

CONVERSATIONS ON OCCULTISM WITH HPB

IN 1875, '76, '77 and '78 my intimacy with H.P.B. gave me many opportunities for conversing with her on what we then called "Magic." These useful, and for me very wonderful, occasions came about late at night, and sometimes during the day. I was then in the habit of calling on her in the daytime whenever I could get away from my office. Many times I stayed in her flat for the purpose of hearing as much and seeing as much as I could. Later on, in 1884, I spent many weeks with her in the Rue Notre Dame des Champs in Paris, sitting beside her day after day and evening after evening; later still in 1888, being with her in London, at Holland Park, I had a few more opportunities. Some of what she said I publish here for the good of those who can benefit by her words. Certainly no greater practical occultist is known to this century: from that point of view what she said will have a certain useful weight with some.

ON DEVACHAN

This terms was not in use at this time. The conversation was about steps on the Path and returning here again. In answer to a question:

"Yes, you have been here and at this before. You were born with this tendency, and in other lives have met these persons [supposed Adept influences], and they are here to see you for that reason."

Later, when definite terms had come into use, the question raised was whether or not all stayed 1500 years in Devachan.

"Well, Judge, you must know well that under the philosophy we don't all stay there so long. It varies with the character of each. A thoroughly material thinker will emerge sooner than one who is a spiritual philosopher and good. Besides, recollect that all workers for the Lodge, no matter of what degree, are helped out of Devachan if they themselves permit it. Your own ideas which you have stated, that 1500 years had not elapsed since you went into Devachan, is correct, and what I tell is what Master himself tells me. So there you are."

PRECIPITATION BY MASTERS

In reply to a question on this she said:

"If you think Master is going to be always precipitating things, you mistake. Yes, He can do it. But most of the precipitations are by chelas who would seem to you almost Masters.

I see His orders, and the thoughts and words He wishes used, and I precipitate them in that form; so does __ and one or two more."

"Well, what of Their handwritings?"

"Anything you write is your handwriting, but it is not your personal handwriting, generally used and first learned if you assume or adopt some form. Now you know that Masters' handwritings, peculiar and personal to Themselves, are foreign both as to sound and form - Indian sorts, in fact. So They adopted a form in English, and in that form I precipitate Their messages at Their direction. Why B__ almost caught me one day and nearly made a mess of it by shocking me. The message has to be seen in the astral light in *facsimile*, and through that astral matrix I precipitate the whole of it. It's different, though, if Master sends me the paper and the message already done. That's why I call these things "psychological tricks." The sign of an objective wonder seemed to be required, although a moment's thought will show it is not proof of anything but occult ability. Many a medium has had precipitations before my miserable self was heard of. But blessed is the one who wants no sign. You have seen plenty of these things. What do you want to ask me? Can't you use your brain and intuition? I've sampled almost the whole possible range of wonders for you. Let them use their brains and intuition with the known facts and the theories given."

IF WHITE MAGICIANS ACT, WHAT THEN?

"Look here; here's a man who wants to know why the Masters don't interpose at once and save his business. They don't seem to remember what it means for a Master to use occult force. If you explode gunpowder to split a rock you may knock down a house. There is a law that if a White Magician uses his occult power an equal amount of power may be used by the Black one. Chemists invent powders for explosives and wicked men may use them. You force yourself into Master's presence and you take the consequences of the immense forces around him playing on yourself. If you are weak in character anywhere, the Black ones will use the disturbance by directing the forces engendered to that spot and may compass your ruin. It is so always. Pass the boundary that hedges in the occult realm, and quick forces, new ones, dreadful ones, must be met. Then if you are not strong you may become a wreck for that life. This is the danger. This is one reason why Masters do not appear and do not act directly very often, but nearly always by intermediate degrees. What do you say - "the dual forces in nature"? Precisely, that's just it; and Theosophists should remember it."

DO MASTERS PUNISH?

"Now I'm not going to tell you about this. They are just; They embody the Law and Compassion. Do not for an instant imagine that Masters are going to come down on you for your failures and wrongs, if any. Karma looks out for this. Masters' ethics are the

highest. From the standpoint of your question, They do not punish. Have I not told you that, much as detractors have cast mud at Them, never will the Masters impose punishment. I cannot see why such a question comes up. Karma will do all the punishing that is necessary."

ABOUT ELEMENTALS

"It's a long time ago now that I told you this part would not be explained. But I can tell you some things. This one that you and Olcott used to call ___ can't see you unless I let him. Now I will impress you upon it or him so that like a photograph he will remember so far. But you can't make it obey you until you know how to get the force directed. I'll send him to you and let him make a bell."

[In a few days after this the proposed sign was given at a distance from her, and a little bell was sounded in the air when I was talking with a person not interested in Theosophy, and when I was three miles away from H.P.B. On next seeing her she asked if ___ had been over and sounded the bell, mentioning the exact day and time.]

"This one has no form in particular, but is more like a revolving mass of air. But it is, all the same, quite definite, as you know from what he has done. There are some classes with forms of their own. The general division into fiery, airy, earthy, and watery is pretty correct, but it will not cover all the classes. There is not a single thing going on about us, no matter what, the elementals are not concerned in, because they constitute a necessary part of nature, just as important as the nerve currents in your body. Why in storms you should see them how they move about. Don't you remember what you told me about that lady ___ who saw them change and move about at that opera? It was due to her tendencies and the general idea underlying the opera." [It was the opera of Tristan and Isolde, by Wagner. - J] "In that case, as Isolde is Irish, the whole ideas under it aroused a class of elementals peculiar to that island and its traditions. That's a queer place, Judge, that Ireland. It is packed full of a singular class of elementals; and, by Jove! I see they even have emigrated in quite large numbers. Sometimes one quite by accident rouses up some ancient system, say from Egypt; that is the explanation of that singular astral noise which you said reminded you of a sistrum being shaken; it was really objective. But, my dear fellow, do you think I will give you a patent elemental extractor? - not yet. Bulwer Lytton wrote very wisely, for him, on this subject."

[Riding over in Central Park, New York.] "It is very interesting here. I see a great number of Indians, and also their elementals, just as real as you seem to be. They do not see us; they are all spooks. But look here, Judge, don't confound the magnetism escaping through your skin with the gentle taps of supposed elementals who want a cigarette."

[In W. 34th Street, New York. The first time she spoke to me of elementals particularly, I having asked her about her Spiritualism. - J.]

"It is nearly all done by elementals. Now I can make them tap anywhere you like in this room. Select any place you wish." [I pointed to a hard plaster wall-space away from objects.] "Now ask what you like that can be answered by taps."

Q. What is my age? *Taps*: the correct number.

Q. How many in my house? *Taps*: right.

Q. How many months have I been in the city? *Taps*: correct.

Q. What number of minutes past the hour by my watch? *Taps*: right.

Q. How many keys on my ring? *Taps*: correct.

H.P.B. "Oh bosh! Let it stop. You won't get any more, for I have cut it off. Try your best. They have no sense; they got it all out of your own head, even the keys, for you know inside how many keys are on the ring, though you don't remember; but anyhow I could see into your pocket and count the number, and then that tapper would give the right reply. There's something better than all that magic nonsense."

SHE PRECIPITATES IN LONDON

In 1888 I was in London and wanted a paper, with about four sentences written on it in purple ink, which I had left in America. I came down to her room where B. Keightley was, and, not saying anything, sat down opposite H.P.B. I thought: "If only she would get me back some way a copy of that paper." She smiled at me, rose, went into her room, came out at once, and in a moment handed me a piece of paper, passing it right in front of Keightley. To my amazement it was a duplicate of my paper, a *facsimile*. I then asked her how she got it, and she replied: "I saw it in your head and the rest was easy. You thought it very clearly. You know it can be done; and it was needed." This was all done in about the time it takes to read these descriptive sentences.

William Q. Judge

Path, April, 1894