

THE THREE OBJECTS

When the movement was started in the last quarter of the 19th century to bring back to mankind knowledge of the Wisdom Religion the purpose of the work was outlined in the form of three objects. These are as follows, given in the order of their importance.

1. "To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction of race, colour, sex, caste, or creed."
2. "To promote the study of Aryan and other Scriptures, of the world's religions and sciences, and to vindicate the importance of old Asiatic literature, such as that of the Brahmanical, Buddhist, and Zoroastrian philosophies."
3. "To investigate the hidden mysteries of Nature under every aspect possible, and the psychic and spiritual powers latent in man especially".

As is well known, the original movement was incarnated in one body in the form of a single society, but since that day it has proliferated into an unknown number of associations and orders. Some of these various forms carry on the original spirit of the work with a high degree of fidelity. Some mix it with extraneous interests and have more or less shifted the center of emphasis. The result is that some associations and orders have ~~gone~~ drifted in the Ocean of the Wisdom Religion until they have fallen into back-currents or become stranded upon sand-banks of thought. Others have continued in noble and selfless effort and so have made real progress toward the end which the Masters have had so much at heart. Now, the question arises; How is real work in the line of the Wisdom Religion to be distinguished from pseudo activities which yet through possession of a common terminology seems superficially to be identical with the former? One of the most

important bases for this discrimination is found in the study of the three objects. Accordingly, we will give a brief analysis of these statements in the present and two following papers.

I The First Object.

~~ixix~~ This object is not only first in the serial sense but also in importance. He who is devoted to this object whether a member of an association or alone and who works steadily for its realization among men is a devotee of the Wisdom Religion regardless of whether he gives much attention to the second and third objects. Our Teachers have on more than one occasion spoken of men and women as true devotees in this sense who were not at all students of the Wisdom Religion in the technical sense. Of course they ~~would~~ ^{would} ~~lack~~ ^{lack} the knowledge and understanding that would come through being such students and accordingly their usefulness would be limited as compared to what it might have been had they possessed greater knowledge. But still they would be working toward the achievement of the most fundamental practical ~~achievement~~ ^{working} of the Wisdom Religion, and that fact determines their alignment. In contrast there are numbers of students and associations that emphasize technical knowledge of the Wisdom Religion and the hidden powers of man and nature but have more or less completely neglected the first object. Such are not true devotees of the Wisdom Religion and do not have the approval of the Masters.

The cultivation of Universal Brotherhood simply means the awakening of spiritual consciousness. For spiritual consciousness which centers in integration of unity. All habits or activities which tend toward narrowing the field of sympathy are opposed to spiritual consciousness. Thus the patriot in

the jingoistic sense is actively working against Universal Brotherhood and therefore tends to be unspiritual. On the other hand, all tendencies to widen sympathy so that the fellow in the other group, class, sex, nation, etc. comes to be felt as equally one's own brother with those who are naturally closer, are definitely in a direction to awaken Spiritual Consciousness. It therefore, becomes the first duty of the student to awaken and widen his sympathies and follow up with the appropriate action when the opportunity comes. No man has a right to greater knowledge than his fellows, in the esoteric sense, save he first dedicates himself to the service of his fellows in such ways as his capacities fit him. This is the practical key for winning the right to the Knowledge which lies in the custody of the Masters.

It is true that the Path to Spiritual Consciousness may be found by an intense penetration within, but there are very few who have the peculiar strength for following this course. Further, he who has attained to spiritual Consciousness by this inner Path automatically has Universal Brotherhood. He is centered in the One and therefore finds himself equally in all states and condition of men, and, indeed, in all creatures. Such a one does not have to be taught Universal Brotherhood because he already is Universal Brotherhood. But the majority of the members of our humanity are already so centered in the peripheral or segregated aspect of consciousness that an external technique in integration must be practiced. This lies in extending sympathy and interest progressively to larger and larger circles of ~~interest~~ inclusion until in the end all mankind is comprehended.

How may one go about this in a practical way? There are any number of courses to be followed. Brotherhood within one's own group is assumed. But one must go beyond this or he will make an exclusive center of his own group of order. Every student should cultivate some Brotherhood interest in the world outside his special group. For this there are many possible activities and each may choose that which appeals to him as peculiarly important, or that for which he is especially fitted. A few suggestions of interest are offered;

- a. Working against the principle of violence as an instrument of individual or national policy. This is peculiarly important since violence is the natural expression of hate and tends especially to build barriers among men.
- b. Working for a rational and humane treatment of the criminal. Our present treatment of criminals tends to make them worse and is, therefore, a crying sin against brotherhood as well as against Reason.
- c. Work for our younger brothers, the animals.
- d. Work for our youth, who have won much freedom but are in sad need of knowledge which our hypocritical society hides so that it is not given openly by those who have knowledge guided by Understanding.
- e. Work against barriers political and economic that tend to keep nations and races apart and are dictated by national selfishness.

These are but a few suggestions. There are numbers of other activities. The one, all important point is to extend oneself so that the world may be the richer, in the spiritual sense, for his having lived. It is in this way that the Order may become a sun radiating its light out among men. And in this way only does

*the student work in regard to special considerations in his work
toward building brotherhood
Yogiswaran*

the student win a right to special consideration in his work toward hidden Knowledge.

Yogagnani.

THE THREE OBJECTS
Part II
The Second Object.

"To promote the study of Aryan and other Scriptures of the world's religions and sciences, and to vindicate the importance of old Asiatic literature, such as that of the Brahmanical, Buddhist, and Zoroastrian philosophies".

It is under this object that the Wisdom Religion is studied as a synthesis of Philosophy, Science and Religion. It is interesting to note that in studying these three aspects of human knowledge as a synthesis we are carrying on the spirit of the first object. For these three synthesized become spiritual. The trouble with the world, and especially the western world, is in large part found in the departmentalizing of these various fields. In other words, each one has been largely separated in our thought from the other two. However, since the starting of the work in 1875 there has been distinct progress toward such synthesis even by men who are not students of the Wisdom Religion in the technical sense. In this the student can trace something of the largely unseen working of the impulse given by the Masters in the past 50 years.

Every student should make it a part of his duty to become in some degree familiar with philosophy and science and to know something about religions other than the one in which he was brought up. Owing to the lack of technical equipment it will not be possible for most to carry this study out in the extended sense that is possible only for able scholars. But that is not necessary. The important point is that each should do what he can in this direction without sacrificing his already existing duties. This is an important part of the task of widening sympathy.

It will be noted that this object particularly mentions the study of Aryan Scriptures and Philosophies. There are two reasons why this is so. In the first place, we of the West have been brought up in the distinctly narrow perspective of orthodox Christianity, and have much need to see that there are other religions based upon the deepest of spiritual insight and the greatest philosophical profundity. We have too long fed our egotism by imagining we had all that was worthwhile in religion and knowledge. The second reason is that religious and philosophical sources are Asiatic. The source of Wisdom and spiritual insight lies in the East both in the microcosmic and macrocosmic sense. It is ~~is~~ highly necessary that we become familiar with these great Asiatic sources.

Another important point is that in the East the ancient Wisdom has been kept in greater purity than is the case with us. They have not kept it entirely pure in the exoteric sense, to be sure, but they still have retained² much of the ancient spirit. Accordingly it is with them that we will find the largest body of confirming evidence of the reality of the Esoteric Wisdom. Hence students should study books like the Baghavat Gita, the works of Shankara and other classical scriptures as far as lies in their power.

This second object is subsidiary to the first. If we represent the first object by the word "Spiritualization" the second might be called "expansion of Knowledge". Thus knowledge is used as a means to aid Spiritualization. The Wisdom Religion movement was not started to extend knowledge for its own sake, but to spiritualize world-consciousness. But as a first means to this end it employs the expansion of knowledge based upon

sources available to the non-initiate.

Though the student who is actively interested only in this object is not a true devotee of the Wisdom Religion, yet there is but little reason to believe that he will do harm either to himself or to others. The desire for knowledge never was a sin, as one of the Masters has said. Further, he who seeks the kind of knowledge covered by the second object will tend to become less and less self-centered in his personal outlook and thus may come to appreciate the significance of Spiritualization. So, though over-emphasis of the second object as compared with the first fails of realization the primary purpose of the Wisdom Religion movement, it is, however, not fraught with any particular danger. Yet the true student should always remember that knowledge which does not in the end help to open the way toward Spiritualization is useless, so far as the saving of man is concerned.

The student should ever strive to win knowledge, not for his own glory, but so that Truth may the more be made manifest to mankind.

Yogagnani.

THE THREE OBJECTS
 Part III
 The Third Object.

"To investigate the hidden mysteries of Nature under every aspect possible, and the psychic and spiritual powers latent in man especially".

Of all three this is the most intriguing object to the average student. Here is the field of mystery, the Unknown. It is perfectly natural that the investigation of this should attract students. And there is no sin involved in this desire provided that consciously or unconsciously the motive is not selfish acquisition of power. But in this field there is danger just because awakening to knowledge of the occult side of Nature tends to arouse any latent seeds of selfishness and personal ambition that may be hidden within the student. So the Masters always have insisted that the cultivation of Universal Brotherhood or Spiritualization should be the prerequisite of any Occult instruction. Yet over and over again students have let themselves drift away from active interest in Spiritualization of Consciousness by an overweening interest in various psychic or occult phenomena and powers. The result is that the order of emphasis in the three objects becomes reversed, the third being given chief importance and the first relegated to the background. This is one of the most important signs of drifting upon a sandbank of thought.

The possession of occult powers may be one of the greatest blessings, or an equally great curse. One of the mysteries of the occult is that within that domain there is no middle ground between Light and Darkness, or Good and Evil. He who goes beyond the outskirts of the occult arouses a conflict to the death between the two aspects of his nature represented so well by Dr. ~~Jekyll~~ Jekyll and Mr. Hyde in Stevenson's story.

He comes out of the ordeal identified either with Good or with Evil, but he no longer remains a combination of the two qualities. This is why the Masters' interest in the instruction of Occultism is conditional. They are not interested in recruiting occult adepts but White Adepts. A White Adept is also an Occult Adept, but an Occult Adept may be a Black Adept. It is far better that the student should remain an ordinary man than that he should become one of the latter. It is better for himself and for the world at large. So the students are ever warned to give the first two objects the first places in their regard and labors. By so doing they tend to strengthen the qualities in their own natures that tend toward Light or Good and correspondingly weaken the opposed qualities. In time, when sufficient strength of this kind is gained then it is time enough to enter the serious study of the Occult in the practical sense.

The danger that attaches to the study of Practical Occultism does not apply to Theoretical Occultism. In the latter case the study consists of investigation to determine that there are hidden occult and psychic powers, and to understand the rationale on which they rest as far as is possible to the non-initiate in the Occult sense. This latter study is not only fundamentally safe but is even desirable provided it is not given precedence over the first two objects. Understanding the rationale of Occultism destroys superstition and the beliefs in miracles. It opens the way to comprehending the whole Universe, both seen and unseen as the manifestation of an inviolate Order or Reason. It carries the scientific spirit in its essentials into the hidden and subtle domains of Life, and this is all to the good. Finally it prepares the way to the safe study of

Occultism in the practical sense.

Understanding of the rationale of occultism is only second in importance to grounding in the ethics of the Wisdom Religion as a prerequisite to entering the archana of practical Occultism. The following quotation of H.P. Blavatsky should be carefully considered in this connection. "A Theosophist, practising the powers called abnormal, minus the light of Occultism, will simply tend toward a dangerous form of mediumship, because, although holding to Theosophy (The Wisdom Religion) and its highest conceivable code of ethics, he practises it in the dark, on sincere but blind faith. Anyone, Theosophist or Spiritualist, who attempts to cultivate one of the branches of occult science - e.g., hypnotism, mesmerism, or even the secrets of producing physical phenomena - without knowledge of the philosophic rationale of ^{up} those powers, is like a rudderless boat launched on a stormy ocean." It is easy to see how this must be so, for even in as familiar a field as chemistry the same principle holds. Place an uninformed student, possessed of the highest motives and practicing a high moral code, in a complete chemical laboratory without instruction and without the necessary manuals and texts, and tell him to see what he can do, and the probable result is that he will either poison himself or blow himself and the laboratory to pieces. He lacks the understanding of the rationale which makes chemical experimentation safe. The same principle is true, in even an intenser degree in the practical study of occultism.

But if all the conditions have been met, if the student has progressed far in the spiritualization of his consciousness so

that the good of mankind as a whole really means more to him than his own good, if he has grounded himself well in the general philosophy of the Wisdom Religion, if he has mastered all available knowledge of the rationale of occultism and finally, if he has a competent Teacher, one who is an adept in Occultism, then the study of Practical Occultism under the necessary rules which the Teachers prescribe may serve the highest good. It is but rarely that students have met all these conditions yet when they have done so, we are assured, they are welcomed as Neophytes in the deeper study. The increase of power won multiplies their usefulness for good many-fold. They are enabled to work for the Spiritualization of human consciousness far beyond the best that is possible to the ordinary man. They become individuals no longer of the world, but devoted to the world and its good beyond every other consideration.

Every student may legitimately aspire to become someday and adept in practical Occultism. But he must make effective his aspiration by meeting the conditions which the custodians of the Occult Mysteries have laid down. He must learn to love mankind more than himself. He must make himself one with the philosophy of the Wisdom Religion. And he must clearly cut the confusing veil of superstition which envelopes all of us, with the sword of true knowledge and thus be prepared to abandon every preconception however dear, if it prove to be not true. He may then with reasonable safety dare to open the ponderous gate to the hidden and dark labyrinth of the Occult.

Yogagnani.