I need your ZIP CODE number.

If I have it, it is on your envelope.

If not, please put it on a post card and mail it to me? (with your name!)

Thank you so much!

Mrs. Ruth L. Doak  
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