

William Quan Judge
The Greatest Occult Truths

First published in: "E.S.T. Suggestions and Aids," No 7, issued to the American Division, New York, 144 Madison Ave., June 1894, (EASTERN SCHOOL OF THEOSOPHY: SUGGESTIONS AND AIDS).

Republished in: Eklund D. (Comp.). *Echoes of the Orient: The Writings of William Quan Judge*. San Diego: Point Loma Publications, Inc., 1975-1987. Vol. III, 1987 (Section V); pp. 445-50; second edition, Pasadena: Theosophical University Press, 2010, pp. 433-38.

And suggestions are to be found in the following, taken from the INSTRUCTIONS, Numbers I and III:

"Double object of Esoteric Sciences:

(a) of proving man to be identical in Spiritual and physical essence with both the Absolute Principle and with God in Nature;

(b) of demonstrating the presence in him of the same potential powers as exist in the creative forces of Nature."¹

Man is identical with the Absolute unmanifested, and also with the Deity as we see It manifested in Nature. This theory is easy for some and difficult for others. The difficulty arises chiefly from the influence of centuries of education in the degrading doctrine that all are *originally sinful*. If we are originally sinful we must be *inherently imperfect*, and that which is inherently imperfect can never, by any possibility, become perfect. Many have not been directly taught this doctrine of original imperfection, but all their thoughts have been insensibly affected by it. God has been continually held up to us as a being outside or different from us, and hence we tacitly hold the doctrine of inherent weakness and imperfection.

Yet most of you believe that Mahātmās do exist, and, indeed, that They were influential in starting this SCHOOL. How can it be possible for such Beings to exist unless they are the product of human and all evolution, unless Themselves once were seemingly imperfect as ourselves? The imperfection is only in the lower elements. In essence, in possibility of soul and spirit, we are all perfect. So long as we deny this we prevent progress and keep back the exhibition of that actual spiritual perfection which we have at the center.

The next object comes from the general to the particular, for it is to demonstrate in man the presence of the same potential forces which are in or behind the creative forces or powers of Nature. This is an enormous claim, yet unless this be true, how,

¹ (No. I, p. [519])



again, is it possible for a Mahātma to exist, to have become such, to wield these very powers and forces? The wielding of these powers is not the same as the raising by our hand of a club or the use by us of a fluid or agent in Nature. Our use of these is not the use of the subtle agents behind, but is only a mechanical effect which may be done in complete ignorance of the force in use. This we can see in even the simple act of using the muscles, where a mental motion is transferred into a physical act. Who can say that they know actually all that goes on in this; how the mental act is transferred into the physical; how it is that the nerve fluid is stirred, in turn stirring the muscles and making them contract or expand? Regard the fact of speech. Here very slight movements of the vocal chords make all the varieties of tone and inflection. Yet all of this is done instantaneously, and the most ignorant can often produce the greatest varieties of tone, no one being able to do more by way of explanation than to declare the fact. Look further into the fields of mediumship, of clairvoyance, of clair-audience, of telepathy, of hypnotism, and of hysteria, and you see that vast and complicated powers evidently reside in man. The *Esoteric Science* aims to go farther than merely to say that man has some such natural powers; it wishes to show that he has creative power. If he has, then it can only be from the fact that he is the same in essence as Nature and God.

Much of the INSTRUCTIONS is devoted to this. The divisions of the principles, the various diagrams, the many explanations are for the purpose of impressing on us that man, who is the small copy of Nature, contains in himself centers through which all the great forces of Nature may be operated. This cannot be interiorly grasped if we continue to think we are less than God in essence. Observe and think over this quotation from [Āryāsanga, in Instruction] No. III:

‘That which is neither Spirit nor Matter, neither Light nor Darkness, but is verily the container and root of these, that thou art. The Root projects at every Dawn its shadow on Itself, and that shadow thou callest Light and Life, O poor *dead* Form! (This) Life-Light streameth downward through the stairway of the seven worlds, the stairs, of which each step becomes denser and darker. It is of this seven-times-seven scale that thou art the faithful climber and mirror O little man! Thou art this, but thou knowest it not.’

This is the first lesson to learn. The second is to study well [and know] the principles of both the Kosmos and ourselves, dividing the group into the permanent and the impermanent, the higher and immortal, and the lower and mortal, for thus only can we master and guide, first the lower cosmic and personal, then the higher cosmic and impersonal. [625]

The person to whom the first part is addressed is the man who is ignorant of his own greatness; he may come out of that ignorance, and, by slow degrees or quickly, realize his oneness with the Great Supreme. This first lesson has to be learned even though we do not as yet realize its full meaning; and then we have to proceed with the study outlined in the next paragraph. The following of occult formularies and the running after this, that, and the other guide will come to nothing but loss. Thus seeking on the outside we delude ourselves and reach the end of life none the wiser. On this head I should like to tell you what our friend and co-worker H.P.B. told me



and others many times, and it has always appeared true; it is also confirmed by clairvoyance of a high order. Thus, in my own words:

There are many men and women now on earth who studied and practiced occultism long ago in other lives and made some progress. But they went too much along the line of astral science, of alchemy, of magic pure and simple. Thus they not only deluded themselves but made a strong affinity between themselves and the lower group of agents in Nature. The consequence is that they are now reborn with two natures, the one opposing the other. One is the old force of a desire for a really spiritual life, and the other a strong passional nature that is due to the forces generated along the lower lines of force. A continual war is set up. The old astral knowledge is obscured; the old spiritual desire is present; while the astral knowledge and practice as well as the alchemical study or force has been transformed into passion, and trouble and delay are the result. She mentioned alchemy because in that study there is a continual investigation of forces that belong to the lower groups of agents. There is no doubt that many of the old alchemists obtained results that would be very astonishing. But what, after all, did they get? Nothing save a tendency along that line, and it, dealing only with the lower elements, must if followed for many lives plunge one at last down the steep declivity of black magic. For in the course of time, the lower parts of the nature being always accentuated, bad motives are engendered, all good ones are lost by a gradual atrophy, and selfishness becomes the pervading influence. The shortness of human life interferes here most beneficently, for periodically men are compelled to die, and being born among different surroundings they are thrown off the track by the deliberate action of others and have a chance of being put again and again in the right road.

The next paragraph in the quotation contains the practical part to be applied by each one for himself. It directs us to study well the general and the particular, or the nature of Kosmos as a whole and our own nature as a special manifestation of the whole. We are prone to omit the particular application of this, and our tendency is to study the general principles only, and that too in a very intellectual way. We should study with great care our own natures, because it is in those that the obstacles and delusions are. The very first step is to apply to ourselves the judgments and criticisms we have for others. In this the words of Jesus will be found to express the exact practice. He said that one should look for the beam in one's own eye before observing the mote in that of another. Whoever Jesus was — and if he did not exist, whatever he represented — it was the discipline of the ancient true school of the Adepts that he gave out. And here I may again quote what H.P.B. said on that at another time. She said and wrote:

In these sayings of Jesus are to be found many of the rules and sayings of our Lodge. Among them is that one about greater rejoicing taking place in heaven over one repentant sinner than over ninety-nine just men who need no repentance. That saying is 'alive and kicking' to this very day among us. So also about the mote in the eye, for does not that touch on self-examination and self-discipline?



In studying these two — ourselves and the Kosmos — we are to divide them first into two groups, one the higher and immortal, the other the lower and the transitory. Applying this to Nature, we see that it consists *first*, of the visible and invisible that is mortal, perish-able, transitory; and *second*, of the invisible, energetic, that is permanent. Applying it to man, he is dual, thus: *first* the visible and invisible that is transitory, *i.e.*, body and the three other constituents of life, astral man, desires, and lower mind; and *second* the invisible *manas*, *buddhi*, and *Ātman*. Having so divided ourselves we must then steadily keep before us the idea expressed in the words, “I am not this body or these desires.” For we might intellectually divide ourselves during centuries and yet never begin to realize the division. That realization comes from dwelling on the thought to be realized. What we are to make a part of us is the knowledge that the body and desires are not ourselves. This should be dwelt on continually until realization begins to dawn on us. As it is now, we are constantly wrapped up in the body and desires, receiving sensations through the one and being swayed and deluded by the other.

Then we must proceed to analyze the desires. This is not done by many as completely and accurately as it should be. Most of us look at *desire* as referring chiefly to the grosser lower portion of our nature, whereas it includes a large part of *manas*. We might successfully eliminate the lower desires such as the sensual, and the sensuous, those for merely bodily pleasure, for eating, drinking, clothing, amusements, approbation, and so on, and yet be fast in the grip of the desires of *manas*, wholly devoid of sensuous or sensual elements. Indeed, many are now at that point. They have mastered mere appetites and passions, but are deluded and carried away by the desires of lower *manas*. Let us illustrate. Here is a member who will not in any circumstances eat meat. If lard by chance has been used, even to grease a pan in which some of his ethereal food was cooked, the food is rejected. He eats but little; he does not care for amusements; he reads much; he knows many strange thoughts written down by other men; perchance he knows Caballah; he has much knowledge of where Lodges of mysterious beings are said to have been; he can debate with you regarding Mūlaprakriti and other recondite matters. But what of his whole nature? How of his dealing with others and their effect on him? How about the question of union as opposed to separateness? On close — or even sometimes superficial — examination we see that he is full of uncharitableness. The views of others not according with his are wholly rejected. Other men annoy him. They are too much engaged in mere virtue. They eat meat; they are stupid; they are often ready to accept a conclusion without showing that they have gone through the laborious logic of philosophical proof; their questions are absurd even though sincere. Yes, he has controlled desire on its lowest planes, but it has gotten the mastery over him through *manas*. This is not progress; it is spiritual darkness. He has given up animal food, but the food of his inner nature is harsh, astringent, bitter, too hot.

Or here is another who has a good nature but has neglected the study of his own mental processes. He can only see in one direction; he has a faculty of confusing his conclusions because he confuses his premises. He desires to go along his own road of thought, for to change it is unpleasant because difficult to begin. He is not of ne-



cessity in spiritual darkness, but the action of *manas* is made crooked because some desire lies lurking down below.

Now having studied a great deal on theosophical lines, we should begin to practically apply our studies. They teach unity and non-separateness. This must mean *all* that is implied. It is not a mere general unity, but is a similarity and communion in every part of the nature. If there is uncharitableness, if there is disloyalty, if there are harshness and unbrotherliness in the race, they exist also in us, if only in the germ: Those germs require only the proper personal conditions to make them sprout. Our duty therefore is to continually encourage in ourselves the active feelings that are opposites of those. Those of us who think knowledge can be acquired without pursuing the path of love, mistake. The soul is aware of what it requires. It demands altruism, and so long as that is absent, so long will mere intellectual study lead to nothing. And especially in those who have deliberately called on the Higher Self does that Self require active practice and application of the philosophy which is studied. Every recipient of this ought to think over it and apply it to his or her own life and thoughts, to see how it may apply, and to apply as much of it as possible every day.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE



Where silent waters whisper by Inga Nielsen

