

My dear Friends,

I have two questions to answer this time. I like being asked questions, for it shows me what you would like to discuss. One of my correspondents asks how if we were originally unconscious and nescient, then where is the ability, thought, will and inclination to move down into matter for experience? I see the point. But when metaphysical ideas are put into words they are bound to be circumscribed and more or less perverted. H.P.B. says that Spirit is consciousness, positive, and that matter is negative, the subject of consciousness. The ordinary, logical, reasoning mind can never fully understand these things. It can only symbolise them. For instance people often ask why "God" or the Life-Force does this or the other? They want a concrete answer, and the best answers are what is called Theosophy. But these deep truths can only be truly understood by the spiritual pole of our being. As St. Paul puts it: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (I Cor. 2, 14)

That "Spiritual Consciousness" has not yet flowered in the majority of men. When it does we shall regain immortal bliss for we shall be one with all life. So H.P.B. tells us to "await with patience the day of our real, our true birth." Meanwhile we cannot imagine it, as a chicken in its eggshell, or a bud, cannot picture a world it has not yet known. "It cannot be described by any metaphor," says Light on the Path: "Call it by what name you will. It is a voice that speaks where there is none to speak, it is a messenger that comes, a messenger without form or substance, or it is a flower of the soul that has opened." It says too that "It is utterly beyond human perception, yet it can be felt after, looked for and desired."

H.P.B. again says: "Truth lies beyond any ideas we can formulate or express..... Conceptions arise which we can formulate. They will form into mental pictures. This does not represent Reality. The pictures fade away and presently other formless gleams come which give rise to larger pictures. At last the learner enters and dwells in the world of No Form, but of which all forms are narrowed reflections." St. Paul also says something like that when he writes: "The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." (II Cor. 4, 18)

My correspondent also wishes to know what could stimulate the "sparks" to dissolve their blissful equilibrium and come forth into manifestation? I expect it was the eternal rhythm of Nature which even for the whole vast universe causes what the East so poetically calls "the days and nights of Brahma."

Another of my correspondents says that he wishes he had someone wise, like a Master of the Wisdom, to talk to. Now that is a desire we all have in some measure. In our state of incomplete development we sometimes feel so alone and yearn for some strong and wise person to lean upon. You see, spiritually we are all children, and every child needs a father-mother hand. I sometimes think that most people's idea of "God" is a father-complex. This is the world of the "heresy of separateness." The spiritual world is the world of complete unity with all that lives. That is why it is eternal bliss, but here we seem so separated. There is an old tale of ancient Egypt, which tells us that the god Osiris was dismembered in millions of little bits, and that Isis, his wife, went all over the world collecting the little bits till her husband the god was formed again. This reminds me of a line of Browning, "We are but broken lights of Thee." The little bits are all of us in our immortal selves. But in spirit we are all one and there is no separation. That is why really getting together, finding our brothers, means temporary happiness for men. If only all the world could see that. It would mean the end of war and misery and envy and ambition, and the coming in of happiness and trust for all. To live for ourselves only is to court disaster. To live for all others is to find the utmost happiness and peace this sad world can offer.

It is the meaning of true friendship. No man is lost who has at least one true friend. But what is it to be a true friend? To be a friend means to share bad times as well as good. That world genius, Sir Francis Bacon, said that a friend was one with whom our sorrows are halved and our joys are doubled. Or, as a popular saying puts it, "A friend is one who knows all about you and loves you just the same." We would all like a friend like that. To live alone is hard. How often have I heard someone sigh that they wish they had some one to talk to. St. James knew that human need, when he wrote, "Confess your faults one to another." Now what would happen if we did that with many? At once they would be shocked, and begin to upbraid us, or

they would deliver us a little sermon about it. That would not be the way of a true friend, for a true friend is never shocked and never delivers a sermon. I remember, a long time ago, a woman came to see me. She told me that she had had a great friend, but now she never saw anything of her as she did not live up to my visitor's ideals. "But, my dear lady," I said, "excuse me saying this, but what arrogance you are exhibiting. If she should your friend live up to your ideals? It is enough if she lives up to her own." Friendship seems with many people to be on a fifty-fifty basis. I will love you if you will love me. But Shakespeare said that "Love is not love which alters when it alteration finds." How many times in life has a man weathered a storm because his friend believed that he could and stood by him. That is true love.

Then again St. Paul said, "Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ." That is to say the Law of Unity instead of separation. The law of the Spirit in man is one with the sinner as with the saint. The spiritual man has risen above the "pairs of opposites" and so he truly "understands" and therefore forgives all.

I remember something I once read from a Tibetan scripture. It said that there were seven forms of love, three which belong to men and four which belong to the gods. It described the three which belong to men. The lowest and simplest was mere attraction like that which exists between iron filings and a magnet. I think most sexual love is of this order. Then there was the love which was on a fifty-fifty order. "I will love you if you will love me, and you owe me something for loving you." The third, said the scripture, approaches the love of the gods. It is so to love your beloved that you desire only their highest good, and in their own terms. That would be a wonderful way to love, would it not?

I think I have quoted it before, but I love Starr Daily's definition of the true friend. Starr Daily is the pen name of a lifer who found his true blessedness in prison. It is from a book of his called "Release." "There is a selfish emotion which hurts. It has often been called love. It is but the shadow of the miracle worker. Just as science, art and invention do not desire to reform anybody, neither does love. By not wanting to reform others it transforms them. A friend is a lover, he does not preach, find fault, condemn. He frees, and the things he frees he binds. You cannot have the thing you will not give away, you cannot be free of the thing you hold. To hold is to belong to the thing held, a bond. What you set free belongs to you. You do not belong to it, for you belong to love. All things below love encircle and squeeze. They press and inflict and hurt. Love is Reality, the Liberator, the miracle-worker. By making others glad you give them a foretaste of heaven on earth."

I go back to St. Paul again to his immortal description of charity or love. Henry Drummond calls it the "spectrum of love."

Love suffereth long and is kind; (Patience — kindness)

Love envieth not; (generosity)

Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up; (humility)

Doth not behave itself unseemly; (courtesy)

Seelceth not her own; (unselfishness)

Is not easily provoked; (good temper)

Thinketh no evil; (guilelessness)

Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; (sincerity)

Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. (I Cor. 13, 4-13)

I should not go on quoting, but I must remember that wonderful passage in "The Imitation of Christ" beginning, "Love watcheth and sleeping slumbereth not," etc. Let me close with a homely saying of Dr. Arundale's, who was the epitome of a good friend: "Friendship is more to be cherished than psychic powers, than knowledge, than erudition, than oratory, than any power of mind, emotion or body." People have often told me that they had no friends. "Jell, my dears," I used to tell them, "go and be one to someone and then you will soon have many."

Your affectionate friend,

Clara Codd