

Part II--The Pupils

Chapter 3--The Way to the Master

The Entrance To The Path

There has always been a Brotherhood of Adepts; there have always been those who knew, those who possessed this inner wisdom, and our Masters are among the present representatives of that mighty line of Seers and Sages. Part of the knowledge which they have garnered during countless aeons is available to everyone on the physical plane under the name of Theosophy. But there is far more behind. The Master Kuthumi Himself once said smilingly, when someone spoke of the enormous change that theosophical knowledge had made in our lives, and of the wonderful comprehensiveness of the doctrine of reincarnation; " Yes, but we have lifted only a very small corner of the veil as yet." When we have thoroughly assimilated the knowledge given us, and are living up to its teaching, the Brotherhood will be ready to lift the veil further; but only when we have complied with those conditions.

For those who wish to know more and to draw nearer, the Path is open. But the man who aspires to approach the Masters can reach the only by making himself unselfish, as they are unselfish, by learning to forget the personal self, and by devoting himself wholly to the service of humanity as they do. In her article on occultism versus the Occult Arts Madame Blavatsky has expressed this necessity in characteristically vigorous language:

True occultism or Theosophy is the Great Renunciation of Self unconditionally and absolutely, in thought as in action. It is Altruism, and it throws him who practices it out of the calculation of the ranks of the living altogether. Not for himself but for the world he lives, as soon as he has pledged himself to the work. Much is forgiven during the first years of probation. But no sooner is he accepted than his personality must disappear, and he has to become a mere beneficent force in Nature. . . . It is only when the power of the passions is dead altogether, and when they have been crushed and annihilated in the retort of an unflinching will; when not only all lusts and longings of the flesh are dead but

also the recognition of the personal self is killed out and the astral has been reduced in consequence to a cipher, that the union with the Higher Self can take place. Then, when the astral reflects only the concrete man--the still living, but no more the longing, selfish personality--then the brilliant, the divine Self, can vibrate in conscious harmony with both the poles of the human entity--the man of matter purified, and the ever pure spiritual soul--and stand in the presence of the Master-Self, the Christos of the mystic Gnostic, blended, merge into it and one with It forever. . . The aspirant has to choose absolutely between the life of the world and the life of Occultism. It is useless and vain to endeavor to unite the two, for no man can serve two Masters and satisfy both.

The point of view of the Masters is so radically different from ours that it is difficult at first for us to grasp it. They have their private affections just as we have, and assuredly they love some men more than others; but they will never allow such feelings as those to influence their attitude in the very slightest degree when the work is in question. They will take much trouble over a man if they see in him the seeds of future greatness, if they think that he will prove a good investment for the amount of time and force spent upon him. There is no such possibility as the faintest thought of favoritism in the minds of these Great Ones. They consider simply and solely the work which has to be done, the work of evolution, and the value of the man in relation to it; and if we will fit ourselves to take part in that, our progress will be rapid

The Magnitude Of The Task

Few people realize the magnitude of this undertaking, and therefore the seriousness of what they are asking when they want to be taken as pupils. The Adepts are dealing with the entire world in enormous comprehensive sweeps of power; they are influencing millions in their causal bodies or on the buddhic plane, and all the time steadily, though by almost imperceptible degrees, raising the higher bodies of the people on a wholesale scale. And yet the same Master who spends his life in doing that work will sometimes turn aside and pay personal attention to little details connected with one pupil.

All who dare to ask to become pupils should try to realize the stupendous character of the forces and the work, and the magnitude of the Beings with whom they propose to come into contact. The least understanding of the greatness of all these things will make it clear why the Adepts will not spend some of their energy on a pupil unless they have evidence that in a reasonable time he will add to the support of the world a strong current of strength and power in the right direction. They live to do the work of Logos of the System, and those of us who wish to draw nearer to them must learn to do likewise, and live only for the work. Those who do that will certainly attract the attention of the Holy Ones, and be trained by them to help and bless the world.

Human progress is slow, but it is constant; therefore the number of the Perfected Men is increasing, and the possibility of attaining to their level is within the reach of all who are willing to make the stupendous effort required. In normal times we should need many births before we

could gain Adeptship, but it is possible for us to hasten our progress on that path, to compress into a few lives the evolution which otherwise would take many thousands of years. That preparation needs great self-control, determined effort carried on year after year, and often with but little to show outwardly in the way of definite progress; for it involves the training of the higher bodies far more than the physical body, and the training of the higher does not always manifest itself very obviously on the physical plane.

The Importance Of Work

Anyone who hears about the Masters and their teaching, if he has any grasp at all of what it means and involves, must instantly be seized with the most intense desire to understand them and enter into their service; the more he learns the more does he become filled with the wonder and beauty and glory of God's plan, and the more anxious does he become to take part in the work. Once he has realized that God has a plan of evolution, he wants to be a fellow-laborer with God, and nothing else can possibly bring satisfaction.

Then he begins to ask himself the question: "What must I do next? And the answer is: "Work. Do what you can to help the progress of humanity in the Master's way. Begin with what you have the opportunity to do and what you can do, which may be any little external thing at first, and presently, as you acquire the necessary qualities of character, you will be drawn into the higher side of it all, until, through striving to be and do your best, you will find yourself possessed of the qualifications which admit to initiation and membership in the Great White Brotherhood itself." When first I had the privilege of coming into somewhat closer touch with the Master, I asked him in a letter what I should do. He answered to the following effect: "You must find work for yourself; you know what we are doing. Throw yourself into our work in any way you can. If I gave you a definite piece of work to do, you would do it, but in that case the karma of what was done would be mine, because I told you to do it. You would have only the karma of willing obedience, which of course is very good, but it is not the karma of initiating a fruitful line of action. I want you to initiate work for yourself, because then the karma of the good deed will come to you."

I think we might all take that unto ourselves. We might realize that it is our business not to wait until we are asked to do something, but to set to work. There is a good deal of quite humble work to be done in connection with Theosophy. Often perhaps some of us would prefer the more spectacular part; we should like to stand up and deliver lectures in public to large audiences. We can generally find people who are willing to offer themselves for that; but there is a great deal of humdrum office work to be done in connection with the Society, and we do not always find so many volunteers for that. Reverence and love for our Masters will lead us to be willing to do anything whatever in their service, however humble; and we may be sure that we are working in their service when we are helping the Society which two of them founded

The Ancient Rules

The qualifications for admission to the Great White Brotherhood, which have to be acquired in the course of the work in the earlier part of the Path, are of very definite character, and are always essentially the same, although they have been described in many different terms during the last twenty-five centuries. In the early days of the Theosophical Society, when all its wonderful teaching was new to us, this question of qualifications was naturally one of those about which some of us were most eager to learn; and before Madame Blavatsky wrote down for us that most marvelous manual *The Voice of the Silence* she had already given us two lists of the requirements for chelaship. I cannot do better than quote them here for comparison with the later directions. She writes:

A chela is a person who has suffered himself to a Master as a pupil to learn practically the hidden mysteries of nature and the psychical powers latent in man. The Master wax at him is called in India a Guru. And the real Guru is always an adept in the occult science. A man a profound knowledge, exoteric and esoteric, especially the latter, and one who has brought his carnal nature under the subjection of the will; who has developed in himself both the power (Siddhi) to control the forces of nature, and the capacity to probe her secrets by the help of the formerly latent but now active powers of his being--this is the real Guru. To offer oneself as a candidate for chelaship is easy enough; to develop into an adept is the most difficult task any man could possibly undertake. There are scores of natural-born poets, mathematicians, mechanics, statesmen, etc.. But a natural-born Adept is something practically impossible. For, though we do hear and very rare intervals of one who has an extraordinary innate capacity for the acquisition of occult knowledge and power, yet even he has to pass the self-same tests and probations, go through this self -same training as any less in doubt fellow-aspirant. In this matter it is most true that there is no royal road by which favorites may travel.

For centuries the selection of Chelas-outside the hereditary groups within the Gon-Pa (Temple)-has been made by the Himalayan Mahatmas Themselves from among the class--in Tibet a considerable one as to number--of natural mystics. The only exceptions have been in the cases of Western men like Fludd, Thomas Vaughn, Paracelsus, Pico de Mirandolo, Count St. Germain, etc. whose temperamental affinity to this celestial science more or less forced the distant Adepts to come into personal relations with them, and enable them to get such small (or a large) portion of the whole truth as was possible under their social surroundings. From a book for of the *Kiu-te*, a chapter on "The Laws of Upasanas", we learn that the qualifications expected in the chela were:

1. Perfect physical health;
2. Absolute mental and physical purity;
3. Unselfishness of purpose; universal charity; pity for all animate beings;
4. Truthfulness and unswerving faith in law of Karma, independent of the intervention of any power in nature--of all whose course is not to be obstructed by any agency, not to be caused to deviate by prayer or propitiatory exoteric ceremonies;
5. A courage undaunted in every emergency, even by peril of life;

6. An intuitional perception of one's being the vehicle of the manifested Avalokiteshvara or Divine Atma (Spirit);
7. Calm indifference for, but a just appreciation of, everything that constitutes the objective and transitory world, in its relation with, and to, the invisible regions.

Such, at the least, must have been the recommendations of one aspiring to perfect chelaship. With the sole exception of the first, which in rare and exceptional cases might have been modified, each one of these points has been invariably insisted upon, and all must have been more or less developed in the inner nature by the chela's unhelped exertions, before he could be actually put to the test.

When the self-evolving Ascetic--whether in, or outside the active world--has placed himself according to his natural capacity, above (and hence made himself master of) his: (1) Sharira, body (2) Indria, senses (3) Dosha, faults (4)Dukka, pain; and is ready to become one of his Manas, mind, Buddhi, intellection or Spirit Intelligence, and Atma, highest soul, i.e. spirit; when he is ready for this, and, further, to recognize in Atma the highest ruler in the world of perceptions, and in the will the highest executive energy (power)--then may he, under the time-honored rules, be taken in hand by one of the Initiates. He may then be shown the mysterious path and whose farther end is obtained the unerring discernment of Phala, or other fruits of causes produced, and given the means of reaching Apavarga--emancipation from the misery of repeated births, Pretyabhava, in whose determination the ignorant has no hand.

The second set of rules which she gives us occurs in her book *Practical Occultism*. They are twelve in number, but she tells us that they were taken from a list of seventy-three, to enumerate which would be useless, as they would be meaningless in Europe, though she says that every instructor in the East is furnished with them. The explanations in brackets are by Madame Blavatsky herself. They are as follows:

1. The place selected for receiving instruction must be a spot calculated not to distract the mind, and filled with influence-evolving (magnetic) objects. The five sacred colors gathered in a circle must be there among other things. The place must be free from any malignant influences hanging about in the air.
(The place must be set apart, and used for no other purpose. The five sacred colors are the prismatic hues arranged in a certain way, as these colors are very magnetic. By malignant influences are meant any disturbances through strife, quarrels, bad feelings, etc. as these are said to impress themselves immediately in the astral light, i.e. in the atmosphere of the place, and to hang about in the air. The first consideration seems easy enough to accomplish, yet--on further consideration, it is one of the most difficult to obtain.)
2. Before the disciple shall be permitted to study face-to-face, he has to acquire preliminary understanding in a select company of other upasakas (disciples), the number of whom must be odd.

"Face to face " means in this instance a study independent or apart from others, when the disciple gets his instruction face-to-face either with himself (his higher, the divine Self) or -his Guru. It is then only that each receives his due of information, according to the use he has made of his knowledge. This can happen only toward the end of the cycle of instruction

3. Before Thou (the teacher) shalt impart to thy Lanoo (disciple) the good (holy) words of Lamrin, or shall permit him to make ready for Dubjed, thou shalt take care that his mind is the early purified and at peace with all, especially with his other selves. Otherwise the words of Wisdom and of the good Law shall scatter and be picked up by the winds.

(Lamrin is a work of practical instructions, by Tson-kha-pa, INTO Portions, one for ecclesiastical and exoteric purposes, the other for esoteric uses. To make ready for Dubjed is to prepare the vessels used for seership, such as mirrors and crystals. The " other selves " refers to the fellow-students. Unless of the greatest harmony reigns among the learners, no success is possible. It is the teacher who makes the selections according to the magnetic and electric natures of the students, bringing together and adjusting most carefully the positive and negative elements.

4. The upasaka while studying must take care to be united as the fingers on one hand. Thou shalt impress upon their minds that what ever hurts one should hurt the others, and if the rejoicing of one finds no echo in the breasts of the others, then the required conditions are absent, and is useless to proceed.

(This can hardly happen if the preliminary choice made was consistent with the magnetic requirements. It is known that chelas otherwise promising and fit for the reception of truth had to wait for years on account of the temper and the impossibility they felt to put themselves in tune with their companions. For --)

5. The co-disciples must be attuned by the Guru as the strings of a lute (*vina*), each different from the others, yet each in making sounds in harmony with all. Collectively they must form of keyboard answering in all its parts to thy lightest touch (the touch of the Master). Thus their mind shall open for the harmonies of Wisdom, to vibrate as knowledge through each and all, resulting in effects pleasing to the presiding gods(tutelary or patron-angels) and useful to the Lanoo. So shall Wisdom be impressed forever on their hearts and the harmony of law shall never be broken.

6. Those who desire to acquire the knowledge leading to the Siddhis (occult powers) have to renounce all the vanities of life and of the world to (here follows a enumeration of the Siddhis).

7. None can feel the difference between himself and his fellow-students, such as " I am the wisest ", " I am more holy and pleasing to the teacher, or in my community, then my brother ", etc.--and remained an upasaka. His thoughts must be predominantly fixed upon his heart, chasing therefrom every hostile thought to any living being. It (the heart) must be full of the feeling of its non-separateness from the rest of beings as from all in nature; otherwise no success can follow.

8. A Lanoo (disciple) has to dread external living influence alone (magnetic emanations from living creatures). For this reason wall at one with all but in his inner nature, he must take care to separate his outer (external) body from every foreign influence: none must drink out of or eat in his cup but himself. He must avoid bodily contact (i.e. being touched or touch) with human, as with animal being.

(No pet animals are permitted and it is forbidden even to touch certain trees and plants. A disciple has to live, so to say, in his own atmosphere in order to individualize it for occult purposes.)

9 The lying must remain blunt to all but the universal truths in nature, lest the doctrine of the heart should become only the doctrine of the eye (i.e. empty exoteric ritualism).

10. No animal food of whatever kind, nothing that has life in it, should be taken by the disciple. No wine, no spirits, or opium should be used; for these are like the evil spirits, who fasten upon the unwary; they devour the understanding.

(Wine and spirits are supposed to contain and preserve the bad magnetism of all the men who helped in the fabrication; the meat of each animal, to preserve the psychic characteristics of its kind.)

11. Meditation, abstinence in all, the observation of moral duties, Gentle Thoughts, good deeds and kind words, goodwill to all an entire oblivion of self, are most efficacious means of obtaining knowledge and preparing for the reception of higher Wisdom.

12. It is only by virtue of a strict observance of the foregoing rules that the Lanoo can hope to acquire in good time Siddhis of the Arhats, the growth which makes him become gradually One with the Universal All.

The first set of rules calls for no comments, as they are evidently of universal application, and differ only in the form of their expression from those which have been given in later books

The second set is obviously on a very different footing. It is clearly formulated for Eastern students, and even among them chiefly for those who are able to devote their whole lives to their study, and to live secluded from the world in a monastery or occult community. The mere fact that there are sixty-one other rules which would be meaningless to European pupils showed that they are neither intended for nor necessary for progress upon the Path, since many have trodden that Path without knowing them. They are nevertheless of great interest and value as recommendations. The moral and ethical regulations are familiar to us, and so is the insistence upon the necessity of perfect harmony and mutual understanding among those disciples who have to learn and work together. It is to this latter object that most of the rules here quoted are directed, and in the case of a group of students its importance can scarcely be exaggerated. In western life we have insisted so strongly upon individualism, and upon the undoubted right of each person to live his own life so long as he does not incommode others, that we have to a large extent forgotten the possibility of really intimate union. Instead of being united as the

fingers of one hand, we live together as a number of marbles in a bag, which is far from ideal from the inner point of view.

It might be supposed that these earnest exhortations to close comradeship are inconsistent with Rule 8, in which the chela is instructed to avoid contact with others. This is not so, for the directions referred to entirely different matters. The suggestion that each should have his own cup (yes, and his own plate, knife, fork and spoon also) is most excellent, for present scheme of the promiscuous use of half-washed, cutlery and crockery is revolting to persons of taste. The avoidance of unnecessary contact with others has its advantage, for the indiscriminate mingling of auras is highly undesirable. In the leisurely Indian life of the old days it was so easy to escape uncomfortable proximity; now that trains and tramways have been introduced, and that the hurry of modern business compels people to use them, even in the immemorial East it is somewhat more difficult, and in Europe it would be practically impossible. That is why a different method of dealing with this problem of propinquity is now offered to us.

We can readily and effectively protect ourselves against undesirable magnetism by forming round our bodies a shell which will exclude it. Such a shell may be of etheric, astral or mental matter, according to the purpose for which it is required. A description of the various kinds and the way to make them will be found in my book on *The Hidden Side of Things*, which also includes the beautiful story of the Alexandrian monks, a showing that there is another way of protecting oneself from evil influence which is even better than the formation of a shell; and that is by so filling one's heart with Divine Love that it radiates perpetually in all directions in the shape of torrents of love for one's fellow-men, so that that mighty stream acts as the most perfect of shields against the entrance of any current from without.

The regulation against keeping pet animals leaves out of account the fact that it is only through association with man that these creatures can be individualized. It appears to consider only the possibility that the man may allow himself to be adversely affected by the animal, and to forget altogether the beneficent influence which the man may intentionally bring to bear upon his younger brother. But quite possibly in the remote ages in which these rules were formulated there were no animals sufficiently developed to be approaching individualization.

In writing of the progress of the pupil, Madame Blavatsky advises strongly against marriage, maintaining that he cannot devote himself both to occultism and to a wife. It occurs to one that if the wife shares his devotion to occultism, this rather severe stricture would no longer be applicable. What is true that the bachelor is in certain ways freer--as, for example, to throw up his business and start off to take up work in some foreign country, which he could hardly do if he had the responsibility of a wife and family--it must never be forgotten that the married man has the opportunity of serving the Cause in quite another way, by providing suitable vehicles and favorable surroundings for the many advanced egos who are waiting to descend into incarnation. Both types of worker are needed, and there's room among the ranks of the disciples for both married and single. We find no condemnation of the married state in any of

the three great guidebooks, which are given to us to light us on our way. The latest and simplest of these is Mr. J. Krishnamurti's wonderful little book, *At the Feet of the Master*.

At The Feet Of The Master

Although Mr. Krishnamurti puts it this book before the world, the words which it contains are almost entirely those of the Master Kuthumi. " These are not my words, " the author says in his foreword; " they are the words of the Master who taught me. " When the book was written, Mr. Krishnamurti's body was 13 years old, and it was necessary for the Master's plans that the knowledge requisite for Initiation should be conveyed to him as quickly as possible. The words contained in the book I those in which the Master tried to convey the whole essence of the necessary teaching in the simplest and briefest form. But for the requirements of this particular case, we might never have had a statement so concise and yet so complete, so simple and yet so all-inclusive. Many books have been written expounding the details of the stages of this preparatory Path, and there has been much argument over the exact shades of meaning of Sanskrit and Pali words; but in this little manual the Master boldly brushes all that aside and gives nothing but the essence of the teaching, expressed as far as may be in modern terms and illustrated from modern life.

For example, he translates the four qualifications *Viveka, Vairagya, Shatsampatti and Mumukshutva* as Discrimination, Desirelessness, Good Conduct and Love. By no possible license can the English word love be taken as a literal translation of the Sanskrit word Mumukshutva, for that unquestionably means simply the desire for liberation. The Master apparently argues thus: that the intense desire for freedom is desire for escape from all worldly limitations, so that even when among them, one may be absolutely free from the slightest feeling a bondage to them. Such freedom can be attained only by union with the Supreme, with the One who is behind all, that is to say, by union with God--and God is love. Therefore only by our becoming thoroughly permeated with the divine love and freedom become possible for us

There is no more beautiful or satisfactory description of the qualifications than that given in this book, and one may say with confidence that anyone who will thirdly carry out its teaching will certainly pass immediately through the portals of Initiation. It was a very exceptional case for the Master to spend so much of his time in the direct teaching of one individual, but through Mr. Krishnamurti it has reached tens of thousands of others, and help them to an immeasurable extent

The story of how this little book came to be written is comparatively simple. Every night I had to take this boy in his astral body to the House of the Master, that instruction might be given him. The Master devoted perhaps fifteen minutes each night to talking to him, but at the end of each talk he always gathered up the main points of what he had said into a single sentence, or a few sentences, thus making an easy little summary which was repeated to the boy, so that he

learnt it by heart. He remembered that summary in the morning and wrote it down the book consists of these sentences, of the epitome of the Masters teaching, made by himself, and in his words. The boy wrote them down somewhat laboriously, because his English was not then very good. He knew all these things by heart and did not trouble particularly about the notes that he had made. A little later he went up to Benares with Dr. Annie Besant. While there he wrote to me, I've been down at Adyar, and asked me to collect and send to him all the notes that he had made of what the Master had said. I ranged his notes as well as I could, and typed them all out. . . . and in due course the book was published.

Numbers of people, literally thousands, have written to say how their whole lives have been changed by the book, how everything has become a different to them because they have read it. It has been translated into twenty-seven languages. There have been some forty editions of it, or more, and over a hundred thousand copies have been printed. A wonderful work has been done by it. Other books also there are which the pupil will find of the utmost use to him in his endeavor to enter upon this Path: the Voice of the Silence and light on the path were given to us for this purpose, and Dr. Annie Besant's wonderful books *In the Outer Court* and *The Path of Discipleship* will also be found of inestimable value. Since the first edition of this book was published Dr. Besant and I jointly issued three volumes entitled *Talks on the Path of Occultism*, which form a commentary on the three classics above mentioned.

For the Disciple's Attitude

Having these books before him the pupil is left in no doubt as to what he should do. He should obviously make efforts along to particular lines--the development of his own character, and the undertaking of definite work for others. Clearly what is set before him in this teaching implies an altogether different attitude towards life in general; that has been expressed by one of the Masters in the phrase: " He who wishes to work with us and for us must leave his own world and come into ours." That does not mean, as might usually be supposed by students of Oriental literature, that the pupil must abandon the ordinary world of physical life and business, and retire to the jungle, the cave or the mountain; but it does mean that he must abandon altogether the worldly attitude of mind and adopt instead of it the attitude of the Master.

The man of the world thinks of the events of life chiefly as the effect himself and his personal interest; the Master thinks of them *only* as they affect the evolution of the world. Whatsoever on the whole tends to progress, and helps humanity along its path--that is good and to be supported; whatsoever in any way hinders these things--that is undesirable and should be opposed or set aside. That is good which helps evolution; that is evil which retards it. Here we have a criterion very different from that of the world; a touchstone by means of which we can quickly support what we must support and what we must resist; and we can apply it to qualities in our own character as well as to outer events. We shall be of use to the Master just in so far as we can work along with him, in however humble of fashion; we can best work along with him by making ourselves like to him, so that we shall regard the world as he regards it.

The Three Doors

There is a poem which says:

Three doors there are to the temple
To know, to work, to pray;
And they await at the outer gate
May enter by either way.

There are always the three ways: a man may bring himself to the Master's feet by deep study, because in that way he comes to know and to feel; and certainly he may be reached by a deep devotion long continued, by the constant uplifting of the soul towards him. And there is also the method of throwing oneself into some definite activity for him. But it must be something definitely done for him with that thought in mind: "If there be credit or glory in this work I do not want it; I do it in my Master's name; to him be the glory and praise. " The poem quoted above also says: "There be who nor pray more study, but yet can work right well." And that is true. There's some who cannot make anything much of meditation, and when they try to study they find it very hard. They ought to continue to try both these things, because we must develop all sides of our nature, but most all they should throw themselves into the work, and do something for their fellow men

That is the surest of all appeals--to do a thing in his name, to do a good act thinking of him, remembering that he is much more sensitive to thought than ordinary people. If a man thinks of a friend at a distance, his thought goes to that friend and influences him, so that a friend thinks of the sender of the thought of as his mind is much engaged at the moment with something else. But however much occupied a Master may be, thought directed to him makes a certain impression, and although perhaps at the moment he may not take any notice, yet the touch is there, and he will know of that and will send out his love and his energy in response to it

The Master's Work

The question is sometimes asked as to what particular labor should be undertaken. The answer is that all good work is the Master's work. Everyone can find some good that he is able to do. In addition, some of the pupil's activity must consist in preparing himself for greater responsibility in the future. The duties of common life often combine something of both these things, for they provide a splendid training and education for those who do them well, and also offer many occasions for helping other people to progress in character and ideals, which is most emphatically the Master's business. All the varied activities of daily life come within our endeavor to serve the Master, which we learn to do all in his name and for him.

The common course of life,
The daily round we plod,

The tasks that seem so wearisome
May all be done for God.

All may of him partake;
Nothing can be so mean
Which, with this tincture, for His sake
Will not grow bright and clean.

A servant with this clause
Makes drudgery divine.
Who sweeps the room, as for His laws
Makes that small action fine.

The Master's work is not something peculiar and apart from our fellows to raise a good family who will serve him in turn, to make money to use in his service, to win power in order to help him with it--all these may be part of it; yet in doing these things the disciple must be ever on guard against self-deception, must see that he is not cloaking with the holiness of the Master's name what is, underneath, a selfish desire to wield power or handle money. The disciple of the Master has to look round and see what there is to do which is within his power. He must not look with disfavor upon the humblest task, thinking: "I am too good for this." In the Master's business no part is more important than any other, though some portions are more difficult than others, and therefore require special training or unusual faculties or abilities.

At the same time certain organized efforts are being made in which the Master's take special interests. Foremost among these is the Theosophical Society, which was founded at their bidding and for their purposes. So unquestionably anything that one can do for his Theosophical Lodge is the very best thing to do. It may easily happen in many cases that one has no opportunity to do that; he must then find some other way of service.

In quite unorganized ways also a great deal can be done. For example, the influence of beauty in human life is immeasurably uplifting, for beauty is God's manifestation in Nature, so--to give one instance--the roadside gardens of all who are striving along these lines should be notable for their neatness and beauty. Many people are careless in these small matters; they are untidy; they leave rubbish in their wake; but all that indicates a character very far removed from the spirit of the Master.

If we work along the same lines as the Master works we shall come more and more into sympathy with him, and I thought so will become more and more like his. This will bring us nearer and nearer to him both in thought and activity, and in so doing presently we will attract his attention, for he is all the time watching the world in order to find those who will be of use in his work. Noticing us, he will presently draw us nearer to him for still closer and more detailed observation that is usually done by bringing us into contact with one who is already his pupil. It is thus quite unnecessary for anyone to make any direct effort to attract attention.

None is Over-looked

Madame Blavatsky told us that whenever persons joined the outer Theosophical Society the master looked at him, and furthermore she said that in many cases the Great Ones guided people to join the Society because of their previous lives. So it would seem that they usually know a great deal about us before we know anything about them. The Adept never forgets anything. He appears to be always in full possession of all that has happened to him, and so if he does cast even the most casual glance and a person he will never thereafter overlook that person.

When a student understands this he will no longer ask: "What can I do that will attract the Master's attention?" He will know that it is quite unnecessary that we should try to do so, and that there is not the slightest fear that anyone will be overlooked.

I remember very well an incident of the early days of my own connection with the Great Ones, which bears on this point. I knew on the physical plane a man of vast erudition and of the most saintly character, who believed thoroughly in the existence of the Masters, and devoted his life to one object of qualifying himself for their service. He seemed to be a man in every way so entirely suitable for discipleship, so obviously better than myself in many ways, that I could not understand how it was that he was not already recognized; and so, being young in the work and ignorant, one day, when a good opportunity offered itself, very humbly and as it were apologetically, I mentioned his name to the Master, with the suggestion that he might perhaps prove a good instrument. A smile of kindly amusement broke out upon the Master's face as he said:

" Ah, you need not fear that your friend is being overlooked; no one can ever be overlooked; but in this case there still remains a certain Karma to be worked out, which makes it impossible at the moment to accept your suggestion. Sooner friend will pass away from the physical plane, and soon he will return to it again, and then the expiation will be complete, and what you desire for him would have become possible. "

And then, with the gentle kindness which is always so prominent a characteristic in him, he blended my consciousness with his in an even more intimate manner, and raised it to a plane far higher than I could then reach, and from that elevation he showed me how the Great Ones look out upon the world. The whole Earth lay before us with all its millions of souls, undeveloped, most of them, and therefore inconspicuous; but whatever amidst all that mighty multitude there was one who was approaching even at a great distance the point at which definite use could be made of him, he stood out among the rest just as the flame of a lighthouse stands out in the darkness of the night

"Now you see," said the Master, "how utterly impossible it would be that anyone should be overlooked who is even within a measurable distance of the possibility of acceptance as a probationer."

We can do nothing on our side but steadily work at the improvement of our character, an endeavor in every possible way, by the study of Theosophical works, by self-development, and by the unselfishness of our devotion to the interests of others, to fit ourselves for the honor which we desire, having within our minds the other certainty that as soon as we are ready the recognition will assuredly come. But until we can be utilized economically--until, that is to say, the force bent upon us will bring forth, through our actions, at least as much result as it would if spent in any other way, it would be a violation of duty on the part of the Master to draw us into close relations with him.

We may be quite sure that there are in reality no exceptions to this rule, even though we may sometimes think that we have seen some. A man may be put upon probation by an Adept while he has still some obvious faults, but we may be sure that in such a case there are good qualities under the surface which far more than counterbalance the superficial defects. It is only the Master who can judge how far our faults affect our usefulness to Him. We cannot tell exactly to what extent any failings of ours would react upon his work; but he, looking at the problem from above, can see quite clearly all the factors in the case, so that his decision is always just, and in the best interests of all. Sentimental considerations have no place in occultism, which has been defined as the apotheosis of common sense, working always for the greatest good of the greatest number. In it we learn of many new facts and forces, and we remodel our lives in accordance with this additional knowledge.

This after all differs in no way from our practice (or what *ought* to be our practice) of the physical plane. New discoveries along scientific lines are constantly being made, and we use them and adapt our lives to them. Why should we not do the same when the discoveries are on higher planes and connected with the inner life? To understand a law of nature and to live in harmony with them is the way to comfort, health and progress, both spiritual and physical.

Another consideration which sometimes comes into play is the working of law of karma. Like the rest of us, the Great Masters of Wisdom have along line of lives behind them, and in those Lives de, like others, have made certain Karmic ties and so sometimes it happens that a particular individual has a claim on them for some service rendered long ago. In the lines of past lives which we have examined we have sometimes come across instances of such a karmic link.

The Responsibility Of The Teacher

It is obviously necessary the Master should be cautious in selecting candidates for discipleship, not only because his own work must be prejudicially affected by an on were the pupil, but because the teacher has a certain definite responsibility for the mistakes of the chela. Madame Blavatsky writes on this subject as follows:

There is one important fact with which the student should be made acquainted, namely, the enormous, almost limitless, responsibility assumed by the teacher for the sake of the pupil. From the gurus of the East would teach openly or secretly, down to the few Kabalists in Western lands who undertake to teach their rudiments of the Sacred Science to their disciples--those western hierophants being often themselves ignorant of the danger they incur--one and all of these Teachers are subject to the same inviolable law. From the moment they begin *really* to teach, from the instant they confer any power--whether psychic, mental or physical--on their Pupils, they take upon themselves all the sins of that pupil, in connection with the Occult Sciences, whether of omission or commission until the moment when initiation makes the pupil a Master and responsible in his turn. . . . Thus it is clear why the teachers are so reticent, and why chelas are required to serve a seven years' probation to prove their fitness, and develop the qualities necessary to the security of both Master and pupil.

The spiritual guru, taking the student by the hand, leads him into and introduces him to world entirely unknown to him. . . . Even in common daily life, parents, nurses, tutors and Instructors are generally held responsible for the habits and future ethics of a child. . . . So long as the pupil is to ignorant to be sure of his vision and powers of discrimination, is it not natural that is the guide who should be responsible for the sins of him whom he has led into those dangers regions?

As we shall see in subsequent chapters, when a man comes into close relation with the Master he has much more power than he had before. One becomes a pupil of a Master can therefore do much more good, but he could also do much more harm if he happened to let his fourth goal in the wrong direction. Very often the young disciple does not realize the power of his own thought. The man in the street may think something foolish or untrue without producing any serious effect, because he does not know how to think strongly; he may think ill of someone else without making any very great impression upon that person's; but if the disciple, who has the power of the Master within him, and has trained himself by long practice and meditation to use it, should misunderstand another person and think evil of him, his strong thought-current would act prejudicially upon that person, and might even seriously affect the whole of his future career

If the victim really had the and desirable quality attributed to him, the pupil's potent thought would intensify it; if no such quality existed, the same thought-form would suggest it, and might easily awakened it if it were latent--might even plant its seeds if there were as yet no signs of it. Sometimes the mind of a human being is in a condition of balance between a good course and an evil one; and when that is the case the impact of a vivid thought-form from without may be sufficient to turn the scale, and because the weaker brother to embark upon a line of action the result of which, for good or evil, may extend through many incarnations. How careful then must the pupil be to see that the enhanced thought-power, with which his connection with his Master has endowed him up, shall be used always to strengthen and never to weaken those for whom it is directed!

Everything depends upon the form in which the thought is cast. We are of course assuming that the intention of the disciple is always of the noblest, but his execution may be defective. Suppose, for example, a weaker brother is addicted to the vice of intemperance. If the thought of the pupil should happen to turn in the direction of that man, his musings might obviously take several different lines. Let us hope that there would be in no danger of his despising the man for his weakness, or shrinking from him with aversion or disgust. But it is quite possible that he might think: "What of frightful crime is that man's drunkenness; how terrible is its effect upon his wife and children! How can he be so inconsiderate, so selfish, so cruel?" Every word of it true, quite a reasonable thought, fully justified by the circumstances, and in no way and kind; but *not helpful to the victim*. However correct and unimpeachable is the sentiment, the prominent idea is that of blame to the sinner, and the effect of the thought-form is to crush him still further into the mire. Why not take the far stronger line of definite mental action: "I invoke the God within that man; I call upon the ego to assert himself, to conquer the weakness of the lower self, to say 'I can and I will' "? If that be done, the dominant idea is not blame but encouragement, and the effect is not to depress the sufferer, but to help them to raise himself from the slime of his hopelessness to the firm ground of virility and freedom.

Wrong Ideas

Another quality most essential for the aspirant is open mindedness and freedom from bigotry of any sort. Madame Blavatsky once told us that her Master had remarked that erroneous beliefs were sometimes a great obstacle. As an example he said that there were a hundred thousand of the Indian *sannyasis* who were leading purist lives and were quite ready for discipleship, except for the fact that their ingrained wrong thought on certain subjects made it impossible for even the Masters penetrate their auras. Such thoughts, he said, drew round them undesirable elementals, most unpleasant influences, which reacted upon them and intensified their misconceptions, said that until they developed enough reason and intuition to shake themselves free from these their practically impervious to suggestions.

It has been said that an honest man is the noblest work of God; and Colonel Ingersoll once parodied that proverb by reversing it, and saying that an honest God was the noblest work of man--by which he meant that each man arrives at his conception of God by personifying those qualities in himself which he thinks most worthy of admiration, and then raising them to the nth power. So if a man has no conception of God, it shows that there is much nobility in his own nature even though he may not always live up to his ideal.

But wrong conception of God is one of the most serious hindrances under which a man can suffer. The idea of the Jehovah of the Old Testament, bloodthirsty, and jealous, mean and cruel, has been responsible for an amount of harm in the world that cannot easily be estimated. Any thought of God that induces *fear* of him is absolutely disastrous, and precludes all hope of real progress; it shuts a man up in the darkest of dungeons instead of leading him onward and upward into the glory of the sunlight. It draws round him a host of the type of elemental which revels in fear, gloats over it and intensifies it by every means within his power. When a man is in

that parlous condition it is all but impossible to help him; wherefore to teach a man (still more, a child) such a blasphemous doctrine is one of the worst crimes that anyone can commit. The disciple must be utterly free from all cramping superstitions of this kind.

The Effect Of Meditation

Remember also that everyone who meditates upon the Master makes a definite connection with him, which shows itself to clairvoyant vision as a kind of line of light. The Master always subconsciously feels the impinging of such a line, and sends out in response to a steady stream of magnetism which continues to play long after the Meditation is over. The methodical practice of such meditation and concentration is thus of the utmost help to the aspirant, and regularity is one of the most important factors in producing the results. It should be undertaken daily at the same hour, and we should steadily persevere with it, even though no obvious effect may be produced. When no result appears we must be especially careful to avoid depression, because that makes it more difficult for a master's influence to act upon us, and it also shows that we're thinking of ourselves more than of him.

In beginning this practice of meditation it is desirable to watch closely its physical effects. Methods prescribed by those who understand the matter ought never to cause headache or any other pain, yet such results do sometimes occur in particular cases. It is true that meditation strains the thought and attention a little further than its customary point in any individual, but that should be so carefully done, so free from any kind of excess, as not to cause any physical ill-effects. Sometimes a person takes it up too strenuously and for too long at a time, or when the body is not in a fit state of health, and the consequence is a certain amount of suffering. It is fatally easy to press one's physical brain just a little too far, and when that happens it is often difficult to recover equilibrium. Sometimes a condition may be produced in a few days which will take years to set right; so anyone who begins to feel any unpleasant effects should at once stop the practice for a while and attend to his physical health, and if possible consult someone who knows more than he does about the subject.

Common Hindrances

People very often come or write to Dr. Besant or to myself and say: " why does not the Master use *me*? I am so earnest and devoted to him. I do so want to be used. I want him to take me and teach me. Why does he not do so? "

There may be many reasons why he does not. Sometimes a person, asking that, has some prominent fault which is in itself quite a sufficient reason. And not infrequently, I regret to say, it is pride. A person may have so good conceit of himself that he is not amenable to teaching, although he thinks that he is. Very often in this civilization of ours the fault is irritability. A good and worthy person may have his nerves all ajangle, so that it would be impossible for him to be drawn into very close and constant touch with the Master. Sometimes the impediment is

curiosity. Some are surprised to hear that that is a serious failing, but certainly it is--curiosity about the affairs of others, and especially about their occult standing or development. It would be quite impossible that a Master should draw near to himself one who had that failing.

Another common hindrance is a readiness to be offended. Many a good and earnest aspirant is so easily offended as to be a practically of no use in the work, because he cannot get on with other people. He will have to wait until he has learnt to adapt himself, and to cooperate with any person whatever

Many people who make the inquiry have failings of this kind, and they do not like it if their fault is pointed out to them. They do not generally believe that they have it, and imagine that we are in error; but in rare cases they're willing to profit by the suggestion. I remember very well a lady coming to me in an American city, and asking the question: " What is the matter with me? Why may I not draw near to the Master? " " Do you really want to know? " I asked. Yes, certainly, she really wished to know. She adjured me to look at her occultly, or clairvoyantly or in any way I wish to, and all her vehicles and their past lives, and to decide thereby. I took her at her word and said: " Well, if you really want to know, there's too much ego in your cosmos. You're thinking all by yourself and not enough about the work. "

Of course she was terribly offended; she flounced out of the room, and said she did not think much of my clairvoyance; but that lady had the courage to come back to years later and say: " What you told me was quite true, and I am going to put it right and to work hard at it. " that story has repeated itself many times, except that this is the only case in which the person came back and acknowledge the fault. Unquestionably the disciple who is willing to see himself as others see him be learn much that will help him to progress. I recollect that one of the Masters once remarked that the first duty of a chela is to hear without anger anything the Guru may say. He should be eager to change himself, to get rid of his faults. Madame Blavatsky said: " Chelaship has been defined by Master as a psychic resolvent, which eats away all dross and leaves only the pure gold behind. "

Self-centeredness is only another form of pride, but it is very prominent in the present day. The personality which we have been building up for many thousands of years has grown strong and often self-assertive, and it is one of the hardest tasks to reverse its attitude and compel it to acquire the habit of looking at things from the standpoint of others. One might certainly step out of the center of his own circle, as I explained in *The Inner Life*, if he wishes to come to the Master.

It sometimes happens, however, that those who ask the question have not any particular outstanding defect, and when one looks them over, one can only say: " I do not see any definite reason, any one fault which is holding you back, but you will have to grow a little all round. " That is an unpalatable thing to have to tell a person, but it is the fact; they are not yet big enough, and must grow before they will be worthy.

One thing which often prevents people from coming into touch with the Masters is lack of faith and will; unless a person tries earnestly with the full belief that he can, and with the determination that he will, succeed one day, and that that day shall come as soon as possible, it is fairly certain that he will not prevail. While we know that in some of us there failings, yet I do think there are at least some cases among us in which is just the lack of that intense determination which holds us back.

It requires some strength and bigness to put oneself in the attitude toward the work which the Master himself adopts, because, in addition to any defect of our own, we have the whole pressure of the thought of the world against us. Madame Blavatsky gave us the full list warning in the beginning about both these difficulties. She writes:

As soon as anyone pledges himself as a probationer, certain Occult effects ensue. The first is a throwing outward of everything latent in the nature of the man--his faults, habits, qualities or subdued desires, whether good, bad or indifferent. For instance, if a man be vain or a sensualist, or ambitious. . . These vices are sure to break out, even if he has hitherto successfully concealed or repressed them they will come to the front irrepressibly, and he will have to fight a hundred times harder than before, until he kills all such tendencies in himself

On the other hand, if he be good, generous, chaste and abstemious, or has any virtue latent and concealed in him, it will work its way out as irrepressibly as the rest. . . . This is an immutable law in the domain of the occult.

Does the reader recall the older proverb: " Let sleeping dogs lie "? There is a world of occult meaning in it. No man or woman knows his or her moral strength until it is tried. Thousands go through life very respectably because they have never been put to the test. . . . One who undertakes to try for chelaship by that very act rouses. . . Every sleeping passion of his animal nature. . . . The chela is called to face not only all the latent evil propensities of his nature, but in addition the momentum of maleficent forces accumulated by the community and the nation to which he belongs. . . . If he is content to go along with his neighbors and be almost as they are--perhaps a little better or somewhat worse than the average--no one may give him a thought. But let it be known that he has been able to detect the hollow mockery of social life, it's hypocrisy, selfishness, sensuality, cupidity and other bad features, and has determined to lift himself up to a higher level, at once he is hated, and every bad, bigoted or malicious nature sends at him a current of opposing will power.

Those who drift along with the current of evolution, and will reach the stage in the very far distant future, will find it much easier, for popular opinion at that period will be in harmony with these ideals. We have now, however, to resist what the Christian world call temptation, the steady pressure of opinion from without, for millions of people round us are thinking personal thoughts. To make a stand against these needs real effort, a true courage and perseverance. We must doggedly keep to the task, and though we may fail again and again we must not lose heart, but get up and go on

The astral and mental bodies of an aspirant ought to be continually exhibiting four or five big and growing emotions--love, devotion, sympathy and intellectual aspiration among them. But instead of a few great feelings vibrating splendidly and clearly with fine color, one generally sees the astral body spotted over with red and brown and gray and black vortices, often a hundred or more. They are somewhat like a mass of warts on the physical body, preventing the skin from being sensitive as it should be. The candidate must see to it that these are removed, and that the usual tangle of petty emotions is entirely combed away.

Devotion Must Be Complete

There can be no half measures on this Path. Many people are in the position of those much-maligned individuals Ananias and Sapphira. It will be remembered how they (not at all on naturally nor in a blameworthy manner) wanted to keep something to fall back upon, as they were not quite sure that the new Christian movement was going to be a success. They were very enthusiastic, and wanted to give all that they could; but they did feel that it was the path of wisdom to keep a little back in case the movement failed. For that they were not in the least to be blamed; but what they *did* do which was most damaging and improper was that, though keeping something back, they did not admit the fact, but pretended that they had given all. There are many today who follow their example; I hope the story is not true, because the Apostle but certainly somewhat severe upon them.

We do not give everything, but keep back little of ourselves--I do not mean of our money, but of personal feeling deep down, which holds us back from a Master's feet. In occultism that will not do. We must follow the Master without reserve, not saying within: " I will follow the Master as long as he does not want me to work with such and such a person; I will follow the Master so long as all that I do is recognized and mentioned in the papers! " We must not make conditions. I do not mean that we should give up our ordinary physical plane duties, but simply that our whole self should be at the Master's disposal. We must be prepared to yield anything, to go anywhere--not as a test, but because the love of the work is the biggest thing in our lives

Sometimes people ask: " If I do all these things how long will it be before the Master takes me on probation? " There will be no delay, but there is much virtue in the word " if " in this question. It is not so easy to do them perfectly, but were that required it would no doubt be a long time before we could hope for discipleship. But one of the Masters has said: " He who does his best does enough for us. " If one has not delight in service for its own sake, but is only looking for the reward of occult recognition, he has not really the right spirit. If he has the right attitude he will go on tirelessly with the good work, leaving the Master to announce his pleasure when and how he may choose.

Our Hindu Brethren have a very sound tradition in this matter. They would say: " Thirty or forty years of service is as nothing; there are many in India who have served for the whole of their lives, and have never had any outward recognition, though inwardly they are being guided by Master. " I met with an instance of this a few years ago; I had to make some inquiry with

regard to some of our Indian brethren about these things, and the answer of the Master was: " For forty years I have had those men under observation. Let them be content with that. " And they were more than content. Since then, I may mention, they have received further recognition and have become Initiates. Our Indian brother knows within himself that the Master is aware of his service; but the pupil does not mind whether he chooses to take any outward notice of it or not. He would, of course, be exceedingly happy if the Master did notice him, but if that does not happen he goes on just the same.