

# **LETTERS TO A LODGE**



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TO A LODGE**

***JULIA  
KEIGHTLEY***

***(JASPER NIEMAND)***

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## PREFACE

Julia Wharton Lewis Campbell Ver Planck Keightley (10 August 1850 – 9 October 1915) was what one might call a somewhat hidden helper in the early theosophical cause, writing hundreds of articles under her name and several pseudonyms. She also co-edited *The Path* magazine, under William Q. Judge.

Jasper Niemand, the name these articles were published under, was the pseudonym Julia Keightley used for many articles published during that time, and also for the famous theosophical book *Letters That Have Helped Me*.

This book is the realization of what Julia Keightley envisioned for this series of articles, based on the notes appended to the original articles in *The Path* magazine.

May these article bring thoughtful reflection and insight to those who find its pages. Gratefully and Fraternally,

Scott J. Osterhage  
Tucson, Arizona  
21 March 2025



# LETTERS TO A LODGE

FROM

*THE IRISH THEOSOPHIST*

**1.**

November 1894, Vol. 3, pp. 17-24.

**2.**

December 1894, Vol. 3, pp. 33-39.

**3.**

January 1895, Vol. 3, pp. 49-53.

**4.**

February 1895, Vol. 3, pp. 69-72.

**5.**

April 1895, Vol. 3, pp. 109-113.

**6.**

May 1895, Vol. 3, pp. 129-132.

**7.**

June 1895, Vol. 3, pp. 149-152.

**8.**

August 1895, Vol. 3, pp. 192-196.  
& September 1895, Vol. 3, pp. 209-212.

**9.**

November 1895, Vol. 4, pp. 21-27.



# 1.

You ask me, Comrades, how we may best assist our fellows, not in material fashion, but along lines of theosophic thought. I have given much attention to this subject. All of us who truly fulfil our pledges to humanity find ourselves placed soon or late where we are obliged to consider it with care. By “pledges” I do not alone refer to spoken vows or promises to any person or body of persons, but also (and chiefly) to the asseverations made within our own hearts and natures. What we thus promise within ourselves, what we aspire to there, finds there a witness, a recorder, an accusing or approving tribunal. This inner nature is judge. This it is which “obliges” us to weigh all questions arising within ourselves, thus demonstrating the existence of that spiritual law which is said to “contain within itself its own executioners.” All that we do or think or refrain from has there its first and deepest effect.

Now, as students, you should know that there is in all things a natural or sequential development, according to which experience unfolds itself in a series of conditions no less regular than those of the flowers. The law of growth is everywhere one and the same. This matter of helping others is no exception; it too has its pre-natal stages. From one to other of these we pass, and must pass, if our experience be vital in the least; if we be growing, involving and evolving at all. The endeavor to observe these stages is at all times necessary. It is the means to that self-knowledge which is the parent of brotherly thought and action.

When first we asseverate within ourselves the wish to help the world, we are prone to go about with offers of help. We look at our fellows with a view to their salvation. Watchful we, to detect every need, every failure; is not our service a panacea for all these? Do not our fellows slip that we may help them rise?

Ah no, Comrades! Not we, but the Law. Are we alone that Law? Has it no other agents? Earth, air and all the seen and unseen elements; are they not full of these? The Dark, more full than all? So we meet with rebuffs. Or our service fails. Or that service results in the deeper bewilderment of our brothers, and we are shocked into the recognition that we are not saviours in the least. We have outrun the Law. Eagerness, over-anxiety to be doing, or personal habit have led us into situations not yet ripe for us, places all too remote, as yet, for any objective tread or touch. We precipitate crises; we stimulate unwise confidences; we startle unready natures into throes of untimely thought. Tangled events, confused issues, atrophied impulses, the jar of living nerve-lines everywhere proclaim our prentice hand. Despondent, we recoil, no more to involve ourselves in the strife of action.

The duration of this period of depression is governed by the reality of our wish to serve. Its fervor rallies us. We regain the base overpassed by our reaction; we examine the cause of our failure. The sincere light shows Law as being competent to designate its agents. Standing then upon our own base, we watch for a sign by which we shall know our own. Sometimes that watch is long. We are tried most by our highest aspirations, and often the answer made to him who asks only to serve is that mystic answer — “*Wait.*” Later on he learns that he serves most who most waits upon the Will, the Law. Other times we fail to recognize opportunities of service; we see them not at all, or all too late. Again the aspiring heart falls back to earth. But the heart of love is a winged thing; it has its home in the pure ether. Earth cannot stay it; it must again try the strength of its wings. It needs not to wait over-long. Some sign is seen and interpreted aright. From the ocean of life some airy form arises and beckons us. An interior prompting fills us with its urgency, or someone asks our aid. The tide of service comes pouring in. Then, when the eager hands knock at our hearts, from those hearts will arise a pure aspiration for wisdom in service.

This much-needed wisdom is slowly and painfully acquired. We learn through and by our mistakes, seen in the

light of dawning self-knowledge. Yet there may be a royal road to it, if any who have learned through their own want of wisdom can point out to another the stumbling-blocks in the path of devotion to mankind.

The great source of our inadequacy is this: we think it all-important that we should be wise givers of counsel to our friends. We should read aright the omens of their present and disentangle for their wearied eyes the labyrinths of Life. This were to be godlike! This were perfected sight indeed! It is a fallacy. Hope of its present attainment, an error. We cannot clearly read the simplest life line of our own. We are of import to Great Nature only by reason of our incompetence. She needs us, just as we are, in all our weakness, to work out the purposes of soul amid coil and counter coil. Our imperfections are her means of advance.

What *is* all-important is that we should help our friends to find their own wisdom. From us, not wisdom, but self-effacement is required. Yet this is in very fact the highest wisdom.

For look at this. If we give definite advice, that will inevitably be the tincture of our own minds, the essence of our personal experience or belief. Our conclusions on another's difficulty are formed upon half-presented facts; effects, these, whose cause lies many a life — many an age, it may be — behind the fitful gleam of the present hour. They appear now on planes other than that in which they had their source; they wear an altered garb; human intellect cannot discern their underlying nature. The most reverent touch is still too rough for this strange potential fact, mighty for good as for evil in the life of our brother. Refrain! Fear to disturb the balance in which a soul trembles towards its destiny. Desire thou naught but the fulfilment of Law.

I said that definite advice or plan is the fruit of our own experience. But the questioning soul which comes to us is not improbably a stranger to the whole of that experience. Our advice will have no reality. It will evoke no interior response. Respect, or love of us, or many another impulse to action, may

cause our advice to be followed. The result will be that false faith which breeds fear. Action taken without one's own hearty interior assent can only breed discord. The hidden will has never moved at all.

The subject bristles with difficulty. What then can we do?

This, as I think. By observation or by question to find out the ideals of our questioner and advise constancy to those at any cost. "Be your best! Be your highest! I trust you!" Observers of that duality which presents choice after choice to the human soul as it oscillates from this pole to that, we may side ever with the higher side of our fellow-nature. We may endeavor to broaden all ideals by comparison. Nearness to universality and unity is a good test. If our brother cannot formulate his ideal to himself, we can hold up one after another before his mind and see which thrills him to response; love will find out the way. It uplifts the banner of the mightiest ideal and gazes with its brother upon that. Or we may have glimpsed his higher nature. Dissevering that nature from the lower attributes, from the mirage of self, we can hold the mirror up to it and bid him see his worthier self, bid him fix his gaze there. He will, if we look too. "Be at each moment the highest self of which you are capable and hold yourself there." It is a blessed office, this, of reflecting to our brothers the image of their noblest possibilities. We are too often but dim mirrors; feeble reflectors of their virtues, magnifiers of their defects. We turn a microscopic eye upon the more salient details of character, and loss of proportion results. False lights ourselves, we deflect the rays of the Self; the divine rays are beaten back, seeking other spheres than ours. Open the fixed mind to them and the rays pass, dissolving our poor limited forms, waxing glorious in that self-creative power which is the appanage of the living Light alone. That Light whose movement is the Law, is the only wise maker of plans. Yet it plans nothing. It provides action, reaction and circulation; mankind calls these down now as blessing, now as curse.

There are, of course, cases where actual wrong may be proposed, and in such elementary situations we can but point

out, not so much the error, as the want of wisdom. The terms “right” and “wrong” have been so misused as dogmatic whips wherewith to flog people into the acceptance of creeds or personal ideas, that to-day their use irritates most minds, as with a hint of would-be authority. This revolt has its root in the soul’s sense of its own freedom. It knows right and wrong to be relative terms of an existence only partially true. But Wisdom always IS. The appeal to that implies no self-righteousness.

When we have thus done all we can, we must stand aside. We cannot participate in the unwise deed. There are hours when silence is the only aid. In these we can remember that the weight of past Karma was too strong for our brother, and has set him the hard task of learning through the want of wisdom. We can look forward to meeting him at the next turning, stronger perhaps, while we are weaker, more apt to bear our burdens than we to bear his to-day; wise in that dread, yet calm, self-knowledge born of pain, pain, ever more pain. “The karmic root of all is one and runs deeper than you know. Never judge human nature on its lowest levels, and you never know all the facts.” So spoke one who too often speaks in vain. We are too careful for our own attitude. Desirers we, of perfection — *for ourselves*. Painful anxiety, ours, to be *ourselves* just and right. The spontaneous generosity which springs to the brother’s aid is lost sight of in the cautious balancing of our own wise persons across the sea of sin. Would we discover any other’s need by the torch of our own self-righteousness? Where were then Loyalty? Where Faith? These high virtues thrive not upon the husks of material proof. Does not the Christ light say, as of old, to the sinner: “To thee much shall be forgiven, because thou hast loved much.”<sup>1</sup> Let us prate less of abstract perfection, abstain from so much “good advice,” and give brotherly feeling, human love of the strong, quiet sort to our beleaguered fellows. Justice, do we say? Man never has it in his power to deal abstract, pure justice to man. Our only justice is compassion, and not that personal judgment born of our knowledge of how *we* would act in some given case. There are

souls of rectitude which scorn to defend themselves to doubting friends; strong lips on which the seal of silence is set; great ones too high to bend to self-defense before petty self-proclaimed tribunals. And there are also sinners so strong that their reaction from sin is like the birth pains of a new star. Wisdom comes from the abandonment of the self, and Love is her guide. Before the vast spectacle of nature in her death grapple, of the soul of the world weeping as the great human orphan struggles to become; of universal mind straining to be born again as mind divinely human, the thinker bows his humble head beneath the prayer:

“O Light of all lights which are in the boundless Light, have mercy upon us also and purify us!”

If, on the other hand, we attempt to advise as from our own minds, it must be dear that we either approve or disapprove a given course; both ways our advice is colored by our own view. We fall into the trap set by our own natures. Wrong for me may be right for you. As we are dealing with others, not with ourselves, we can only help them to find out what aspect of truth is most visible to their minds at the time, and then hold up their hands as was done for the prophet of old. All this talk of influencing others appears to me nauseating, contemptible. If we have influence, let us use it on ourselves. He helps most who influences not at all. Resist the appeal to vanity, and our fellows seek our light because their trust is in us. Well they know those who have never used or betrayed them, even to themselves. Well they know that comrade true to the evolutionary trust, who, without assumed authority as without self-seeking, ever refers them back to the law of their own soul. Of such a one the vulgar will say that he (or she) strives to “influence,” but clean minds recognize the presence of that impersonal power which is the greatest force in nature. We can only exercise it fragmentarily now, but its smallest portion may feed a multitude. The world may vivisect those faithful ones whose simplicity of service makes naught of all its plans, the incense of grateful hearts may die away, but the deep “Well done, thou good and faithful servant,” from the

inner altar of their worship is all the reward they understand. The true, the universal lover, will, at all hazards, prevent in himself the expression of that haughty form of separateness which gives the death-blow to compassion by saying, in the presence of wrong: "I could not do that." We err. In the very same position we would do the same thing, for that situation includes the mental and physical make up, the entire Karma of that other person. Every determining factor would be the same. There were no possible escape from the same action were we the same actor. Do we thank heaven we are not the same? It imports more that our fellows shall have good cause to thank high heaven that we are other.

Again, strenuous opposition often forces the questioner in the contrary direction. And too often people ask our opinion to have their own confirmed. Failing that, it is sweet to find, in our opposition, a spur or a justification, it may be, of their course. The Mâyâ of Nature is endless. It happens again that some who come to us for help, apparently, really man the lifeboat of the Law sent for our succor. They may bring to a focus some long-delayed choice of our own. They may throw, as it were, a search-light upon our position, revealing us to ourselves. "What men prize most is a privilege, even if it be that of chief mourner at a funeral."<sup>2</sup> To most of us, a privilege means the exclusion of others. He who foregoes the privilege of adviser-in-chief to his fellows begins to learn a deeper wisdom of self-control that leads to wider helpfulness in fields of hidden space. Yet do not say that we can help but little. Sympathy is a vast force, and we develop by its exercise. Not the gush of puling sentiment, nor the blaze of emotion, but the quiet charity which is an occult power, that broad attractive current binding souls apparently dis severed. We touch the bond; they thrill response to its widespread harmonies.

I cannot make you more definite reply, yet you will feel helped, I venture to believe, because, while no definite path has been pointed out, a direction has been indicated where many paths do lie and are to be found. Each path must be freely

chosen by him who is to tread it. Hence the wise guide will only indicate their direction.

There is more to it, though. Inasmuch as even two or three are thus met in the name of the universal Law of Brotherhood, or Identity of Souls, and when self has faded from sight, a very real guidance can and does arise from the inner selves of all. It arises from those spiritual spheres whose beings are selfless. Attracted by the harmonious aspirations quivering through the unseen light, they half incline, they listen, they recognize the voice of soul, they help the inner selves of men through the minds and hearts. Watch, then, for these, the descending gods.

Not men and women seek our aid, but souls. The soul, deeply buried in matter, seeks itself through the universe. Deep within us lies that soundless Aum which the Mahâtma — the soul made perfect — salutes in every human being. It lies so deeply hid and knocks. Material brain is occupied. The heart of desire cannot hear. Vainly the Voice resounds; the Aum knocks on, unheard by sinning man. But his brother may hear! On us Nature may have imposed that signal trust; we may have that gift to hear, to recognize the Aum in other lives. Then we may make reply. How? By returning trust for suspicion; silence for deeds of wrong; we may uphold to our brother the image of his creator and god. Ours it is to cause hatred to cease by love, to win for that distraught and warring comrade a moment of stillness, in which the inner Voice may be heard. When we return patience for anger, that fettered soul within his body vibrates to the universal harmony. Like a miner imprisoned within a ruined mine, it hears the signal of the rescuing party coming nearer, nearer still. It feels the hope of escape, of breaking down the walls; that light approaches from without, borne in a brother's hand, to free the inner light, itself. It leaps in its stony prison. The man feels, he hears, he obeys; the soul-light floods out to know itself, to know the worlds which are but its greatest expression. Is it not an august service, thus to assist the purposes of soul?

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Only the Teacher can know whether the soul has done well or ill. The Voice is all the guide the soul can have. It will bring it to the broad places in the end.

*Note.* — The Editor will gladly receive any communications, in the nature of enquiry or otherwise, connected with this series. These he will forward to the author, to be dealt with in future letters if suitable.

#### **NOTE**

1. {Luke 7:47.}
2. {*Essays, English and American* (1910), James Russell Lowell.}

## 2.

You ask me, Brothers, for my thoughts respecting the Theosophical Society and its neutrality. The latter point appears to me to be one important at all times and one which should be better understood.

The Society is held to represent our ideal. It stands for Universal Brotherhood. What is that? I have heard, and I believe it true, that when the elder Brothers of that hierarchy which specially helps the West were considering the base of the T.S. — a base to be as broad as the world, free as the ether — they chose for this foundation a truth which they expressed by the term “Universal Brotherhood.” In this they followed after Nature, herself based upon that truth. The term was chosen as one fitted to convey to all minds in all languages a clear, distinct, and ethical idea. At the same time, their ethics transcend ours; the only real ethics are spiritual laws we do not glimpse as yet. So this term is held to cover and to convey in its highest sense the truth of the “spiritual identity of all Being,” on which alone can a *real* universal brotherhood, true in fact as well as in potentiality, active on all planes alike, be based. The Society is thus seen to rest upon spiritual identity, upon likeness and not upon difference, upon union and reunion as beginning and goal, and, in the intermediate spaces of Time, upon unity in diversity. Like the world-soul, the Society receives into its bosom all manner of minds, souls in all stages of evolution and involution, promising within those borders free and unimpeded development, through enquiry, to each. Thus the sole article of faith necessary for admission premises its neutrality; the one springs naturally from the other.

Let us now take up and examine the nature of this neutrality. At once we perceive that no passivity, in the usual sense, is implied. The Society does not permit the war of creeds, the attack of minds within its precincts. Members and officers are not to sit calmly by and allow the assault upon the

beliefs of others to go on unimpeded. It is not permitted in the meetings; on the part of officials it is held to be a misdemeanor forbidden expressly by the Constitution. The neutrality is positive, not negative. It is active, as becomes a spiritual quality springing from a spiritual truth lying at the very foundation of Being. Rightly so, for those who sit by and allow a wrong to be done when their activity might prevent it, are sharers of the injustice which their passivity makes possible. They do not escape, by that inactivity, a really active share in the wrong. They provided a quiet shelter, so to say, for the aggressor, a field from which the evil could sally forth and take effect. We find mankind recognizing this fact at two poles, first in the common axiom: "The receiver is as bad as the thief;"<sup>1</sup> secondly, in the mystic's code, "Inaction in a deed of mercy becomes an action in a deadly sin."<sup>2</sup> When the machinery of the Society is put in motion to bring about an infringement of the rules of Brotherhood, we do not escape responsibility by assuming the attitude of calm spectators, or of judges ready to deal out a justice which in truth we have not to bestow, being as yet imperfect men. Neutrality is not passivity. The last is a mental inertia, the other a fixed mental attitude. The first altogether rejects an infringement of Brotherhood, and forbids an insistence upon diversity, which the latter supinely permits. The ideally neutral attitude is that taken up by the Society. It posits for itself a broad code, a tenet wide as the fields of light and single as is the source of that light; for others it adopts an impartial neutrality. In this mental equilibrium there is no lethargy. The "holder of the balance" requires every faculty, every nerve brought into play. Try; you will not find it easy. This point of balance is the lever of Archimedes; once found, it moves the worlds. When disturbances shift the balance too far, the true neutrality consists in an effort to bring about readjustment, just as we see people instinctively throwing themselves to one side when the ship keels over or the coach careens. That is the recognition, in physics, of nature's law of readjustment, or reaction. The Society provides for it, even to dismissal from office, if the rule of neutrality be violated, and

such provision is a part of its neutrality. Ours should be no less positive. In this light an occult saying becomes understandable: "Because thou art neither hot nor cold I will spew thee out of my mouth."<sup>3</sup> To be at either pole implies reaction in time, and so comes about circulation, or the condition of living, of evolving. To lie passively in a middle state where no action is, is to be spewed out of the mouth of nature, or manifestation, to fade out without further *personal* evolution. The Yogî is intensely active on the spiritual plane and negative upon the physical plane in trance. The same penalty would be incurred by the Society if it were "neither hot nor cold." Its inactivity would bring about its decay.

It would thus appear that an active charity is the legitimate outcome of the sole article in our confession of faith. An *active* charity — not verbal, not inanimate, not supine. The magnificent picture given by St. Paul delineates the aspect and mode of such a vital charity from the standpoint of the adept, and portrays the inadequacy of mere eloquence, though it spoke as angels might speak, to do justice to that living quality, without which sonorous speech "were as sounding brass or the tinkling cymbal."<sup>4</sup>

Our Society is the model, the working model in the objective world, of that body known to the mystics of all ages as The Lodge, or aggregate of spiritually active souls, embracing all the rungs of conscious mental Being.

THE LODGE is the servant of Karma. That is, its operations are guided by the laws of Being. It works along the lines of Law, using cause and effect as it finds them to its hand, provided already by mankind under Karma; using the action and reaction of currents in the Âkâśa as it there finds these. It reveals nothing. It attacks nothing. It punishes nothing and no one. It leaves all this to the Law. The withdrawal of its influence or its aid is not, properly speaking, punishment, for it only removes that which cannot be used by those who turn away from its path, the path of Law. Strictly speaking, offenders are those who have removed themselves. But it protects. It defends. It secures for its followers the right to

mental freedom. It imposes no action. It offers opportunity for right action to those entitled to such opportunity. If rejected, the opportunity comes no more. The Divine is not importunate. Where honest intent and pure aim have not secured a man from mistaken action, his soul learns a broader view, a vision more intense from the pain of the mistake, and his right intent carries him onward still. The Law thus provides that intention, motive, shall count, and so they do also count with that instrument of the Law, THE LODGE. So long as a man wills to do rightly, wills to see clearly, he is helped over the innumerable obstructions put in our way (by nature), by that LODGE itself, whose mission it is to help mankind in their progress through the mire of material life.

THE LODGE has but one insurmountable barrier, hypocrisy; one crime, ingratitude; one felony, self-abuse. For conscious root in falsity under guise of truth-seeking must debar the mind from sight of the True. Denial of a gift, rejection of the giver are perjuries committed against the very nature of Life — the One Being — itself. All who give us aught have given us somewhat of their life; that life works in and for us; when we deny that, after any one of our numerous contemptible human fashions, we do inhibit and expel it from our spheres; we do our paltry best to stifle Life and stultify its source; we deny the very mainsprings of existence, the eternal give and take, when we give back evil in any shape of denial, forgetfulness, suspicion, for the blessings of fraternity and good will. And he who destroys the nervous vehicle destroys the inner senses in the germ and cannot penetrate to that arcanum of hidden Being because he has destroyed the path leading to it, and that, too, after a fashion which affects the atoms of nervous matter for many a life beyond the life we call to-day.

The great function of THE LODGE is also that of the Law — readjustment. That is to say, bringing into equilibrium the nature — human or universal — temporarily overbalanced by undue determination to one or another pole of force. When undue stress is laid upon one aspect of life, the true servant can

be helped by the awakening of energies then latent at the other pole. This is done whenever *necessary*; the good gardener does not disturb the plant until it requires his care; then he only brings to bear upon it natural agencies which he has learned to specialize. Such servants form, each in his own degree, links of the great chain of conscious endeavor which stretches from man to the angels, and beyond. Once they have served, and while they do serve, that LODGE is in the very nature of things bound to them as they to it. For such living links there is no severance unless they will it so.

Life, the Breath, the Conscious Mover, flows along the chain, *seeking and making its own bed*, choosing its own vehicles; those above cannot reject those below; those below must receive that Life by way of those above. Each put himself in his own place; not one can lose it unless he himself moves away or is moved away from that place. It is hierarchal, because the laws of Life, of the One Life in the One Substance, have made it so, fashioning plane upon plane, stage upon stage, link after link, soul after soul. “Ingratitude *is* a crime in occultism,” as the Master twice has said, for he who denies one link of the chain, one source of but a single interior benefit, throws, or would if he could, throw the whole chain into confusion. He endeavors to isolate one link from the living palpitant whole; that whole resists, and he himself is torn away from it; the great stream expulses him as debris upon the naked shore, and flows on. Brotherly help is a spiritual entity; it is of the higher order of life; it is a part of the higher substance of our being — the thought-substance, the heart-substance — and we sow it in the spheres of our fellows, open to ask and to receive it.

When, then, they turn against the giver, they do violently reverse the action of those living substantial atoms within them; the sudden reversal of force is a great shock to their own inner man. Moreover, they do then, by their thoughts, expel and cast back upon us the force we have bestowed, but a force also reversed to its other pole. By this reversal of force they drag the atoms of spiritual substance down to a lower plane

existence before their time. They return hatred for love; in occult dynamics this means that they give contraction, death, bitter cold for life and love. They *may* hurt the giver, if they be powerful enough, but primarily they injure themselves. In the ungrateful man you may plainly see the horrid action of this sharp reversal; he is torn by doubt, anger, suspicion; his misery knows no cessation. Peace has no foothold within him; he is the wretched playground of forces whose nature he himself has transmuted, making that deadly which was given from the fountain of life. And Life uprears its crest against him, it will have none of him except upon the terms he himself has made, the terms of violence to the essential nature of things; no truce is given by the Law to him who has thus declared himself a foe to order and law. The Benefactor is sacred in the penetralia of spiritual truth; he cannot undo the good once done, himself; no benefit once set forth can ever be cancelled; the stream can be checked at the source but its flowing waves cannot be recalled. Present evil cannot obliterate past good so far as we are concerned; in the universal sum of things they may tend to one benefit — self-knowledge — in the end.

Hence fidelity to that Society, at once a model and a benefit, an ideal and a nucleus capable of perfection, is a primary virtue in the would-be Theosophist. He must act the brotherhood he professes, or he risks to become a hypocrite, one of those “pharisees” of whom H. P. Blavatsky remarked that they were the only class whom the Christ constantly rebuked. The mystic Christ-light will have none of the hypocrite, for he seeks a false light, one of the numberless false reflections of the One. He must be grateful, to his fellows, his officers, to the unseen givers of the ideal, to the “guardians of the base,” to the “bearers of the flame.” Otherwise, he risks to destroy the vehicle. It is not perfect, for men can provide no vehicle which shall be better than their aggregate selves.

It is for them to perfect both. Theirs is at choice that noble part of avoiding all fixed codes, all rigid methods of comparison, all hard and fast conceptions of charity or justice or neutrality or benevolence, whereby we reduce divine fluidic

lights to mere forms, models of our restricted minds. Let us watch at the springs of the spirit within us; let us wait for the dawn of compassion; let us listen for the pleading of an inner voice; for the pulses of pardon, of peace and of prayer, let us keep undying watch within ourselves. When these arise, were it by but the feeblest heart-beat, let us give way to the eternal processional of the peace bringers, the currents of divinity ever ready to flow through every man who will take down his bars and evoke their passage. We are fixed; they change ever. We are mechanical; they are spontaneous. Fatigue is ours; they are immortal, tireless, ever-born and never-fading. We are the slaves of our own poor preconceptions of conduct and virtue; they are servants of the Divine Dark Children of the Father of Lights, teachers of men who yet are — if they will — themselves. Through and by our Society, that concept of spiritual and charitable identity, we may both receive and give these boons *if so be we abide by the spirit itself*. We shall learn and become that truth than which no grander ever was set forth:

“As the one fire, after it has entered into the world, becomes different according to what it burns, so the self within all things *is different — but it exists also apart*.”<sup>5</sup>

Now this is an epitome of the *real* neutrality.

*Note.* — The Editor will gladly receive any communications, in the nature of enquiry or otherwise, connected with this series. These he will forward to the author, to be dealt with in future letters if suitable.

## NOTES

1. {*Lectures to My Students*, Charles Spurgeon. As found: “Remember that, as the receiver is as bad as the thief, so the hearer of scandal is a sharer in the guilt of it. If there were no listening ears there would be no talebearing tongues. While you are a buyer of ill wares the demand will create the supply, and the factories of falsehood will be working full time. No one wishes to become a creator of lies, and yet he who hears slanders with pleasure and believes them with readiness will hatch many a brood into active life.}

2. {*The Voice of the Silence*, H. P. Blavatsky, p. 31.}
3. {Paraphrase of Revelation 3:16?}
4. {1 Corinthians 13:1.}
5. {*The Light of the East*, October 1895, Vol. 4, p. 34. As found: “As the one fire, after it has entered the world, though one, becomes different according to what it burns ; thus the Self within all things becomes different according to whatever it enters, but it exists also apart.”}

### 3.

COMRADES:

You ask me for a fuller interpretation of the idea that the White Lodge acts on the expanding force, and the Dark on the contractive. I understand this as follows:—

The spiritual forces, following the action of the Great Breath, flow outwards and downwards periodically, and periodically withdraw into their own center. This is known as the “descent and reascent of the gods.” It is for men to lift themselves in aspiration towards the descending gods. When the spiritual forces are in full play of activity they are to be felt on *all* planes, even on the physical and most objective, where they are not indeed always sensed by men who may yet act with them from some interior perception not cognized by brain-mind. Of course you will see that this is again quite different from the action of those amongst mankind who do cognize the spiritual activity, in any degree whatever, and who apprehend the meaning of right action at such periods.

Following the method of that Planetary Spirit who imparts the vibration of truth for the Manvantara, the White Lodge acts with the expanding force, and, like it, and with it, withdraws into its own plane and center, to work no more actively (externally) when the contractive force is on. On the spiritual plane there is always activity so long as the Great Breath is in manifestation at all. Roughly speaking, at such times the Adept of the White Ray, the white sexless Unity, acts in Samadhi, &c., only. You will see that when the spiritual expansion is on in great force all planes of nature feel it, according to the higher or lower evolution of the beings of that plane. But when the spiritual currents withdraw, each plane sets up its own action and reaction in the substance of that plane.

The dark powers, on the contrary, act with the contracting force. That is to say, they act with and increase the action and

reaction especial to each plane; such planes are the physical and lower astral.

Master has said: "It is impossible to worship both sides of nature at once." The word "worship" should be deeply underscored. For by "worship" is meant exclusive devotion to both Eros, the One Ray, the expansive compassion, and to the differentiated action and reaction of Jiva-prana especial to physical nature. Some great occultists have erred in this respect. As take the example of Paracelsus. Such men have thought that they could work on the higher manasic and other planes at favorable cyclic moments, and could then act in the body in separative physical and other extremes, supposing that by this they were copying the example shown by the manifested duality. They failed to discern Karma as a universal law, and to learn that Reaction really means that the spiritual forces are withdrawn to their own plane, to their own center, and that the action then observed by men in nature is an action of a differentiation of force common to nature alone. Hence these men failed to reach the great truths.

When the spiritual forces expand from within outward, all nature thrills responsive; even the hierarchies of lower powers can only assert themselves on those among mankind already predisposed to their influence. But the word Reaction is one which covers, in fact, that action referred to as coming from the unprogressed Planetaries, with all their hierarchies down even to the unprogressed elementals, with tendency to limitation, to fix and arrest thought-molds, as to fix and arrest the worlds hanging suspended in minor pralaya.

Heed now the danger of this spiritual current to those amongst you whose thought-forms, whether of creed or plan, or what not else, are fixed. Were such a current forced into a sphere largely insensible, so far as mind may reach, to noetic action, the result would only be that these erroneous ideas of rigid mold would more actively vibrate, would more vividly impress the brain-mind. Herein lies the danger of forcing the evolution of a man. Even when Karma permits, this process is one dangerous to the co-ordination of the various bodies; and

danger, great and grave danger, is incurred either to the physical body or in the reaction set up in the mind itself.

In the case of some the danger is in large part that of the physical body. They may feel reaction in the mind also; but forewarned is fore-armed, and if they have been taught — and in some measure have grasped the teaching — to observe this reaction in brain-mind as the action of the dark quality in nature (tamo-guna); to check pictures, even thoughts, and not to regard this effect of reaction on the lower mind as an expression of the real self, they have lessened little by little and in part the tendency to be carried away by it.

In other cases the danger lies less in the physical than in the brain-mind, which may feel the reaction of which I speak, in so far as there may be these mental pictures of rigid mold, which require time ere they can be dissolved in that Light which fluxes all things, and which works to more rapid purpose as men increase its power by looking to it alone. The dark powers can make fierce assaults in ways not generally understood, but which are felt in the form of terrible mental reaction. That reaction awakens the pictures of erroneous ideas to fresh life, and casts their vivid images anew upon the brain: bewilderment results. If at these times we set all down to the reaction common to nature, and induced by the force of our aspirations, avoiding meanwhile our own fixed mental preconceptions, we soon find that a time comes in which the Readjustor does his great work. This Readjustor may be the Higher Self, its messengers, or Karmic circumstance, or a Master, and even our own inner man: in all these cases it is the Self.

On this plane the dark powers rely upon their ability to create a Mâyâ. If they see that we are not to be trapped in the prominent lines of work, they lay their hands where our currents exist but in some very small matter. Let me suppose a case, and one common enough. X. may have indulged in some criticism of another, small, and coupled with sincere and kind thoughts up to his lights. The dark powers could seize upon these pictures (vivified already by sound and its objectivizing

power), could dress them up with more subtle matter, could enlarge them, enliven them with elementals and also could assume X.'s image, making all appear very large and bitter to the brain, whose nervous matter they would then proceed to impress with these images more than half their own creation. The object is to make it appear that all these things came from X., and the impression of other minds and repetition by them causes the evil to grow and spread. How are we to avoid this? We should refrain from all criticisms, especially in times of disturbance, when the etheric tension is great, and when all our spheres are tense as harp strings which feel every stir of the air. We must not manage, precipitate, nor force. We may work on and leave results to the Law and its wiser servants. Let us each assume that the others do not think harshly nor critically of us, but put it all against the dark powers of lower Nature. We may and must defend others, when necessary, but let us do so upon a basis of principle and fraternity of *the whole*. By gentleness, detachment, strict attention to duty, and retiring now and then to the quiet place, bring up good currents and keep back all the evil ones. There must be silence in heaven for a time, or the dark ones rejoice to so easily get good, malleable images for annoying us. Remember it is the little things this work is done through, for they are not noticed and their effects are not traced to them, while larger things draw the eyes and minds of all, and hence are not good "blinds."

Self-abnegation and charity may yet save the day for that nucleus of the Light, that child of the cycle and of our hope, whom we have created to give forth the great blessing of the Spiritual identity of all being, and will project the T.S. into the next century as a living wedge to cleave the darkness of the darkest age. Watch then and stand, but not as men who stand in a desperate cause. Stand as those stand in whose hearts the living Light has awakened, has burned and has borne witness to the truth. Stand calmly, stand serenely; bear witness yourselves to that Compassion which is that Light itself. Give heart to those feeble ones amongst you whom the time and great Karma may well shake, by a fraternal quiet support which

is beyond all loud asseveration, which needs no defense of self, but which waits upon the Hope of the ages, the Spiritual Light which "lighteth every man in the world" if that man will.

Beware of brain pictures which partake of the chains and delusions of matter. Their oscillations in the form of brain-mind action and reaction we may largely avoid. When you are not sure, stand still. Turn the peaceful heart away from all sharp clamor and await the hour of right action, resting meanwhile on the duties of the moment. Thus shall we baffle those hierarchies which have place in the duality of manifestation, upon which the great White Lodge cannot expend those high energies of which it is the guardian and evolver, since those powers must disappear with nature when the Great Breath shall be manifest alone. But it is *our* part to wage that war, since we have given them within our spheres a home, dwelling places and a power. Ours to evolve every atom, to drive the dark dwellers from their homes dissolved by the fluid mind which yields readily to the spiritual influx, and to the changes it brings in the akasic substance. Masters have long since left that task — once their task, too — behind.

Neither should we judge those who have interpreted events, bewilderment, suffering according to their karmic tendency. Enfold them also in the divine Compassion. All we have to do is to work and to wait in silence of the lips and of the brain. If we succeed in this, ours will be the great reward of hearing more clearly from that Light within ourselves which will guide us to action when the right moment for that action shall have arrived.

Do you not now see that power is only attainable by man on condition of his being able to work with either one pole of force or the other? With spirit which finds manifested fruition only in going forth, and not in withdrawal. Or with nature which fructifies only in so far as she is able to contract, indraw and to retain some portion of that ever-acting spirit. Man, having power to choose, makes the first right steps when he acts only through the heart-perceptions of fraternity, resignation, patience, courage, altruism, all evolved by the high

magic of the great name of Humanity; all strengthened and broadened when attained and used for love of that race which shall be the temple of the Spirit if it will, and by the help of those amongst us who have the ideal of service with and for the Elder Servitors. Otherwise you strengthen the intellect only; intellect the perceiver of form and formulated ideas; intellect whose proper service is to verify in Nature the *facts* of the continuity of spiritual laws, as intuition holds the office of verifying those laws with the Buddhi eye when Nature sleeps in man. Thus in every act in life you have a choice; each tells for or against spiritual evolution. Each choice is a step: the aggregate of these steps impels you to or from right choice in all the crises of great tests when the karmic hour strikes. You should use all the knowledge given to you to interpret the action and reaction of life about you. Thus only can you have a real and living compassion, thus only can you draw nearer to that ever-living Spirit contained by no molds but container itself of the whole. Faithful to this trust you shall be able to understand the perplexities of events, letting "action and reaction have place in you, the body active, the mind as tranquil as the summer lake." Interpreters, without being judges in the least, you shall stand firm on ground of your own, amidst the tide of the world, able to remain yourselves inactive until the inner voice shall indicate the presence of the descending gods. Then listen greatly, will greatly, and obey. This done, the blessing of the great White Lodge shall indeed be yours, won by you in that service in which they won the right to bestow it.

## 4.

COMRADES,— While I am glad to answer the questions which you put to me in so far as I may be able to do so, I cannot of course pretend to say the final word upon any of them. You must judge for yourselves of the relative value — if any — that my replies may have for you, while my part is to say what I have been taught and have verified to a greater or lesser extent; the extent varies according to the various matters dealt with. You ask:

“What is the difference between the ‘psychic faculty’ and the ‘psychic power,’ to use a current phrase?”

*Answer.* — The “psychic faculty” is that which is born with any individual, it inheres in the Skandhas, in such astral atoms as have been brought over from previous lives. It is a rudimentary trait, undeveloped, latent, or semi-latent, and its exercise is not controlled by will.

The “psychic power” is the trained and developed use, through will, of that faculty latent in all mankind.

The “faculty” is native, inborn, and arises from the evolution — in the race — of a more complex nervous system. The “power” consists in expanding, grasping, educating and governing that faculty.

“The difference between a man born a psychic and one who is made is that the former is a rough, unpolished jewel, reflecting light superficially (and usually they do not wish to learn), while the other has a perfect polish all round, reflecting equally on all sides; each man must polish himself. The inborn psychic faculty, being more sensitive, comes in contact with more force in Nature.” (*Letter of Master K.H.*)

The haphazard awakening of the “faculty,” due to mere sensitiveness of nerve fluid, makes of the born psychic a playground for astral forces. The orderly unfolding of these

microcosmic points of contact with universal forces (which gradual development can only be had by one whose mind and will have been developed and purified), provides for the safety of the individual.

All mankind is destined to evolve to a point where the psychic life or germ will manifest, more or less, through the physical body. A few among the men and women of each century lay hands upon their inheritance and train themselves into “power.” They are, as I said, those whose will and mind have been *previously* evolved through purification and concentration. Hence arises the occult saying, “the psychic plane must be entered from above by the white adept;” *i.e.*, from the *higher* Manasic plane. Entering by will-force from the lower or physical door is the Hatha Yoga of the black magician. Here the term “physical” includes all the gross lower astral plane, all below the “divine astral.”

2. “Can one discriminate between the person possessed of the psychic faculty and one possessed of the power? If so, how?”

*Answer.* — That depends upon the identity of the questioner. Some can; some cannot. There are two ways of so discriminating, which two ways may be combined in one person. The first way is by the exercise of common sense. The second way is by knowledge of occult training. (You may also *know* the rules of training and not have the mastery of them as yet.) In regard to the first way: the born psychic may be of any grade of morality and intellect, just as any other person may be. But usually the powers of endurance, the will and self-control — especially control of self-esteem and self-seeking — are absent in the person of the psychic who is born and not made. He is minus, and not plus. Correctness of psychic vision or what not else is no proof; the psychic may be correct as a photographic plate is correct — because it is sensitized. But such a psychic will not be possessed of knowledge of life and character: there will be no control of events touching the

personal life, nor will he correctly interpret what is seen. After all, it is indescribable, but surely you and I can tell a practical carpenter from the amateur by that indefinable but distinct something — the “*je ne sais quoi*” which radiates from one who knows what he is talking about. A book written by a man who has been in a country has what the critics call “atmosphere” and “local color,” which are never found in the writings of one who describes what he has not himself seen. Of course I have my own tests. And you must have your own, and mind this: first test your own tests before leaning too blindly upon them. You will come to better them too, if you yourself are upon this path. But the tests of another avail little or nothing *as regards this way*.

In regard to the second way, the way of knowledge, there the tests are indeed precise, exact, scientific. All who have passed an examination in, say mathematics, not only know the man ignorant of them, but they can also give you their reasons. Let me particularize, by illustration.

You tell me that you heard of someone who claimed to have a “psychic power of looking into people” and seeing what they really are. You do not name the person — and perhaps the person is imaginary — which leaves me free to criticize the phrase. So much the better. For this phrase displays ignorance and pretension, whether conscious or unconscious. Let me tell you why.

No *psychic* examination, that is, of the mind, or of the moral nature, or the emotions; in short, no examination of anything above the mere *physical* body is made *inside*. The clairvoyant who wishes to ascertain the state of health of the whole or a part of the physical organism, looks *inside*. The term physical organism here includes the nerves and blood and all the fluidic contents of the body belonging to the material plane.

The trained psychic who looks at the character of a person, the thoughts, the moral and evolutionary status must have: (a) control of the third eye, to some extent, at least; or, (b) control of a certain other center in the head corresponding to the matters of psychic planes up to and inclusive of lower Manas;

also, (c) knowledge of *what* to look at and *what* to look for. The person looked at, so far as the physical body is concerned, is, by an effort of will, brought before the eye quite flat, like a figure in a camera; this figure is not looked at. Regard is had to a certain emanation and to certain things — let us call them motor-changes — in that.

In some cases of partial training, the student-observer does not sense these changes as occurring in an image outside himself. He sees them as pictures of motor-change and so forth inside a center of one of his brains (in the head). I cannot explain further. The use of the expression “inside” or “looking at” persons, or inside them, or at their “magnetic aura,” at once shows the ignorance of the speaker.

Moreover — and this is of vital importance — no student who would speak of doing such a thing would continue under training. It is psychic spying, psychic pickpocketing. It would never be permitted except in certain instances for just reasons, and speaking of its exercise or results would promptly entail cessation of training.

As to appearances of Masters, about which you also ask. Voice, form, all can be simulated. There is one sure way by which it may be known whether such manifestations are from the Master or not, but H.P.B. apart, I never met but one person who had ever heard anything of this scientific way. This person, needless to say, is Mr. Judge. He did not tell me of it. Can I give you any hint on it? Well, just the least hint. If you have opened a reflector within yourself, it reflects back an image of its own plane and only that. It is a deep question of mysticism. As to the Thought-Body of a Master, few persons living in the outer world could stand the energy pouring from that, unless an Adept were with them to temper the force to the atmosphere of the looker-on. Otherwise the pranic energy would have disastrous results indeed.

In my next letter I will reply to your further questions on this and upon the question whether Masters work upon this plane.

3. "Mr. Judge in *Irish Theosophist* for January, 1895, p. 55, says that those who have not made a connection with THE LODGE by 1897, will not afterwards be able to make one. Does this refer to audible hearing, to clairvoyant sight and the like?"

*Answer.* — Not at all. All these things are misleading unless the one who uses them has had at the very least seven years of rigid training. They may exist *pari passu* with the real "connection," but would not be relied upon. The real "connection" is not to be described. It is interior, it is Manasic in its operation so far as *objectivized* to the one who has it. Its root is in "Buddhi, active," more or less. I have known two cases where the person had a Lodge "connection" and did not know it to be that, but took the "connection" to be a very high order of inspiration, and, in another case, it was not realized at all by the possessor. Of course it was quite patent to *trained* observers. The "Companion" is always known by certain indubitable signs. The Masters speak through the *inner* (higher) planes of Being. It is better not to ask whence a thing comes, but examine whether it be good. If it comes from the Higher Self, it comes from the Masters, for *the* Higher Self is the One Self, the same for all. "It is a state, a breath, not a body or form." "The Master Soul is one." Under such inspiration of "The Presence," only one trained can consciously be and consciously *enter at will*. But many a man and woman, both within and without the T.S., are helped by the Masters in their work for the world. May we all reach up *consciously* to this Power, for connection with it, aye, and later, to become it, is our birthright and inheritance as souls.

Comrades and all, you, Companions, I salute in you the *embodied* Law.

*Note.* — The Editor will gladly receive any communications, in the nature of enquiry or otherwise, connected with this series. These he will forward to the author, to be dealt with in future letters if suitable.

## 5.

COMRADES,— This moot question, as to whether Masters (Mahâtmas) descend upon or manifest upon this material plane, is at present acting as a kind of ferment in many minds. And I would, in many cases, let it continue to ferment in order that students may, as is beneficial, reach their own conclusions.

Yet there are members of the T.S. who are undergoing much searching of soul upon this point, a point which, it appears to me, has been raised artificially and before its time. And it was not improbably raised for controversial and destructive purposes. This probability appears to me as very great, for the reason that members who have spoken to me upon the subject have in every case gone on to say that decision upon points now in controversy hung upon the answer.

But we shall never arrive at truths relating to spiritual evolution by seeking for them as controversial weapons. The cause of search, the spirit in which any search is undertaken and the thing really looked for (whether truth, or mere argumentative success), will infallibly color the result, as Mind colors all it looks upon. It is not with the Mind, but with the Intuition that spiritual truths are discerned. Mind reports what Intuition has seen, in cases such as this.

It would appear sufficient that the student should accept the idea of the existence and functions of the Mahâtma in evolution as a bright hope, a light in the darkness, a beacon upon the hills of the hereafter. Whether They do or do not descend upon this plane would seem to be of small moment to him, as he, assuredly — were he of the student nature in the least, were he ever so little of a seeker after truth — would not expect their aid to extend to matters purely of this material plane, at all. This is to some extent true. And being a half-truth, it is used to color the personal conclusions of some minds, and to lend to incomplete expositions a weight not properly their own. Yet the question is raised before its due time, in my

opinion, and for this opinion I have the following reason, to wit: Almost all Theosophists are content with the ideal of the existence of Great Souls who help the upward course of the race, and I find them caring but little about the exact plane from, to or by which that help comes. Students who are striving to live the life, to help themselves and others, mystics seeking deeper and ever deeper, ever more inwardly, for the hidden Self, are very rarely scholiasts or precisians. The Mahâtma *is*. Intuition has revealed thus much to Mind. The humble seeker bends his head, reaches upward and inward, aspires, loves and believes. What to him are planes? He knows that he *is* helped, and knows no strife to verify the exact point in Mother Space from which that god-like aid descends to fill his brimming soul. He hears that the Mahâtma may be that help and yet be also a living man, and in the fact — if fact it be — he sees new proof of great Nature's mysteries. Withdraw the fact — he feels no sense of loss; you have withdrawn from him a body, not a soul, and it is Soul he seeks, and would penetrate, even to those hidden deeps where the All-Soul merges into the One-Spirit.

Thus the mystic who seeks alone. But all mystics do not seek thus. Others there are who received the initial impulse from without, rather than from within; some soul in casement other than their own passed on to them the vibratory music of the spheres, causing them thus to tremble into consciousness of their interior world. This office was filled — for many of us — by a Soul whom we name H.P.B.

It will be evident that those who have followed such a messenger, whether as followers, as students, as pupils or as observers, will be more or less affected, according as her office as witness and messenger is clear or obscure to their eyes. And H.P.B. did most clearly assert, both in print and in private letters, that the "Masters" were also "living men." The present denial of that statement has its origin, as has so much else, in a more or less organized effort to destroy H.P.B. as messenger. Let us, therefore, keep this fact well in view. I have myself seen letters from India which put the statement very clearly as follows: "these high beings do not ever descend to this plane."

The pupils of *modern* India are also repeating the statement in writing and otherwise, and it does absolutely contradict the teaching of H.P.B., which teaching I accept.

It is necessary to put this point very plainly, for the reason that it explains why I shall not put forward any statements by H.P.B. at all. Nor shall I quote from eastern literature. This has been done before; moreover, translations may be questioned. Long ago I pledged myself to speak only to you of what I knew; that is to say, of things discoverable within my own consciousness, coupled with an explanation of their bearing and the method or mode of their existence, as this came before my mind.

Now I believe that the Mahâtma is possible; that He is necessary in evolution; that He exists; that He may or may not be using a human body amongst men. It is, to my mind, quite true that the Mahâtma, *as such*, does not descend upon this plane; but you must lay stress upon those words "*as such*." Atma, spirit, does not *directly* function upon this plane. What does that mean? It means that when you are dealing with the things of Spirit you are not dealing with this material plane, nor yet when you are dealing with the Intuition, nor when you deal with Mind, nor even when you deal with nerve fluid. None of these things are of this physical plane. Take a sentence attributed to a Master; "Buddhi does not act on this plane, where the acting agent is Manas." This is simply saying that the action of Intuition — any grade of its action — is not of the material plane, and that the Intuition acts through the Mind, which again is not of this plane, but is an acting agent for this plane, just as Intuition is an acting agent for spiritual truths. The Mahâtma, or great Spirit, touches from afar the fire-soul of man, and truths are born into the womb of the hidden, mystic brain. Whether the Mahâtma is or is not inhabiting a human body in full and conscious volition, this mode of action above described is the same. You and I deal with one another after the same fashion, though so far less potent for good. Mental intercourse, spiritual perceptions, the widening experience of love or art or duty are none of them attributes of the material

body; they are seen by the Mind, they are verified by mental experience, they are not of the earth, earthy. On the physical plane, as such, they are not observable. Occultism also teems with examples of bodiless entities, disembodied entities, minds of a kind, all invisible to us, yet all eyes, as it were, to see our surroundings and our physical selves. Is it not, then, clear that, in very truth, the Mahâtma *as such* descends not to this material plane?

This does not mean, however, that the Mahâtma may not be using a human body. I take it that the conscious and perfected soul may use and does use some particular body, or several bodies in as many different places. It is a question of degrees. The Spirit acts through Intuition, and that through Mind, and that again through body by means of a reflecting mirror, or brain. Just as the Breath may or may not have condensed itself into a planet or world, formed and visible, so the Maha-Atma may or may not have adopted a human form.

There is a reason for this adoption and a very simple, because a very natural one, having to do with evolution. The races evolve, but require the aid of the Spirit in evolving. The Elder Brothers turn and help. But how? Not all men are to be reached by purely psychical and spiritual methods, making of the world a vast forcing-house and developing a race of irresponsible mediums. The self-evolved and self-initiated (though really naught is done by self alone), require to be met at a certain point with instruction in the orderly training of the bodies and the minds they use. It is clear that, if we omit from the chain of human development which stretches from man to the Archangels or Chohans, one stage of development which we may call a perfected soul using a body and acting upon and for men with that body, we miss out one of the links of that chain. It is as if we missed out Buddhi acting through Manas; as if we omitted Manas and said that Buddhi must act through body or not at all; or that Mind, having freed itself from the trammels of bodily necessities and limitations, must become Atma without passing through the fire-mist of the electric

Intuition which alone receives from Spirit the light of the world.

There is a further reason. A perfect body is at once a reflector and a dynamo. The fully conscious soul inhabits it, and observes through its medium all the currents affecting the race. In even the most perfect body there is, locked up in its molecules, that force which represents the karmic tendency of that race. Upon the mirror of the body these forces and currents are reflected, and the Great Soul is “*in touch*” with the men of the race. He does not identify himself with his body, not in the least; but it is to him as a harp upon which the cyclic forces play and by means of which he is able to verify the notes which move the human beings of that race and period. It is a difficult idea to put clearly, but you can all the better work it out for yourselves. Body — a house to dwell in — is at first useful to the evolving soul itself; later on body becomes, to the fully evolved soul, a thing useful to the evolution of other souls, a medium by and through which to act upon and aid them. While there are men living in bodies, they will be accessible to psycho-physiological force; they cannot neglect it, it is one of the steps; hence the need, on the part of a Great Soul intending to meet and help them at a certain given point, for a storehouse or dynamo.

All the same, that Maha-Atma is not *itself* acting upon this plane or descending upon this plane. It is like a general who acts through the private soldier by means of a graded series of officers. It is also true that the *highest* office of the Mahâtma lies upon the spiritual plane and is not experienced by the disciple *when in the body*. True, too, that a man may live with or near a Mahâtma — say as a servant, being a man of a type and order as yet quite unevolved — and never come in contact with the Mahâtma *as such* at all. This servant may be, so to say, one of the necessities of the situation, as much as food, or clothes, or a shelter may be so. Undoubtedly there are Mahâtmas who need none of these things; they are appendages to certain conditions of life, which conditions are, in their turn, necessary to that situation which I have called being “*in touch*”

with mankind. For to touch Maha-Atma you must be Maha-Atma. You only touch, in the Mahâtma, those planes which you have developed within yourself.

We think at once too much and too little of body. The soul *needs* no body. Some birds need no nests. Yet the body and the nest are alike necessary to a certain set of conditions. Those whose most interior need it is to help the evolution of mankind, atoms of that One-Spirit-Soul which evolves all things, require a vehicle of action, a means of communication, of a certain kind, because at certain stages of progress some given evolutionary link is necessary, and the free, perfect, conscious Soul, acting through a series of vehicles of which body is one, is just that specified link. Of course these bodies would be very perfect engines and of a higher order of “matter” than that which we take up in our present bodies. And it is one of the duties of the Great Souls, one of the many duties which arise along the pathway of evolution, to evolve just such perfect atoms of “physical” matter by becoming their indwelling force or evolver; which atoms are taken up again and again by the building forces, ever at work to provide forms composed of a higher order of matter for the higher orders of men as they evolve.

For “body” is a term for a congeries of forces; the human body is the highest achievement of the building forces, and by the means of a perfect body these builders themselves may be guided (by the perfect and conscious Soul indwelling) to a still higher development of their building powers. These powers, too, must evolve; building higher and still higher forms for the evolving races to inhabit. Do not forget that Soul owes a duty to matter; that these physical atoms, so-called, are not really physical at all and are Lives, and that the sublime and perfect Maha-Atma owes a duty to all that is, for all is Himself and He is, not body or soul or even spirit, but That Self; That thou art.

## 6.

COMRADES,— One of the first questions which meets us upon this path of ours is the question of right action. Into the many details of this question we will not at present enter, but we will occupy ourselves with one aspect only, to wit:

How shall we learn to discover and to encourage that Intuition which alone leads to right action?

Now there are three phases of consciousness which students are prone to confuse with a fourth, which is Intuition. These three are Intellect, Impulse and Instinct. What we require is some clear idea of the distinction between these and the Intuition. With Intellect it is easy to deal, for we readily distinguish its action in the reasoning faculty. Intellect has so little in common with Intuition that no danger of confusion arises here. To study, to reason, to debate, to analyze, to think in detail — all this is not Intuition and we are in no danger of mistake.

A real difficulty arises when we come to Impulse. Very many students mistake their impulses for intuitions. Yet the distinction is really very marked.

Intuition is the synthesizing faculty carried to its highest power. Facts are marshalled and synthesized in a flash; their array passes too rapidly for the brain consciousness to take note of separately; it notes the sum total alone, as the optic nerve sees the ray of light only when it becomes objective and — so to say — stationary, and not during its long journey towards the eye nor in its many millions of vibrations. The Intuition is Buddhi-Manas. It synthesizes and perceives. Also it informs. Very often its light falls upon some truth of which in this life we had no previous knowledge, for Intuition gazes directly upon the Real. It is, in fact, itself a ray of the One Light, and one of its highest aspects is, as you know, the Kundalini force. But to-day we are only dealing with that form of Intuition which the ordinary man and woman can trace in themselves.

The distinguishing trait of Impulse is an interior propulsion towards action. It differs from Intuition in that this is a seeing, is apperception, while Impulse is invariably a desire to do. Impulse is wholly kamic.

Instinct, on the contrary, is largely pranic. It is the interior selective faculty. By it the lower mind takes what the physical and animal self most needs in life. By it the cells on their plane select, reject, assimilate. By it the creatures live, move and procreate. From its action comes the automatic self-preservation which we notice even in states of unconsciousness. By its action also does the astral or vital body of all creatures attract or repel that which is needful or harmful to its preservation and development. By the aid of instinct the kamic principle chooses what the intellect most desires — or what it wills — be it high or low. By it also the purified Soul seeks the real source of Truth and Light. For Instinct is of all planes and is the unbiassed servant of the Mind and Will. Where these are not as yet evolved, the Instinct is guided by the Life principle and by Kâma, which is pure in the pure and mindless creatures, and in the lower elementary lives, animal, vegetable or mineral. Instinct is one and undivided, but desire is manifold. Desire — and later on, Will, if all goes well with man — is the driver of Instinct.

The chief difficulty, therefore, is to distinguish between Intuition and Impulse. The best present guide for the student is the fact before named, that Intuition sees, while Impulse drives forward. Intuition is the seer. Impulse is the actor. Instinct, and not Impulse, should be the vehicle of Intuition. It would be so if our minds were free from sensuous desire. For our Instinct would be guided by Intuition toward the higher life. Or to put it differently, what Intuition sees, Intellect should establish and Instinct should carry out. For Intuition sees by its own true light, it is self-luminous, and the Instinct of men who have developed their Intuition is of the same order of life and gravitates by its own nature towards that light which it needs in order to live the life desired. When the purified mind instinctively discovers the true path, the path of its true needs,

this path is from time to time illumined by flashes of Intuition. Intuitive ideas rise, full-orbed and flashing, upon the expectant mind.

Impulse is the vehicle of human desire. Its invariable tendency to action shows this. We never feel an impulse to sit still. We may feel an instinct to do so.

Intuition carried to its highest power is, of course, Buddhi. In manifestation upon this plane it is Manas. "Buddhi never acts on this plane, where the acting agent is the Manas." It is moved by the will-force of occultism. That shakti is a spiritual force which sets a certain center (in the case of Buddhi) in motion. But, as was before said, we are not now concerned with this highest form of Intuition. Few are they who even know the approaches thereof.

The developing Intuition may be known by a flash of a certain color in a certain center, accompanied by an impression of knowledge, of a sure conclusion, upon the brain. A great mystic once said that the Intuition might be known from the simplicity of its utterance, which was always, "Thus saith the Lord." Its action is instantaneous; it illumines the darkness of the intellect. It is *unaccompanied by any feeling or emotion whatsoever*; note this well. The flash is in the head center: the stir arises in the heart as a rule, and is thence flashed into the head center. But no hard and fast rule can be given. Such intuitive knowledge is a partial recovery of what the soul has seen during sleep or trance, or what it knew "when journeying with Deity." For the pure Soul is pure Light in its own nature and is itself the Truth which we seek. The flash spoken of here is the moment of registration of this intuitive knowledge, or recovery of Truth, upon the brain. This registration, in cases of trance, is said to occur at the last moment of the passage back from the spiritual state to the objective state, and through this registration the knowledge gained is "brought through." In the cases of students not adepts, the knowledge has more difficulty in getting through; it may occur some time later and is but partially recovered, and usually mixed with error, for reasons

pertaining to scientific occultism into which we will not at present enter.

Many persons who might hear all this about Intuition might say: "Oh, yes, I know that Intuition." But it is far less frequently known than is supposed, because few discern its action from that of mere brain flashes ("flashes in the pan" literally), which often arise from a variety of causes, even physiological ones. The light of the Manas is not the light of Buddhi. Neither its color, its mode of motion nor its action is that of Buddhi. But even were I able to fully describe these, I would not do so, lest they be falsely imagined to exist where they do not.

Of Impulse again it may be said that the student will find it to be of an explosive nature. That is, an outward propulsion of force takes place, usually attended by more or less heat or warmth spreading suddenly through the body, and, sometimes, a sudden heat in the brain. A swift quickening heat and an attraction towards action; thus can Impulse best be described by me.

Of Instinct again it may be said that the upper brain appears unconscious of its action. This action is felt in the lower brain, the center of automatic action and the real "Home of Isis," if mankind only knew it. The self-preservation of the drowning; the leaping aside from a danger before the brain has cognized the fact of danger; the going unexpectedly to a place or to a person where we meet what we most desire, all these are instances of instinctual action. Generally speaking, we are led by Instinct just as we breathe the air, without conscious thought. Instinct is pranic and wholly impersonal, which Impulse never is.

The Intuition is only true for the average man when judgment, heart and conscience verify it. These three are the witnesses of Intuition. But Intuition is Lord over all. It affirms; the witnesses only attest.

## 7.

COMRADES,— Replying to a former letter of mine, you say that some persons have advanced the following argument, to wit:

“That Masters may use bodies, but they never interfere, or notice, or take interest in temporary affairs.”

This is not an “argument.” It is a statement of belief, unaccompanied, as you put it, by reasons. It would not be noticed among people of good breeding, for the reason that it expresses a dogma, a creed, a personal belief, and one would not criticize such, any more than one would criticize the dress, or the manners, or the features of another. There is a good breeding of the spiritual plane — little as some may think it — and it exists in ethics as well as in psychical life, and everywhere it forms a part of the mental equipment of true souls, freed from the shackles of self-conceit.

If, however, anyone were to ask whether my experience agreed with that statement, I should frankly reply that it does not. Even upon its face it is illogical and against reason. For why should Masters have or use bodies — which bodies are governed by two brains — if all questions relating to the physical plane are to be excluded from those brains, the engines or motors of this plane of human life? There is some truth in the statement, I believe, but it needs a discriminating care. And I must admit that a feeling of indignation will, at times, arise in my heart against the cruelty — that worst form of cruelty which seeks to fetter the mind — exercised by those who make a veiled statement of that kind, knowing that other minds will be entangled in it, while they themselves, the only fit guardians of the truth in their own eyes, are saved from falsehood, and also from laying the truth before the multitude, by verbal double-dealing.

It is true, and may well lift our hearts, that Great Nature always recompenses. Those who bring us to doubt and despair

become angel visitors entertained unawares if, through the pain to which they bring us for purposes of their own self-seeking, we learn to think for ourselves. The race has not yet learned how to think; Manas is too recently acquired and is not yet fully involved by that race as a whole.

Let us, then, set aside interlopers and thresh out this matter for ourselves. We understand the “Mahâtma” to be a perfect Soul. And by the term “Adept” we mean one far advanced in practical occultism but not yet a Mahâtma. It is stated on the authority of H.P.B. and also in letters from himself, that Master K.H. was not yet a “Mahâtma” at the time when he wrote the letters in Mr. Sinnett’s *Occult World*. It would appear unwise, a waste of energy, that one of the very rarest products of Nature — the Mahâtma — should do work for which less advanced members of the GREAT LODGE are fit and able. And this is true, *as a rule*. But just as there is no gap in the ladder of Evolution, so there is no gap in that of the GREAT LODGE, and we may hence expect to find, and I believe that we do find, some one Great Being whose duty it is to preside over all that relates to the evolution of men, from our present plane on to the highest planes, and to assist, both by his own powers, knowledge and action, and by those of his hierarchical supporters, assistants and pupils, in that great work. For to THE LODGE this is the greatest work; it is THE WORK. Those who are engaged in deepest spiritual research, wholly remote from this earthly plane of ours, still pursue that arduous toil for man; Man, the final word of the manifested universe and the first promise of Spirit — perfectible Man and Man perfected. If the Mahâtma, in his duly appointed place and work, is to help man, he must take interest in this plane, of which man to-day almost wholly is, in which he lives and from whose chains he must rise. There always have been and there always will be natural distinctions, departments, duties in the universe, just as white light can always be decomposed into rays. There are Mahâtmas whose specialized function it is to watch over the East and others who watch over the West; there are those who watch on the starry confines of this globe and those who watch its teeming interior;

there are those who search the Light and those who question the Dark; but each has evolved to his place and his duty and all pass along the rounds of universal duty, all great and none less. Else analogy has no voice and Law — or the sequence and order of Being — no meaning.

It is my belief that the Master, or Mahâtma, whose special function it is at this period of time to watch over the involution of Manas and its evolution by and through Egos now embodied in the West, is He whom we call Mahâtma Morya. But name Him as you please, or let Him — better still — be nameless. Regard Him as a Great Soul known only to some advanced men “BY ITS LIGHTS,” and to others by its influence. We may be sure that matters *not* having to do with the evolution of human souls engage him not. Buying and selling, marrying and burying, the mart and the home, all these countless details of human interest are but effects of previous causes, and the Master deals not with them, but the Law runs its course. The Master deals not with them *as such*. But also, we do not know when, precisely, any given matter has to do with the evolution of the soul. A man is a fool who would limit the action of a power he does not fully understand. We may know, and some of us believe this, that the Mahâtmas occupy themselves with all men and movements tending towards evolution, by which I mean tending towards universality. It would be strange indeed if they did not. He who climbs helps those below him, else he risks one day to stand upon the peaks of solitude. In such an interior solitude the perfect soul will never be found. So the Master would naturally — *i.e.*, in virtue of his own nature — help the leaders and workers of a spiritual movement so long as these were capable of being helped at all. But he would do so upon strictly hierarchical lines, by duly appointed means and agents and agencies, all evolved to the point where reception and comprehension were possible. Observe the processes of Nature. In Nature, “gratitude” has its cosmic expression in that law by which a stream makes its bed along the line of least resistance and follows that alone.

In the Tao are these beautiful thoughts, sent to me by a friend. "Effecting difficult things while they are easy, and managing great things in their beginnings — this is the way of Tao.... Therefore the wise man takes great account of small things and so never has any difficulty.... Transact your business before it takes form.... The tree which fills the arms grew from a tender shoot."

The last part refers to the mind, and its purification and wisdom, for from it all actions spring. But also it is very true that in very small things, unobserved by the crowd, lie the great results of the future. And why? Because all exists first upon the astral or etheric plane as a nodule, or embryo form. When these forms first come into activity upon one plane — and it is usually as what we call "thoughts" in human minds — they appear trivial; yet the right impetus can make them great. And that man or woman who has power to evoke the soul, and the high qualities of the soul, in others, that person has touched diviner things. Moreover, the life elementals are less obstructive while the grosser energies are inactive or subdued.

There is not space for me to extend these suggestions, but you can do that better than I. Yet one word more.

There is far too much talk of proving things of the spirit and soul by the things of sense. Would you smell, touch, hear, see the perfect Soul? When you know that Soul, there may be further lessons for you in the way the vibrations of its ethereal body or its thought-body affect your nervous fluid; but you will never prove the independent existence and perfectibility of the Soul to the world by any such means. You will only fall amid jeers and laughter. Rather say boldly: "I know the Soul by its touch upon my soul, and the Spirit by that which is nameless among men." In *The Voice of the Silence* we find that all senses must merge in the *concealed* sense before we can find the Master.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, such appearances are more rare than you suppose. In a letter published in *The Occult World*, Mahâtma K.H. says how very rare such an appearance is, that it is only in great crises. The ocean rolls between me and my books, but

seek the quotation for yourselves. And the use of physical terms is forbidden to Chelas in this connection.

You will find, I think, that in most cases the Teacher teaches through the mind. He may, and doubtless does, instruct his special agents in other ways. But the appearance of his form is so rare because the student's mind creates an ideal image in his own mental sphere, which image can be made visible. The Master can use it as a vehicle of communication, but a special training on the part of the student is necessary before he knows how to *form such an image out of the proper grade (or plane) of nerve fluid*. In this secret lies the whole difference between right or wrong interpretation of the message sent through that form or vehicle, which may appear to speak, so far as your eyes and ears are concerned. Consider a moment. The "message" is vibratory, if real — a vibration sent along the Âkâśa. If the atoms of which you have composed this image are not atoms of a very highly evolved etheric substance ("light," as the occultists call it), those atoms do not vibrate "purely," *i.e.*, in consonance with the vibration, and you get a sense impression which is incorrect. It is for this reason, among others, that at least seven years of scientific training are required before the pupil can even begin, and far longer before he can be exposed to the energetic play of the real Mâyâvi-Rûpa of a Mahâtma unless there is an Adept near at hand to protect him without undue waste of energy. In *The Path* for June you will find more upon this theme.

#### NOTE

1. {*The Voice of the Silence*, H. P. Blavatsky, p. 16.}

## 8.

COMRADES,— What you ask me of pertains to the mysteries. Therefore I must make answer in parable.

You say: “Who are the companions?”

It is said:

*Before the aspirant can become one of the Companions, he shall have taken the vow of Poverty. Now this Poverty shall be intimate and interior.*

*And what one of them is attacked the Companions shall defend him, because he is their Brother. But they shall defend him without malice and, without aggression, because he is their very Self.*

*In that Self are the aggrieved and the aggressor; the minute and the inexhaustible; the good, the evil and that which is the Cause of both.*

Therefore the poverty of the Companions is that great humility of soul which manifests itself by the abandonment of results. It is not what the world calls humility, which is but another form of vanity arising from intense self-consciousness. By this is meant consciousness of the false self as “I,” or perception confined to a reflected and distorted light. Study the laws of light on this plane and a clue will be manifest.

When the Companion turns his face to the world, he will not be seen to be in a state of great sweetness and light. What the world sees as such qualities are but rays proceeding from the false and refracted lights. THE PEACE is not objective; it is not a state of *human* serenity; it is a Consciousness of the Universal. A Western mystic, Thomas à Kempis, has bidden men beware of this mental state of sweetness and false satisfaction, which is one of the more subtle snares of Mâyâ. Those *who know*, in facing the world, wear the gathered brows of self-restraint and have a power of silence. When the light of

the Master Presence is upon them they are only seen by one another. Yet there are many who are of this company and know it not; they will know when their lowliness of mind has dispelled those mists which throw up the mirage of the false self.

A Companion passed through the Hall of Learning, the rock corridor leading to THE LODGE. All must pass through its various stages, but none should linger.

Where the spiritual consciousness is fully developed, the psychic consciousness exists also, for it is the vehicle of the higher consciousness, for use, *when trained*, upon lower planes of Being. He who has the whole, has the parts.

There are sentences written in light upon the walls of the Hall of Learning. They sparkle out as the neophyte advances. Some fade; they are not for him as yet. Others sparkle out and engage his attention. These are the clues by means of which he may pass safely through the labyrinthine Hall. They are in cipher, but this cipher makes their meaning known at once to the brain in any language. A first difficulty is that the neophyte is prone to strive after those sentences which fade as he approaches and to neglect those which are obvious and easy to be had. The evanescent lures and bewitches him, while any time will do for the sentence so deeply graven there, as he thinks. This is a false concept, for all things have their karmic hour. Let him take only that which is his own.

A Companion saw this:

## THE TRUE MASTER.

*The true Master is felt; He is not seen.*

*When He who was unseen is seen, He disappears.*

*Then the spiritual Presences are gathered into the Unity;  
they know not one another, but they are the One Self.*

*In that Darkness there is but One.*

*In that Silence there is no knowledge, but Being — which  
is all — is fulfilled.*

*This is the path of the true disciple.*

*Before man, the lowest immortal, can find the true Master,  
he must lose Him; that loss is pure gain. To lose Him thus, is to  
find Him indeed.*

*This should be known: the disciple who finds Him on the  
plane of the senses has objectivized his Karma; he loses The  
Master after a higher fashion.*

*When He speaks through the soul, the ignorant disciple  
says, 'it is I myself;' he rejoices to be so wise.*

*Know that there is only the ONE SELF, THE MASTER, and  
lose thyself also to find Him who is never found until He has  
been lost.*

*When He is lost to every sense then the One Flame arises,  
pure as before the beginnings of worlds.*

*This thou shall never know; thou art It.<sup>1</sup>*

1. There are many and serious mistakes made on the subject of so-called appearances of Masters. The voice, the form, the “Lodge perfume” of the Masters, all can be parodied or simulated. All exist as pictures in the nerve-aura of individuals, for the brain, the wonderworker, has fashioned them out of nervous matter only one degree less gross than the matter of the physical brain, but many degrees more subtle and dynamic. The play of energy, liberated by Thought, upon these pictures, sets them in motion, and their vibrations, communicated along the lines (or media) of nervous ether, causes the brain to receive their reflection. Anything which (a) inhibits physiological action; or (b) which heightens nervous action; or (c) which causes increased tension in the etheric field (such as, for example, (1) the creation of vortices or currents therein, whether by magnetic passes, music, sound or concentrated thought, and also (2) the control, by a magnetizer, of the mere physiological senses of any person or persons), would cause such voices, sounds, odors, forms or what not else, to be visible or to be made visible in the place where they exist, to wit, the aura or magnetic sphere of man, or in the nervous ether of the earth. The more evolved elementals — as well as consciously dark powers among men — and intelligences could also clothe these pictures, so existing, with grosser matter, thus causing these to become visible and for their own purposes. There is thus both (a) evocation and (b) automatic action tending to objectivization of these pictures.

Consider these lines of *The Voice of the Silence*.

“Allow no image of the senses to get between its light and thine....” {p. 7.}

“Silence thy thoughts, and fix thy whole attention on thy Master, whom yet thou dost not see, but whom thou feelest.” {p. 16.}

“Merge into one sense thy senses, if thou wouldst be secure against the foe.” {p. 16.}

The one sense is the sense of *feeling*. With eyes closed, ears stopped, we know the presence of one friend from another, all untouched by them. We have sensed the aura. The true

Master may be truly known by the aura, read esoterically, The Companions know Him “*by His lights.*”

There is but one safe mode by which the disciple of at least seven years training (and it is usually far more) may know the Master. This means is by the seventh (esoteric) principle; it is the highest âkâšic differentiation. To sense it, or rather to have the apperception of it, you must have developed to some extent, at least, a rudiment of the same thing in yourself. The path leading to the Master is “that sense alone which lies concealed within the hollow of thy brain” (*Voice of the Silence* {p. 16.}); to put it differently, the Master’s aura can only be “felt” in that *hollow spot* which is the “home of Mother Isis.” This purely spiritual quality must be, to some extent, developed in the seer before he can “feel” it’s like. There must be, in his own sphere, a conscious center of similar âkâšic substance to receive and register (*i.e.*, feel, or get the impression stamped upon it) this highest âkâšic vibration. This hidden center, the Isis home, is made “white” by will; to this refer all the sentences in the *Voice* about cleansing the “mind body” and also paralyzing the lunar body; the lower vibrations of the nervous ether are checked and the âkâša in the hidden spot of the skull held “white” or negative, plastic, by will-power. It is a matter involving a distinct knowledge of noetic action in a high grade of substance, and how to prevent the atoms, or monads, from throwing up those pictures which they hold, as already impressed upon them by the action of energy. This is the difference between the medium and the disciple. The one makes his nervous ether and brain stuff passive. The disciple rolls back all currents from the secret hollow and “whitens” (*i.e.*, intensifies its tension) by a supreme effort of will-power. But this will-power must be intelligently directed *and it must be fire-born.*

Most of the forms of Masters seen are these mind forms made temporarily visible by increased vibration, as that caused by a train, or by the etheric tension in an audience, or in many other ways. The Master might use these pictures as a vehicle to impress an idea to those seeing them; so, also, may the dark

powers in Nature or among men. By “dark powers among men” I mean and include those persons who merely work for some end to which they are partial. Hence Masters by preference, in cases where there is no Adept-guru helping on the physical plane, prefer to speak “through the inner planes of being,” which are the soul and mind. But mere sentiment and religious gush are not within the Master Mind.

As I understand the matter, the thought-body (Mâyâvî-Rûpa) of a Master (which is himself) does not visit any but a highly trained disciple, unless an Adept be at hand to modify the great vibrations coming from this energetic “body” for the unprepared (by long training) disciple. As in the case of H.P.B. when Colonel Olcott first saw the Master. Otherwise the energetic volume and force would injure the physical and nervous body of the perceiver. The training extends over many years and even many lives. It differs in different races. Embryo students of less than seven years’ training in any one or several lives, and without the aforesaid “spiritual quality,” are unable to tell whether an appearance of a Master, or any of His manifestations, down to letters written by His order, are genuine or not genuine. Seven years are required for each new body, even by an Adept. Those who have evolved certain centers, and can cause them to “breathe” (*i.e.*, intensify and vibrate) at will, at a spiritual rate far beyond any known to ordinary men — only such persons can “feel” the Master. And these persons will never be found to use terms of the senses to describe “The Presence,” even “feel” being a blind or substitute for “tremble” or “vibrate.” Nor will they endeavor to prove the spiritual Presence by terms of sense to the material mind. The Companions say fearlessly:

*The spiritual is its own proof. Only to Consciousness can Consciousness be known.*

A large proportion of men and women know what absolute, interior conviction is. To such, the first rudiment of the real Consciousness is known. It would be wise to trace it *to its source* in ourselves; a clue lies there.

Consider also that paragraph in *The Secret Doctrine*, where the seer is depicted as watching the first differentiation of a milky “spiritual substance.” The human process is an image or model of the world process.

{The second installment of 8. begins here.}

2. *What He who was unseen is seen. He disappears.*

Those who come to rely upon appearances (or sounds) of a Master, such as may be experienced by physical or psychic (lower) sense, soon lose touch with His true and real Being, for the cheating powers gladly rush in to deceive that person. Are we not warned against *lingering* in the Hall of Learning? All must pass there, but should not “*linger*” (see *Voice of the Silence*)<sup>2</sup>. The noetic is one mode of atomic action, from within outward. The psychic is another, from circumference to center. The atom must have both in-breathing and out-breathing. It should in-breathe — from circumference to center — only from the spiritual world; “the breaths” are drawn from that world; it is the world of the highest energies or force, and not, as some think, the world of religious sentiment. It is not by means of religious emotion that Brahman formed the worlds. It was by Yoga concentration — or intensified vibration.

The atom, drawing in its breath from the spiritual, should breathe out into the world of form. It should take from the spiritual and give to the psychic, which animates or informs the physical. The reverse is what most frequently takes place. We take from the (lower) psychic world instead of giving to it.

The terms “psychic” and “astral” are too loosely used. They have become terms of reproof and of offence. There is the higher and lower psychic, the higher and lower astral. The pure psychical plane is that of the pure ether. A nervous body formed of such pure ether is a necessary vehicle. The pure astral is the plane of the highest starry influences. Beyond these is the spiritual, the innermost. Let us discriminate and avoid offence. We shall thus avoid (to some extent) ignorance, which

is only inoffensive to itself. The psychic is no proof, but it is an indication: when purified it is a vehicle of the Nous, the noetic. Those who know the noetic action will not harshly judge the psychic plane, however they may warn.

When the Master Himself uses such forms as His temporary vehicles or modes, reaching a man by the only avenue as yet opened by that man, He trains the disciple to the use of the “spiritual quality,” and the disciple is soon beyond the need and reach of form and sound manifestations, in the usual acceptation of “sound” and “form.” In other words, the disciple is helped to enter that condition which is the One Master, Alaya’s Self. It is described in:

### *3. The spiritual Presences enter into the Unity.*

These Presences are Atma-Buddhi-Manas. Gathered into the Unity, coordinate and one, they are the Higher Self. “The Higher Self is a state, a breath, not a body or form,” wrote the Master. It is a state of Universal Consciousness. “The Higher Self of one is that of all.” It is far above sense registration. Its first indication is “a sense of freedom;” this is not one of the five physical senses; it is a consciousness of freedom. In the Unity, these Presences do not know one another, *i.e.*, as separate one from another, but they are the One Self.

### *4. In the Darkness (and Silence) there is no knowledge...*

That is, no knowledge of external manifestation, or of anything external to the Self. Knowledge implies a knower and a thing known, two distinct and separate things or states of Consciousness.

*...but Being, which is all, is fulfilled.*

In pure Being the states above named become one; there is only the One Self. Along this path is led the true disciple. He is not misled by the senses or sense appearances in super-sensuous matter. Behmen said, as did Paracelsus, that the spiritual sense was one, it was Sensation, pure and simple. That is to say, Consciousness of the spiritual Breath. In the next

stage that Consciousness of the Breath as external to ourselves, or separate, passes away; the Consciousness and the Breath are one, are pure Being. The Breath is the spiritual energy in Spirit-Substance. This is the path of the true disciple; he becomes that path himself.

If we talk of appearances which are satisfying to the physiological standards, we fall into a trap.

There are sentences quoted from letters of Masters which seem to give point to an opposite view. It should be borne in mind that these referred to chelâs in training under supervision, and also that they are to be taken, often, in a spiritual sense. "Form an image of the Master in your heart as a focus of will-power." This does not mean that you shall make in your mind a little picture of a Master's physical body and try to drag it into your physical heart by an effort of the imagination. It means that you should dwell in thought upon the great qualities of the real Master, the perfected Being (not his house, or form, which he uses) and do this until your imagination warms to the sublime conception of absolute justice and wisdom, and the heart (the inner heart) kindles and emits its energies; the divine conception, immaculate, invokes the Soul; it arises in majesty and goes forth to find its own.

To take in a literal sense the directions given to disciples living under conditions quite different from our own is to make a grave mistake. We live where gross magnetisms, lower psychic action and low grade emissions of nervous ether make up picture-forms which will vibrate into objectivity under the play of currents corresponding in grade wherever and however such currents arise. Therefore let us arise and go unto the Master *within*, the Father of Lights, in whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning.

### *5. Man, the lowest immortal.*

That is to say, the lower quaternary. It is only immortal when Lower Manas is transmuted. The three aspects are not immortal. Lower Manas, identical in essence with the Higher Manas, is alone immortal of the lower quaternary. Before it can

find the true Master, it must lose all preconceptions of Him as aught of sound and form. Abandon form and sense. Look for the first traces of the Master in the purified thoughts of the lowest immortal. Thus the false conception may be absorbed and the real Presence found.

6. *He has objectivized his Karma.*

The Karma, or action and reaction of the less evolved atoms in his sphere, cause the living pictures he has impressed upon these atoms to become visible, and the more he depends upon them and their false voices the more he puts aside all opportunity for communion with the Master “*after a higher fashion.*” He grasps at the form and loses the touch of the spirit.

7. *The ignorant disciple says, “It is I myself.”*

When the first promptings of the Master Self are felt in the mind, the disciple does not recognize them to be such. He should know that all which is universal partakes of that higher Consciousness which is the same to all who reach it, though each attains after his own fashion. Trance is not that state. Trance, as the term is generally understood, has nothing in common with that state. All lower, personal tendencies of mind must be uplifted and enlightened before man can himself become the path on which is found that Master who is never (really) found until all sense preconceptions of Him have been utterly merged and lost. When they are indeed lost, then Buddhi (center) becomes action and the *one Flame arises*. But also it must be *pure as before the beginnings of Worlds*, that is, forms or bodies; pure as before differentiation into crystallized form. It can only be thus pure in the absolutely pure mind. In occultism, “pure” means wholly free from sense of self, from the concept of the false self as being the real. The beginner is adjured to leave every sin behind before he sets his foot upon the lowest rung of the mystic ladder (of the spinal cord).

8. *This thou shall never know; thou art It.*

The disciple can never know that Flame, for in knowledge is duality. In Being there is unity. When we are the Self, consciously, we cease to observe or to know it as a separate object or state, for we are the One Self.

*Now when he is seen to shine with "Great Glory," the Companions rejoice. But when "Divine Dark" enfolds him, that highest they have not seen, save as they have become That.*

*Not knowing, thou shall deem it ever possible. Salute in every man this divine possibility. But in thyself await it not, but create it.*

*Create the Uncreate by awakening "Great Glory." Upon that follows the Darkness, the Not-to-be-named, the Unknowable.*

*For Knowledge cannot contain Being. Can the drop contain the well-spring?*

*Can man, the spark, know the Flame? Not so, yet all men are That.*

May the Flames, the devourers of the gross, arise! May they purify our lowest immortal ones! May we become wise! May we see as we are seen! May the Aum resound!

## NOTES

1. {*The Path of Attainment*, D. N. Dunlop, p. 16.}
2. {*The Voice of the Silence*, H. P. Blavatsky, p. 8.}

## 9.

DEAR COMRADES,— These letters which have had from you a reception so kindly are now come to an end, and it only remains for me to answer questions which have arisen in the course of their reading. Some of these questions have had direct and personal replies, as requested; a remaining few are here dealt with.

One friend writes me:

In THE IRISH THEOSOPHIST of May, 1895, p. 1, paragraph three, of your interesting and helpful article entitled “Letters to a Lodge,” you speak of Intuition as being frequently confounded with three other states of consciousness, viz., Intellect, Impulse and Instinct. It brought to my mind cases which probably may come under your head of intellect; cases in which certain impressions from other minds or from thoughts in the atmosphere around one were mistaken for intuitions, and more especially with sensitives or mediums.

For illustration. A woman, Mrs. W., engaged her passage in a European steamer while her best friend, Mr. S., was lying ill. As soon as she did so her conscience began to trouble her, although it was important to her interests that she should go abroad at the date fixed upon. She did not like to leave her friend ill. She did not know what to do about it. She waited, as she said, for her intuition to decide for her: but day after day passed by and no light came. Finally, one morning she seated herself quietly, holding herself passive to her inward voice, as she expressed it. Suddenly, in a flash of intuition, as she felt convinced, the idea was graven upon her mind that her friend would die, and that it was her duty to give up her intended trip and to adopt his only child, a little girl three years old.

She had not hitherto considered her friend seriously ill, nor had the idea of adopting his child ever before entered her mind; but she felt that strict obedience to so unmistakable an intuition was her only course, so she at once changed her plans.

She proceeded to the house of her friend. As she reached the door there flashed instantaneously before her a vision of him lying dead upon his sick-bed. She was admitted and sorrowfully proceeded to his room, but was surprised to find him living and better. In sum, he entirely recovered, and she went abroad at the fixed date.

It appeared that the two women who attended the sick man fully expected him to die, and had freely discussed the subject of the child's future, deciding that it was clearly Mrs. W.'s duty to adopt her. It seems clear that she, Mrs. W., being *en rapport* with those two women, their thoughts were easily impressed upon her sensitive mind.

Now, the falsity of what Mrs. W. received was to her a conclusive proof that it was no intuition. But if her friend had died she would always have mistaken those mental impressions for intuition, and many cases daily occur, in which the only proof of genuine intuition will be in a more intimate knowledge of our inner constitution and its workings.

The above is an excellent example, to my thinking, of the way in which psychic instinct is frequently mistaken for intuition. The mistake is at once detected in the words, "holding herself passive to her inward voice." Unless she had been trained she could not know *how* to hold herself passive, in the first place. With untrained persons this sitting for passivity implies throwing the whole body and nervous currents into a relaxed and quiescent condition; this prepares the sitter, like a sensitized plate, for the reception of astral pictures and astral currents; those first received are, most often, the pictures and currents in their own sphere, either consciously or unconsciously engendered by themselves. There is a biblical and occult phrase, most unpleasantly translated, which expresses what is really done by the sitter: "returning like a dog to its own vomit."<sup>1</sup> In our spheres are echoes, reverberations, refracted lights, the psychic mirage and what not else, cast off and out by the mind; to these we oft return.

Now body and astral (nervous) body are the appointed receptacles for forces of the psycho-physiological planes,

which are their own planes, and if you render them passive what can you expect but that “their own waters shall fill them,” to use the mystic phrase? Note that I say receptacles; not vehicles. Vehicle, with me, has quite another sense. Receptacles of the *pure* force of their own planes they are intended to be, and when thus filled with force pure to its own plane — relatively pure — they should then become vehicles for the higher forces, just as a vessel filled with pure water purely reflects the sun’s brightness in a dazzle of rays, while a vessel filled with dark and turbid water gives forth a dense image contracted to a formed orb, which form gives a false idea of the true sun, while the darkness dims the radiance and obstructs the electric dazzle, absorbing the light into its foul depths, instead of giving it forth.

This explains one source of error. Another fact gives another facet, to wit: there is a certain spot, and one spot only, which is to be “whitened” or “held for Mother Isis” by the trained seer. This act involves a use of some of the highest forces in Nature, spiritual forces, be it said, and is a power never attained except by the highly trained disciple, who by its very use becomes and is an Adept. He who can use these forces at will “in the home of Isis” can perform phenomena equally at will.

What then of ourselves, seekers after truth, catching now and then glimpses of real intuition? Are we to abandon all hope of such because we are not now in a time and place where we are able to lay strong hands upon our birth-right?

By no means. Abandon no hope. Do not sit for passivity nor stare into mirrors; but purify your motives, seek to do The Will, and your Father who seeth in secret, himself will reward you openly. Do not forget that the Self uses whom it will, and that flashes of truth can be, and are, sent to us. Positive meditation on sacred themes will help you. Not that you will receive the intuitive flash *at that time*, for you more probably will not, but when you are going about your daily work, then you will receive them, entertaining angels unawares.

We are told in *Isis* (and I cannot quote the place, being absent from my books)<sup>2</sup> that the activity of the physiological senses alone prevents our cognizing the unseen truths. Many students have found that while these senses have mechanical employment, such as walking, dressing, copying, any occupation which holds them to a given point in a positive and not a passive manner — that at such times the intuitive flash will visit the brain all at once. When we have referred some question of the inner life to the Self, the Father of Lights, and have asked to know and to do the Will, we may go about our duties in serene confidence, dismissing from our minds the question asked, sure that we shall know the doctrine if we live the life. Only be sure that we are living the life so far as we do discern the Will. He who submits himself in thought and desire to the will of his Father in heaven, need have no fear that he will not know all that is good and necessary for him to know; let him aspire ardently and go his way peacefully; the Law in its entirety works for him, it provides him with all that sustenance for which his nature is now ripe.

Another question opens up another phase of the same subject:

I have just been reading your “Letters to a Lodge, VIII.,” “The true Master is felt, not seen.” This brings up a question I have often thought about. Take the case of, say, Emerson or Carlyle; to me “all that Narada and the seven sages knew” is found in the *Essays* (“Oversoul,” “Spiritual Laws,” etc.) and *Sartor Resartus* (“Everlasting Yea,” etc.), and this they both learnt inside, directly, from “the light that never shone on land or sea;” so that I would be most strongly inclined to say that if any men ever felt the true Master, these two did. Yet one hears nothing of any “Lodge connection” in the case of either of them, or of their knowingly coming into touch with any “adept,” “magician,” “occultist,” or what you will. So that I think they were “children of the Kingdom” in a very real sense, and yet would have understood nothing, for instance, of what W.Q.J. wrote in THE IRISH THEOSOPHIST about “making a connection with the Lodge before the end of 1897,” indeed would hardly

have understood anything of the technicalities of occultism, as you put them forward in the “Letters to a Lodge” and elsewhere. Now the question is, had they fully and satisfactorily gained the one thing needful? or, on the other hand, is it that they ought to have done this, and not to have left the other undone? or, to put it another way, must the inner light be supplemented by an adept, the Holy Ghost *in partibus* be helped out by the Holy Ghost particularized and brought to a focus in some other person? or to put it yet another way, is it necessary to be *consciously* a “member of the Lodge” in order to be in reality one of the “children of the Kingdom?”

In order to reply to the above I must in some sort utter a personal Credo, and to one who knows as much as I do on the point under discussion. Would’st trap me, friend? But if my mistake might serve to illuminate thy knowledge, were not this tired old world by so much the richer? I adventure my Credo, thus.

(a) With the writer, I believe that all such inspiration comes from that source which we are agreed to call The Lodge, or the Oversoul, which Oversoul is specifically and fully embodied in the Sages of all time, is less fully embodied in the inspired ones variously working on this plane, and which “exists also apart.” Emerson I regard as an especial instance of such inspiration. It is recorded that Emerson carried with him “as a *vade mecum*” a work of Jacob Boehme’s.

(b) “Yet one hears nothing of any Lodge connection ... or of their knowingly coming into touch with any Adept....” Italicize the words “*one hears nothing.*” So; and did you expect so to hear, friend? How, and in what formula? Turn again to our well-beloved Emerson. There is that which he wrote of great teachers, sages. In our literature you yourself have pointed out to us his utterances as to the reality of those perfected men whom we call Masters. How did he know it, think you? Whence came the vision, the certainty? Believe me, many there be who touch, and consciously touch, that body of high Knowledge and Being known as The Lodge, who do not formulate their belief to the world because that which they

touched was formless. Yet in his heart each gives it a name, and bows him to the sun.

(c) What Mr. Judge wrote in THE IRISH THEOSOPHIST (to the best of my belief) had reference to a specialized connection with that specialized Source or Focus of Knowledge known as the Lodge, which connection may be recognized or unrecognized by us, but which is recognized on the part of the Lodge.

(d) Then you ask if these men “had gained the one thing needed, fully, satisfactorily.” Nay, friend, the plenitude thereof were Perfection’s self; that is the one thing needed, these men are on the way to it. In the fullness thereof, in that only, is full satisfaction to be found, but it disappears as a sense of satisfaction because Being is complete, undivided, fulfilled. We pass along through many incomplete stages towards final Perfection; in one such stage — a Manâsic one, I take it — these men were. But they have not told us what passed in the inner closet of prayer, the meditation where the Father was met, although Tennyson, Emerson and a host of others have left word of a trance-like state and incommunicable visions.

(e) I do not think it necessary to be “consciously a member of the Lodge, in order to be in reality one of the children of the Kingdom.” The poor, the ignorant, the helpless, and those who deem themselves forsaken of God and man, and those who know not the mystic terms, and those who dimly, dumbly strive to follow some sense of right which vaguely stirs the breast; all, all these and many another uncounted and unnamed, lost among earth’s myriads yet seen by the light of their own heart rays, are of the glorious Kingdom; our friend is there, and there, too, many an honest foe. For the children are the doers of the Will, in so far as they are conscious of It. They pass through successive stages of Being; in time their Lodge connection, from being general, becomes specialized; thus, life after life, these lift themselves nearer to conscious Divinity.

There comes at last an hour when those who have learned, in the very depths of their nature, to merge the personal in the impersonal, and who can henceforward be trusted to work on

with impersonal and greater Nature, must now begin to learn as a science that which has (to some extent, at least) been mastered as a devotional or religious truth. Those powers they traced in earth and sky they now must make their own, specializing now their connection with Mother Nature, who shall now become their helper as she was erst their instructor, for the powers which are most immediately helpful to the human race are those which are guided and wielded by perfect man. They do now require a wise guide, and of such each one has opportunity, whether he accept or reject it. His choice is conditioned only by his own mental limitations. If he has long ago abandoned his personal will and inclination, he now tastes the sweet fruition of such abandonment of the self; the eyes of the mind are not blinded by prejudice and erroneous belief. When the great day of choice arrives, foregone conclusions and fixed mental concepts muster in to drag the soul of man back to the errors of its long, long past; he who has fettered the infinite possibilities of Nature by a rigid conception of THE IMPOSSIBLE, now mistakes the false guide for the true; his false beliefs lead him captive and Nature from her fastnesses mocks her would-be enslaver who is the prisoner of himself. This is why we find H. P. Blavatsky fighting creeds above all other things save, one thing only — the most microscopic meanness in the earth-scale — the hypocrite. Both fetter the mind. The teacher of false doctrine is a poisoner of the worst description; the injection of mental virus infects the whole Mind-Sphere.

(f) In the “True Master,” I dealt only with one key among seven keys, reading the sentences as from the standpoint of one who had entered upon the cycle of definite instruction. My purpose in so doing was to afford a glimpse of the real methods of the higher occultism as opposed to mistaken ones, and this with a view to counteracting some statements — dangerous because foolish — now being put forward elsewhere. Folly is more dangerous than vice, for vice is obvious, salient and more swiftly defeats itself in fierce reactions, while the airy thistle seed of folly floats unregarded on the ambient air and sows itself unseen to strangle the crops of the future. I do but tell that

which I have heard, and let me, as a final word, point out the obvious fact that I or anyone might have information of the real methods of scientific (because higher) occultism, without having necessarily reached that point where the cycle of training is definitely begun. Carrying out the idea of specialized vehicles for special states of Being, we can throw further light upon this subject in our minds, which light it would be difficult to voice correctly.

Another questioner, signing himself “A.S.,” asks what I cannot answer. Reply involves controversial matter, into which I have not entered and will not enter. If he will give me an address, I will reply in part by giving certain facts which he and all are entitled to have of me, but I will not influence another; I cannot descend to that level. I can answer in the amplest negative the two questions, viz., “Does Judge teach psychism?” and, “Is Theosophy, as viewed in the {United} States, largely psychic in its tendency?” Mr. Judge most strenuously combats, in all parts of the world, that psychism which will arise wherever men and women are evolving the double nervous system which will characterize the bodies of the new race. These absurd statements called out a peal of merriment from the Eastern to the Western coast, and wherever it was known, as it is widely known, that the accusers numbered several most urgently remonstrated with by Mr. Judge on account of their psychic practices. Poor human nature! Like Yorrick,<sup>3</sup> it is a fellow of infinite jest! The only psychic teachings I have ever seen originated with the chief promulgator of these rumors, and was instruction — among a page of other stuff — how to meditate on the stomach and other organs and “get in touch *with the dreadful inhabitants of Kâmaloka; this state is very dangerous; Master will protect you*” (!!!?). This precious script was sent me from a foreign country, and with several such missives from similar sources will make a very pretty Theosophical Nonsense Book, which I have in preparation. Ah! good friends, our gentle brays betray us to the world’s derision, despite the too short lion’s skin we borrow. Let us bear with one another, for the world will not! As to the

theosophical movement in the States, it has been and is of a firm, steady growth, increasing from month to month, from year to year. From the central headquarters comes over a firm propulsion towards the Philosophy. In rumors, as in fevers, there are types; I classify these two as "MALIGNANT."

A last question: "What is the 'power of Silence' spoken of by you? It seems more than refusing to speak."

It is more. Anyone who has no answer ready can look down their nose and keep quiet. This is a frequent trick of polemics, a "common or garden variety" of Expediency, used by those who know that silence is a weapon difficult to parry. Intense personal pride is often the cankered root of one order of silence. The true *power* of silence is an interior quiescence; an interior stillness invisible as such to the world. Thomas à Kempis warns that when we are in a state of sweetness and peace (to ourselves) the true peace is far away. This silence consists in a firm attitude towards the personal self. You ask: "How can I judge who has it?" Where is your need to judge? "Who art thou to judge another man's servant? To his own Master he standeth or falleth."<sup>4</sup> Our need is to develop it within ourselves, and it is that which maketh the bearer of that power "to appear as nothing in the eyes of men."<sup>5</sup> And now, may the Law lift us ever nearer to that ideal Light of which we have a constant pre-science, while yet we are too rarely able to see it.

## NOTES

1. {Proverbs 26:11. As found: "Like a dog that returns to his vomit is a fool who repeats his folly.}
2. {*Isis Unveiled*, Vol. 1, p. 42.}
3. {*Macbeth*, William Shakespeare.}
4. {Romans 14:4.}
5. {*Light on the Path*, Mabel Collins, p. 5.}