

The Technique of the Master

By Raymund Andrea, F.R.C.



THE TECHNIQUE OF THE MASTER



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Dedicated with Gratitude to

HARVEY SPENCER LEWIS

Imperator of the Rosicrucian Order

for North and South

America



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PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

NUMEROUS WRITERS HAVE glorified the attainment of Cosmic Consciousness. They have in able literary style informed the student of mysticism, of the rewards awaiting the postulant of Cosmic preparation. Elaborately have they depicted the distinguishing characteristics between the two spheres—one, the sphere of Cosmic Consciousness, the complete, the absolute, the state of absorption of personality into the ultimate, the All-knowing and perfect; the other sphere—the mundane, temporal, empirical, lowly and finite, related to the body and its earthly existence. Perhaps it is a compliment to the manner of expression of their concept of Cosmic Consciousness, and its sublimity, that they have widened the gulf between it and the common consciousness of the layman to such an extent that the mind of most of their readers is not able to conceive of the means of bridging the void. Such glorification of a goal to be attained may undoubtedly be an incentive to the layman to plunge from his world of reality into an unknown realm. But it provides no technique. The technique is necessary if the student is not to wander into a maze of terms and abstract theories which eventually detract from the halo and lure of the goal. The student who strives for Cosmic Consciousness and the evolution of his personality without adequate preparation and a precise technique is left suspended between a world of objective thinking from which he ventured, and a world of idealism to which he has no guide.

It is not that philosophical meditation and reflection alone are purposeless and a dissipation of thought, but it is necessary that when the ideal has been conceived of by the mind, that it finds its counterpart in form, in action. True mysticism, like true philosophy, can never be limited to a value in the “business of living” Yet, if an ideal so far transcends the possibility of its application in life, it is purposeless. Resort to philosophy and mysticism is, we believe, for the enlightenment and advancement of man as man. If they but find form in the mind of the student only, they are only partially expressed, as

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man is both mind and matter, and the philosophical or mystical idea must relate itself in some way to the progress of man in the exoteric, as well as in the esoteric. A technique for Cosmic attainment is a sum total of numerous actual experiences in reaching the goal. A technique is not the result of a process of reasoning, nor a personal belief, faith or theory. It is the accumulation of knowledge of ways and means appropriate to obtain the end with the least loss of effort, both physical and mental. The technique is the aftermath of an eventual venture of blazing a trail through obstacles of ridicule, criticism and false illusions. It is a critical review of a series of acts, and an accounting of those which have proved to be the best.

No one, we believe, is more ably qualified to give to the student of mysticism such a technique as the author, Raymund Andrea. He has served in the capacity of Grand Master of the Rosicrucian Order for the British Jurisdiction for years. It has been his duty and responsibility to guide on the path of knowledge large numbers of initiates, and to encourage them in their pursuit. The value of his own experiences in preparation for Cosmic Consciousness has been multiplied many times by the accounting to him of the experiences of others. His treatise here is masterful; it is not for those who seek a rapid or simple way. It substitutes a staple and an assured method for the quick practices so commonly advertised by lectures on mystical subjects. The quick process places the initiate in a state of light where he is unable to adjust his psychic nature rapidly enough to appreciate his advancement, and he descends with preference from the light into darkness because he is more accustomed to the latter. The technique advanced by the author recognizes the necessity of the student's comprehension of each stage of his advancement before he can go further. Thus the psychic and intellectual development at all times complement each other. There is no conflict, no irritability, and the harmony resulting is so gratifying to the student that he can conceive of only one movement, and that, upward and onward.

ROSICRUCIAN ORDER , AMORC.

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INTRODUCTION

THERE EXISTS, AND always has existed within the Rosicrucian Order, a technique of peculiar value when applied to everyday life; and there are men in every department of life who need nothing more than this technique in order to make their lives eminently productive, and conclusive in investigation and demonstration. In principle and aim they are potentially Rosicrucian. They possess all the characteristics of the pioneer in the mystical and progressive quality of their minds. They are actors, not theorists; but their sphere of action is greatly curtailed because they lack an organized technique which will bring them to a profound understanding of their constitution, enable them to establish a ready response between the psychic and physical organizations, and look to Cosmic sources at once for inspiration and the working power to actuate it immediately and locally. It is these men, who are capable of great work in this cycle, whom we seek to contact, that they may have the opportunity of participating in a technique which will bring them to conscious knowledge and strength, the resurrection of latent faculty, and a soul consciousness and personality equipment truly Rosicrucian in character.

In "The Technique of the Master" I have endeavored to approach this subject of the technique from several related angles and give a comprehensive idea of the use of personality, from the inner and technical point of view, in its progress on the path while qualifying for initiation into Cosmic contact and pupillage under a Master. I have no two opinions about this one fact, that the Masters will use any man who can efficiently use their technique. That proposition is basic to all I have written. What he is by profession, whether he be highborn or humble, of this race or that, as well as practically every other consideration—these factors are incidental. If he can prove himself in the eyes of the Masters as a sound technician on the cardinal lines set out herein, he may be sure that he has reached a point in evolution where important disclosures await him from their sphere. I am not dogmatic in this matter. I am merely suggestive. I express an opinion. If it is considered

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of value it can be used; if not, it can be rejected. But my aim has been to offset the idea so prevalent among students that they can obtain to high evolution on the path mainly through abstract meditation, and postponing action until they receive a mandate from a Master, ill equipped as they are, to carry out some momentous campaign. Not by meditation on the Self, but by using the self, is the burden of my theme. I do not emphasize the latter to the exclusion of the former. The Rosicrucian technique recognizes completely the dual aspects of development. But whilst philosophical meditation has been the main feature of countless cults, the path of action, in the most varied and practical sense, has ever been distinctly Rosicrucian.

We have only to glance back over the history of the Order to realize how profoundly true this is. The discoveries and practical works of the Rosicrucians of the past stand as a challenge and an example for all time. It is for us to keep this fact ever in mind and endeavor to apply this technique with all possible urgency and with complete dedication of all our powers in the place where we are. That is what the Masters demand first of all from us. When we have proved our efficiency and attuned our lives to the Cosmic forces, sympathetic response and contact will result and our sphere of service will be correspondingly enlarged.

The aspects of the subject I have sketched in this work are all related to the technique;—its fundamentals, the preparation for it, common delusions about it, its impersonality and magic, the Masters on the technique, vocation in relation to the technique, personal adjustments, the neophyte and his critics, and in conclusion, the vexed question of probation. My hope is that the book will be an inspiration and companion to every student of mysticism.

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NOTE: The descriptions of the *Masters* in this text, and of their willful direction in peoples' affairs is, by Rosicrucian definition, allegorical. The sense of personal contact and communion which a person experiences in Cosmic contacts is simply the form that the impersonal and invisible forces of the Cosmic take in such periods of attunement.

Chapter I

FUNDAMENTALS OF THE TECHNIQUE

THE TECHNIQUE OF the master artist has always been a subject of engrossing interest for the ambitious student who fully appreciates the beauty and rarity of that wonderful ease and facility which characterize the execution of great works in the realms of art. With the measure of understanding he has of the particular art he follows and such practical ability attained in it through conscientious labor, to witness the master projecting with perfect abandon the ideal conception, impeccable in detail and completeness, fires his soul to the limit and resolves him to press on to the seemingly unattainable. As he looks or listens he is carried out beyond himself; he is raised one step nearer this high heaven of invention; certain limitations seem to pass away and the goal appears less remote under the controlling influence of the embodied ideal before him. Nothing is so necessary to the aspiring student as the embodied ideal. Books will never educate him as that can. There is something immediately urgent and compelling in the visible action of the master mind, which takes by violence the faculties of an appreciative soul and awakens it by degrees to clearer comprehension of that unique technique, and enables it to grasp intuitively fundamental principles and methods of interpretation which merely astonish and overwhelm the passive and unaspiring admirer.

Now, in the technique of the Master of Occultism we have a condition analogous to this. Here is a man who is the flower of humanity, with a consciousness universalized and expressing at will a knowledge, multiform and vast, and exercising powers and abilities, various and intricate, so impressively and effectively, that only a comparative few are ready to accept the fact of his actual existence. Yet

it is sufficient that some do believe in his existence and that of those an increasing number can testify to his existence through personal contact with him. But this question is beside my purpose. My purpose is to consider some aspects of the technique as far as it may be discerned through personal study of the subject and from what has directly impressed me during my investigations and reflections, particularly in connection with my own development on the path and generally in dealing with my individual problems of students of occultism. These students are, consciously or unconsciously, reflecting in their occult progress what appear to be manifest signs of certain phases of the method of procedure which I term the technique of the Master. For I hold that in these days of advanced developments along every line of mental and spiritual research, the human mind has evolved such exceptional capacities both of insight and demonstration, and has passed so swiftly and boldly beyond hitherto jealously guarded frontiers of secret knowledge, and made discoveries so momentous, as to justify the opinion that, where these researches are of an occult and spiritual character, those master minds whom we know as the Masters of Occultism, are taking the keenest interest in the upward progress of those who are prosecuting such researches and whose maturity of soul demands a specialized discipline and personal guidance at their hands. Nor is this idea difficult to accept if one observes the confirmed character, trend of life and particular service of many beautiful souls in the occult world who have devotedly followed the path through a long course of years and in whom may be perceived very clear signs of a presiding deity which permeates them with eagerness and self-abnegation and a divine thoughtfulness for the welfare of others in manifold ways, but especially in those things pertaining to their higher evolution. On encountering such souls recognition from the interior aspect is almost instantaneous, since it is a matter of synchronous vibration and of dedicated purpose. Their work on the path has often allied them closely in the past through the medium of meditation and in periods of withdrawal; and where they belong objectively to some special group of aspirants, on the plane of the ego they are one and under the supervision of a Master or his initiates. Indeed, the further we advance in our occult work the more necessary it is and the more natural does it become to measure those we contact from this inner

standpoint. We develop an entirely new scale of values and retreat from the judgment of the objective mind to the certain intuition of the divine monitor whose voice grows clearer and more insistent in proportion as we recognize and trust it. In this way we learn to detect our true compeers on the path. There transpires in them an indubitable response to the cultured and heightened vibration that irradiates and controls our vehicles of expression as it energizes downwards from the higher centers of the inner personality. And this vibration, so active and potent in the physical, emotional and mental economy, as I conceive it, constitutes a distinct development and denotes, it may be, one aspirant only in a whole group of students, as having reached that evolutionary point where he becomes, in some degree, an exponent of the technique of the Master. I make this limitation of only a possible one out of many students all engaged perhaps in similar work on the path because I believe the exponent of the technique is a comparatively rare individual even among earnest students. Yet the attainment of this inner touch of the Master's method of instruction and manifold adaptations in life and circumstances is surely the outcome of no favouritism or simple plea for power and prestige. It is the gradual fruition of a rigorous discipline to that end in the long and continuous struggles of past existences. Such an aspirant will manifest the peculiar influence of this past development in all his life activities. It may become more and more a conscious possession and pass under greater control in the course of his studies in this life and his particular work on the path; but even early in his incarnation the immature effects of the principles and practice of the technique will be observable, and in his later years important results will ensue which will infallibly demonstrate that he is one of that esoteric group of aspirants who is carrying out specialized work under the direction of a Master. It will be understood that I am not writing for those who demand proof in the ordinary sense of the term of this fact of special development in the individual. It is not susceptible of this kind of proof. Moreover, there is no desire to prove the fact in this way. The only proof that can be furnished lies in the personal influence and work of him who has it. It has been averred that the Master himself is often indistinguishable from ordinary men except through a subtle magnetic radiation arising from auric intensity; and it is precisely this radiation which characterizes the man, but in

a far lesser degree, who is magnetically linked with the Master in the occult world of force. Truly, there are manifest signs and enough of this condition recognizable by those who themselves aspire and seek the divine in nature and man. Some of these signs may be noted, since they are intrinsic and stable qualities and are so unvarying in character that they may always be predicated of the men we are denoting. We shall observe great versatility in the character, a ripe understanding of the profundities of human nature, an acquaintance, intuitive if not experimental, with all the crucial depths of human sorrow, allied with a skillful adaptation to the diversities of temperaments and a power of appeal to the soul in men. These qualities characterize the man who is called, in the technical phraseology, a disciple of the Master. He may be a conscious disciple, or an unconscious one. He may be consciously aware of his relationship to and acceptance by a certain Master, or he may be unconscious of these facts: the fundamental position remains unaltered; and it is only a question of time and specific growth until he will become as fully aware of this relationship and acceptance as of his relationship to and acceptance in his own family.

Very variously have been given in occult treatises what are designated the qualifications for discipleship, but fundamentally they are identical in character and expression, and will be found to underlie and indeed to be the basic cause of the development in the man of the above-named qualities. All of these qualifications merit the closest attention and study by the aspirant who is bent upon soul culture and who hopes to equip himself for demonstration of the technique in some phase of world work of the Master. They must be wrought into the very fabric of the emotional and mental life and become as truly a part of the expressive self as are the ordinary and well-known faculties of objective use. On this point hinges largely the whole problem of the technique. It is common to meet with students who are disconcerted because their studies do not culminate in some exceptional crisis in this direction. Knowledge they have; their reading is extensive; yet they are unaware of any special development indicating discipleship, or of any outstanding facilities for putting their knowledge to specific use. The difficulty lies here. The soul has not matured to the point of utilization and demonstration of its content, nor has that content the required measure of fullness and force; and the Master cannot accept and use

it, even through the agency of subordinate initiates, until the necessary maturity is shown. The decision in this matter is not arbitrary; it is based upon occult law. If it were only a question of study there would be little difficulty, the objective would be easily obtainable; but the Master cooperates with his disciples on the basis of inner soul force. “The world of force is the world of occultism and the only one whither the highest initiate goes to probe the secrets of being” Any advancement, then, towards the technique must be made in accordance with the long-established and invariable method of procedure of prolonged and conscientious study of the main subject of occultism, embracing as many branches of related thought as possible, in conjunction with the unfolding in the personality of the various attitudes of emotional and mental culture known as the qualifications for discipleship; and a variable period of experimentation in the use of spiritual forces to be generated through introspection, meditation and service. “Learn first our laws and educate your perceptions”



PREPARATION FOR THE TECHNIQUE

THAT PERIOD OF duration the institution of the fundamentals may occupy cannot be determined. I am anxious not to say anything on this subject of preparation which may appear discouraging to the aspirant who hopes to cover the necessary stages within a short period in the present incarnation. On the other hand, no good purpose is to be served by giving a colourable construction to a subject of such vast proportions and rendered intricate by the peculiar discipline necessary for overcoming those hindrances and obstacles inherent in the texture of the personality, which must be gradually remodeled and exalted to a higher plane of expression. Students often bring discouragement upon themselves in that they are unable to gauge rightly where they stand approximately in the scale of interior evolution. They judge of their growth and assume their immediate possibilities by what a more advanced soul is and can do. This inevitably leads to discontent and discouragement. Nor is it at all easy to impart to others an infallible method of judgment in these matters, since the whole question practically rests upon what grades of evolution the individual soul has already taken before it resumes its studies of the path in this particular life. My opinion is, that the student who enters upon the study of the science in this life for the first time cannot expect to become an exponent of the technique in the same life. There is a hint of corroboration of this in the words of one of the Masters, "If the psychic idiosyncrasy is lacking, no culture will supply it" We shall find that this psychic idiosyncrasy is a distinctive trait in the man who is the recipient of higher influences. It has no relationship with the condition of mediumship known as spiritualistic. It is the polar antithesis of that. The man is not a tool in the hands of intruding entities, or an entranced revelator of the improvised discourses of guides of doubtful authority.

The inspiration which is a feature of the technique comes from within, from a point of ascension in the head, from the sacred precincts of the indwelling divine self, which impresses directly the prepared and dedicated personality of the aspirant with such aspects of the Master's work as he is so far competent to undertake and advance. Therefore it is among those who have early in their incarnation entered upon the path and in whom the qualifications are instinctive and an intrinsic part of the character and temperament, that we shall expect to find some selected, after persistent and consolidating effort to that end, as exponents of the technique.

Let us take the qualities we have specified as particularly connoting the man who has attained that point in soul evolution where he is conscious of certain developments indicative of contact with super-physical influences and is being used in the work of the Master. These qualities, it was intimated, included and focused, so to speak, the various indispensable qualifications for discipleship; not in their fullness and perfection, it may be, yet with so much precision and effect in their use in daily life of the man as to clearly indicate that they are fully recognized and fundamental factors in conduct and are in continual evolution.

Versatility in the character derives from a large mental content, and is obviously of first importance, since the versatile technique of the Master himself is so large and comprehensive, so momentous and imposing in its nature and operation, that without this background of an extensive mental activity and consequent facility in the use, reciprocal and instant response would be lacking. In the man of technique this response is immediate and sure. Hidden relationships in particular situations are swiftly revealed through the unified action and close consent of all the faculties and senses. A subject under consideration becomes a focal point in the mental life, compelling to itself a wealth of associated ideas from the Cosmic repository of thought, so that abundant informations and dictates are forthcoming, imperative and constraining, which impart significance and effect to the prevailing theme; or a human soul comes, burdened and hesitant with a weight of emotion which hinders clear thinking, mystified and perplexed with some problem lying heavy upon the heart, which the

technique sees intuitively and embodies in shapes and aspects which raise and dignify and give mental form, and with it ease and satisfaction, to the incommunicable and oppressive. These are merely indications of the characteristic versatility the procedure of which is intricate and obscure to the uninitiated observer, yet operates with discrimination and exactness and with the promptitude and effectiveness of a divine afflatus from concealed sources. It does so because of a long novitiate, wherein the mind has habituated itself to a deeply occult responsiveness to a higher order of cognition, wherein a path has been made in mental matter by an ascending vibration, leading consciousness gradually upward and polarizing it within that sphere of spiritual impression remotely analogous to, and to some extent recipient of, the finer sphere of the octave of the Master. It will be observed how peculiar and special is this quality in the technician and how greatly it differs from, how much it exceeds in luminousness and force, that versatility which is objective in character and use and commonly met with in everyday life. It is from the exercise of this quality that profound understanding of the human heart becomes more and more a cherished possession of the aspirant. He so regards it because it gives him increasing ingenuity and skill in service. The human soul draws him irresistibly; it has a divine fascination for him; and his constant aim is to “understand the beauty and obscurity of those other divine fragments which are struggling side by side with him” that he may assist their evolution on the path. This quality, too, has its exoteric and esoteric aspects. It is common enough to meet with those who are excellent judges of human nature; they classify temperaments and are acquainted with their manifold peculiarities; and there is satisfaction in feeling that we are easily understood and that there is ready response to our personal expression. But the range of the technique is of a profounder order. It has not to search for motives; it registers them. They rise in all their conscious strength before the observant soul; the silent thought speaks and is answered before it finds utterance. “For as the individual has voice, so has that in which the individual exists. Life itself has speech and is never silent” It is the speech of life itself that the technician has studied; it is the voice of that in which the individual exists to which he has attuned himself during his ascent on the path; and that voice is single and unerring because it sounds in the Master’s presence.

Here, too, it is that his past intensive moral training plays its part. Through the persistent search after reality the soul becomes sensitive and receptive and swift to discriminate in the kingdoms of nature and man. It becomes clairvoyant of the atmospheres of souls, and that which is working at the heart of life is transmitted to and declares itself sympathetically in the vehicles of the man. There is nothing miraculous in this; it is the law of reciprocal response and is indifferent in its action. It may be utilized for evil ends as well as for good. But only in the well-trying aspirant who recognizes the sacred value and responsibilities of this faculty will it unfold to the full dimensions of its finest culture. This is a point for special consideration on the part of those who aspire to the technique. Do you aspire to serve, or to bend others to your will? With this quality well developed you can do either; but it is only legitimate for you to use it in service. If the desire to play with human hearts is greater in you than the desire to serve them, you must tarry, because the real technique is not within your reach. You will have but a caricature of it. There is something sinister and cruel in the advancing individual who seeks the power of the Master and uses it in the work of the devil. I recollect a poignant case of this description. A student was entrusted with the instruction of a group of seekers, but betrayed his trust for self-gratification. The law is not mocked in this way. It passes the man back to the world where he belongs, to bitter reflection and sorrow, with the misdeed written by Karma in his vehicles for an everlasting remembrance.

This is an extreme instance; but there are other ways of misuse, less heinous in character, which yet are not permissible in a servant of the Master, nearly all of which are the direct offspring of vanity and the desire for power. Yet the Master's own technique is so searching and discriminative in the choice and use of a disciple, that the aspirant will acquire little facility himself in exercising any distinct phase of it until these undesirable tendencies have been eradicated from the mind and heart. The infirmities of an aspirant are never cause of condemnation, but so long as they exist in him the responsibilities of higher evolution will not devolve upon him, since they would but accentuate those infirmities. There is only one thing which is justifiable and safe and which is imperatively demanded of him as he draws closer to the secret life of human hearts, and that is, a compassionate understanding. A full

and restraining compassion lies at the very heart of the Master's own technique in dealing with a disciple. There is no coercion, no autocratic control, no exploitation of weakness, neither fear, nor intolerance, nor sentiment, in that great and suffering HUMANITY which lifts and frees and dignifies the trusting soul that looks up and gives itself in adoration and love. This is the ideal for the aspirant in his work for and with others. "He must learn to look intelligently into the hearts of men from an absolutely impersonal point of view, otherwise his sight is coloured"

It will be observed how completely these specific qualities ramify through the whole nature of the man, how each includes in itself subsidiary attitudes which must receive attention and be constantly developed. Impersonality is such an attitude. The aspirant must be able to stand back at will from the assertive personal self which craves recognition and aggrandizement, would exercise forbidden power, grasp and hold that which is unlawful yet easily within reach and subject to his influence.

Acquaintance with the depths of human sorrow is a quality closely related to and contingent upon the last-named. We cannot advance far in the study of the human heart without sensing and knowing the almost intolerable burden of pain in every imaginable form which rests heavily upon humanity and cries aloud for deliverance. Here again we note the dual attitude in the aspirant in his bearing toward the pain of life in his fellowmen. It is a condition of the technique that, in the man who is demonstrating it, sensitiveness is continually increasing. "He must suffer, must enjoy or endure, more keenly than other men" In the early stages this condition is particularly difficult to deal with. It is, indeed, a secret cross which perforce he must carry; and the effects in himself are often of so singular and antagonizing a character that he is apt to question the usefulness of submitting to it. But these moods are fleeting and contemporary with those little crises in thought and emotion which ever assail the advanced man on the path. They never really deter him; for there is present the consciousness of persistent right action in the past, of his intense and abiding aspiration to be of service to the Master, besides the many instances of interior development which compensate a hundredfold for the pain-producing reactions consequent upon his self-imposed discipline.

Nevertheless, there is much of occasional difficulty experienced by the aspirant through this fact of increasing susceptibility throughout the whole economy of his expressive self. As it is a concomitant of his evolving soul life, whatever temporary disquietude or dis-concertedness or actual suffering it entails, will be permitted to work itself out, its utilizations and possible applications in the service of others will be fully noted, and a wise submission and resignation to what is inevitable and must be patiently borne will extract peace from many a troubled hour. For remember, the technician is not a theorist; he is, literally and truly, in the depths of his soul a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief. I have no wish to cast a sombre hue over this phase of the subject, but if this thing is true in the experience of the soul it must be faced and expressed. What is the use to stand before a fellow creature who has been wounded to the soul by some untoward circumstances, or is desolated and helpless through loss and deprivation, and quote to him a text from the secret doctrine? I have proved over and over again in such cases that the voice of a compassionate understanding and of expressive affection has been the one and only effective ministrations to the soul in affliction. I would go so far as to say that no aspirant, whatever his accomplishments and qualifications, can hope to contact the sphere of the Master without the priceless quality of a great humanity.

The next quality is adaptation to the diversities of temperaments. A man who is mastering the technique gradually includes in consciousness, through the increased momentum of vibration in his vehicles, the vibrational force measures of all other consciousnesses on his own level and of those below that level. In other words, his consciousness is attuned to certain octaves of vibration; he can respond at will to every keynote within those octaves; therefore any other consciousness which responds vibrationally to any keynote therein, he can adjust to and interpret. We are considering the esoteric aspect of temperament. In speaking of temperaments generally we class them simply as the artistic, the scientific, or the legal, and so on. But there is a temperament or atmosphere of the soul. The technique in its operation is esoteric; and its interpretations and utilizations are concerned with and based upon the expressions, the impresses and signatures, of the soul. It never relies wholly in its use upon so misleading a factor as temperament

in its simple exoteric classification. To do so requires no superior development, nothing but a familiarity with psychology and related sciences; whereas the sensitive and developed soul sphere of the technician reproduces within itself the precise soul states prevailing in another. Through the law of receptivity and response the lesser sphere is contracted and known as by an inner sense of touch. No willful effort of the objective self can withhold this transmission of the vibration of its soul sphere from the intuitional observation of the technician. It acts independently of the will of man. It is the man as he stands in the scale of evolutionary influence; and that is what the technician is concerned with, not with the outer personification which is often but a misleading caricature of the self. However involved and theoretical this may appear to some, it is true in the experience of the technician. He knows immediately and fairly accurately—I do not say perfectly, since we are not speaking of perfections, and there are many grades of the technique—the personality and the soul measures of those he contacts and would assist, whether occultly or in any other way, and is able to apply to them that aspect of his accumulated wisdom and experience which they instinctively seek. Nor am I referring to specific methods of mental influence known to psychology. These have their place in certain phases of life experience and may be used for good and legitimate purposes; but the power and efficiency of the technique are neither derived from nor stand in need of them. There is a psychology of the soul which the aspirant evolves within himself for his own use as he advances in the technique; and while the qualifications are the same which produce the cardinal qualities indispensable in every aspirant, the higher psychological procedure evolved in the soul through the usage of the technique is an individual and peculiar one, and will vary in character according to the Master sphere he contacts and the kind of work he is fitted to undertake.

The aspirant who has the above qualities well developed will undoubtedly in some measure have the power of appeal to the soul in men. In the course of his discipline on the path he will have discovered in what way he is to present his knowledge and experience in the service of his fellowmen. The technique has manifold lines of usage, and during the process of unfoldment his particular line will be unmistakably pointed out. It may be in his business relationships or in

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his professional life that the influence of the Master will prevail upon him to work with and upon his associates in higher and beneficent forms; or, if he has that mental constitution whereby he is competent to teach and guide others along the path, he may find a field of action for the technique in a school of occultism or with a group of students, to which he is allocated through Karmic alliance. One thing is certain. The technique will be unfolded only in the man who has throughout been steadily bent upon giving himself unreservedly to the betterment of human lives, who has pledged himself in mind and heart, and studied and struggled with the whole force of the soul to be worthy of the attention of the Master and to become his efficient representative. Such a man will never lack the power of appeal, but will augment it at every step of advance.



DELUSIONS AND THE TECHNIQUE

IT WILL BE at once apparent to those students who have carefully considered the foregoing reflections and are able to grasp intuitively the meaning and potency of this higher experience, that we are dealing with the advent in consciousness of a spiritual force of which comparatively few are aware. I am making no singular personal claims, nor am I depicting the exponent of the technique as one who exercises a prerogative so remote and hidden in character and function as to mystify and perplex the aspirant who is sincerely seeking the Master. Nevertheless, I am dealing with that which is so emphatic and operative in its expression and yet so recondite and disputable to those who are inclined to adopt a critical attitude, since there is much in it that may appear austere and unattractive to those who prefer theoretical knowledge to practical developments, that only in a few among recognized students of the occult shall we expect to meet with its development

A statement of this kind will no doubt lead to a good deal of serious individual self-questioning and examination, which is good and an excellent aid to self-knowledge. Happy is the student who can exercise a just discrimination during the process of introspection and rightly adjudge his position on the path of attainment. That self-appraisal should give him confidence and humility; confidence through the realization that he has made much progress and notes that the qualifications necessary for higher work are steadily ripening within him; humility in the realization of how much is to be done and overcome before he can bear those responsibilities which the Master demands that he shall consciously accept, with all their necessary implications, and be competent to discharge largely upon his own initiative.

A Theosophical leader once remarked that his society was, from top to bottom, full of sponges. I have no wish to cast the slightest reflection upon any body of students. I write dispassionately and uncritically, and introduce the above remark because it throws out in bold relief a profound truth which has a direct bearing upon the subject of delusions which hinders the development of the technique. Indeed, the remark might well apply to many groups of students other than Theosophical. Undoubtedly, there is a large number of so-called occult students who are literally but passive receivers of doctrine which they have neither force nor initiative to apply in any practical sense.

One of the greatest delusions prevalent among students is, that by imbibing doctrine from the lips of a teacher thoroughly indoctrinated they will in no long time be suddenly accepted by a Master and be raised to some nebulous level of sanctity and to the accomplishment of miraculous works. It is sufficient to ask of these students, can they instance any such cases of miraculous intervention and divine exaltation among themselves? If they point to some of the outstanding personalities in the vanguard of certain movements, their delusion is twofold. All such instances of exceptional development on the path are clearly exponents of the technique who have trodden the long and arduous way of soul culture, work and service. It is lamentable to note the one-sided conception that obsesses students in this matter; and the sooner their hope is shattered regarding it the sooner will they begin to take the first serious steps already outlined.

A large percentage of these same students are entirely devoted to what is called the Eastern path of development. No intelligent person having knowledge of that path would decry it. It has produced saints and saviours in abundance. We know that some of the great Masters have taken this path. But a rigid adherence to it by the Western student is fraught with manifold dangers and as often as not productive of unbalanced development. We have only to remember that the Western aspirant is not constitutionally fitted for the rapid demonstration which is comparatively easy of attainment in the East. The ordinary well-known obstacles and hindrances on the path have a far greater range of difficulty for the Western aspirant, since his very constitution is an

obstacle over and above the specific obstructional tendencies to be eliminated by aspirants of any nationality. The grasp of the science is not intuitive in the case of the Western aspirant as it is in the Eastern. So much is evident to those who follow the questionings and endeavours of the former in his studies. If then the aspirant in the West is breaking almost entirely new ground in pursuing the science and needs so much encouragement and prompting and guidance in his study and effort, it cannot be amiss to assert that he should be required to demonstrate unusual facility before he may hope to reap any real benefits from sincere application. And it may be pertinently asked, what chance has a passive imbiber of doctrine of meeting successfully the ordeals of the exacting Eastern path? To think of being able to do so reveals a basic ignorance of first principles.

This applies equally to the aspirant on the Western path, or who combines the methods of the East and West. Every aspirant for attainment must at some stage or other master the technique and become a living exponent of it. There is no compulsion for him to master it quickly. He may enjoy such personal satisfaction as he can from a theoretical knowledge of occultism and leave the practical issues to the future; but if he does aspire to recognition by the Master, this basic ignorance must be thoroughly eliminated. For observe what a vast amount of development, what a range of experience is involved in effecting the necessary discrimination, how full and balanced a conception is requisite in the man who is using the technique consciously even in its rudimentary stages. Any idea of a short cut to the goal is immediately ruled out. The first thing, in fact, towards overcoming ignorance is a clear idea of the work to be done; and if the work is long and difficult there is no virtue in fooling ourselves with the soothing notion that it is a simple matter and of short duration—the passive existence of a sponge.

No student who has given time and labour to the science can say other than that it calls for a soul of distinct calibre and of mental qualities of no mean order. Even the initial intuitive perception of a long task ahead requiring the cooperation of the whole man is of vast importance; because if that is present, is fully accepted, and there

succeeds a strong assent of the mind to achieve and a determination to master the steps of discipline—that, even at the threshold, is the voice of the Self sounding emphatically though inarticulately within the aspiring cosmos of the man and is a prophecy of success. To some this perception comes at the threshold of study with clear and strong and sudden emphasis; others have nothing of the nature of this egoic impetus, but often enough only a very vague and misleading perception of the work before them. In the case of the former there is present a body of latent growth and but little application and preliminary study is necessary to set the aspirant firmly on the path with a surprisingly comprehensive conception of method and line of approach; in the latter, a well-defined plan of study has to be entered upon and the basic facts of occultism assimilated until a sufficient reason for prolonged future effort is seen and an interest strong enough is awakened to steadily pursue the initial stages of discipline. If the assertion of his will is sufficiently powerful to urge him on to the greater discoveries of self, the preliminary settlement which he will experience in the personality will ultimately pass; a miniature spiral of evolution will have been achieved, which will give birth to successive and wider spirals of related experience. A peculiarity of these advances is that they are nearly all concerned with daily life and a keener and more exacting sense of living. The whole process of advancement, it seems, inheres in an increasing stress or tension in the vehicles of expression, until the observant aspirant comes to realize that it is mainly in new and finer contacts, in unlooked-for rearrangements of circumstances, in perplexities and trials of the mental life, in unexpected responsibilities naturally opening upon him, most of which appear totally unrelated to any glory of spiritual conquest, that the path to knowledge and right action and the overcoming of ignorance, in the occult sense, consists. Well is it for him if he can seize this truth quickly and accept and encourage its beneficent working out upon every plane of his being; if he can realize that it is his own individual Karma and none other that compels.

The delusion of inaction as a factor in occult attainment which arises principally from a basic ignorance of first principles, merits a conclusive judgment. Reading alone will not dissipate it, nor, aspiration

alone, nor alone the quiet mind which refuses to engage and participate in the exigencies of life and circumstances, nor yet devotion to an ideal or a personality. It is by continual demonstration of the force of the soul, by the assertion of life upon every plane, by compelling vibration to answer vibration in any aspect of the tumultuous worlds of form, and giving all this in essence back into the playing hands of the inner man as experience known and assimilated, to enlighten and ameliorate and bless.

Another very prevalent delusion is that connected with the overcoming of the sense of personality. Students spend precious hours affirming and willing the personality out of existence. Let the serious aspirant observe, that his early efforts in the science of attainment will increase the sense of personality to an unusual degree rather than blot it out, that is, if he goes whole-heartedly to work. It is obvious that in his first attempts to overcome the basic delusion of ignorance he must take knowledge; and if he does that rightly the range of his personal vibration will extend in every direction. Should he disallow that extension and resort to the common practice of denying reality to his personality, he may ultimately be reborn upon a higher plane, but without power or initiative and with nothing of practical use to give to his fellow men. It sounds trite enough to say that before we can really know a thing we must have intimate knowledge of it; yet there exist countless students of the occult who base their ascent to the spiritual upon a dreamy and weakening denial of that which it is their primary business to investigate and understand from every possible aspect.

I consider it of first importance for the aspirant that he should take an inventory of his mental faculties with scrupulous exactness. He should know their range and strength and the particular line of activity which they naturally follow with ease and facility, and so indicate his vocation in life. If, for instance, he has strong faculties for certain types of literature, art or science, there is the mental foundation and the point of departure which will later indicate his path of approach in occult work. This should be obvious, yet it is not sufficiently observed; and through the lack of this elementary knowledge of self the aspirant will often say enthusiastically that he only wishes for illumination and

sits down to meditate upon the self, while the personality receives no specialized attention. There is only one remedy for this hypnotic and fatal condition. Know the personality and make it a tool of power. When we know a thing and have taken the measure of its action and reaction, then it can be used with telling effect. In this case, it is the mind we have to know, with its faculties of judgment, imagination and reason, the skillful combination of these in resourceful daily action in a multitude of common and original adaptations in life. We want the two-edged sword of the mind firmly in our grip, to advance or retreat on the instant, and to apply to any problem directly and adequately. The action of such a mind is a joy to behold; and it is so because every faculty has been awakened to the limit of its function and operates individually or in conjunction as its developed technique directs.

This idea of the use of the personality may be brought to a focus in the observation of a maxim of a master mind, the Rosicrucian Bacon. He says: "There are and can exist but two ways of investigating and discovering truth. The one hurries on rapidly from the senses and particulars to the most general axioms, and from them, as principles and their supposed indisputable truth, derives and discovers the intermediate axioms. This is the way now in use. The other constructs its axioms from the senses and particulars, but ascending continually and gradually, till it finally arrives at the most general axioms, which is the true but unattempted way" Now the continual and gradual ascent is the method for the aspirant to adopt in recording and studying the accumulated impressions received from the senses and particulars of mental action and reaction, so that his knowledge of personality and its relationship to the worlds of form and mind shall be built up soundly and solidly and yield a reliable experience of his position in the world of men and his evolutionary value as related to other mentalities. The Self must have a powerful instrument to work with, a body of information through realized contacts. For of what use would be the thoughts and intentions of the Self to an unorganized and feeble mind? Where would be the basis for the right discrimination and use of these? I command this reflection to the ardent deniers of the existence of personality. I grant that there are instances on record of brief and intermittent contact with the Self in those of weak and unbalanced

mentality, and I am not sure but that they have been more a menace than a help in the matter of the concepts they have disseminated in the field of knowledge in which they considered themselves authorities. But the orderly unfoldment of the technique which is based upon the science of the soul is calculated to eliminate this kind of spiritual abortion and specifically indicates a sane and practical method leading to that personality completion whereby the Self may be scientifically contacted and the will of the Master be done.

A further delusion is that by forced and profound breathing the Self is to be contacted and known, and long stages of the path taken by violence through athletic procedure. The grave dangers attendant upon this kind of practice should be obvious to every clear-thinking and discriminative student. As an illustration I might cite the lectures of Vivekananda on Yoga. For a long time these lectures were a standard work in the West. The author of them was undoubtedly a practical yogi; but, like a master of his subject, he set out with a stride so bold and with such commanding authority, that at first sight it appeared the easiest matter in the world to enjoy the bliss of Samadhi in a few months. My opinion is that he was an incompetent teacher for Western students. He came to the West with the Eastern ideal of Yoga flaming in his heart, but he failed to adjust his ideas sufficiently to the Western mind. No one could doubt his devotion, his vision, or his sincerity, nor of his own practical realization and attainment in the science; but his pace was too swift, his ideas too general and luminous, to be successfully worked out to safe practical issues. He did not adjust to the measure of Western thinking sufficiently to be a patient and sympathetic educator of students in the West. He dazzled his hearers, and confuses most of his readers, in spite of the enlightenment he brought with him; so much so, that the majority of those who have taken up practical Yoga under his guidance become discouraged by reason of the sheer magnitude of the ideal, towards which, through this or that inability or incapacity, or want of fitting circumstance, they have made scant progress. Other and more recent writers have recommended similar practices for the attainment of Samadhi, or liberation, many of which are totally unfitted for the Western student and if rigidly adhered to would mean positive disaster. One of these

writers counsels his readers to continue breathing practice until a duration for inhalation and exhalation is reached of between four and eight minutes. I have known a student to take breathing exercises and complain of pains in the body and affection in the head. If nature's warning is not sufficient, who can help him? Yet students are foolish enough to force their vehicles to the three-minute indispensable breath of a yogi teacher who finds the task hereditarily easy and therefore advertises it as a passport to the Union.

A famous occult teacher once confessed that at one time he became enthusiastic about the work of Vivekananda and applied himself strenuously to breathing exercises with a view to rapid development; but within a brief time he found his etheric body vibrating to such an abnormal degree that he felt himself being lifted out of the physical and walking upon air. It was some time before he became normal and properly adjusted to his physical body. This is but one instance of the extreme danger of following a teacher like Vivekananda without the strongest common sense as to time, place and values, and a wise discrimination pertaining to the general teachings of Yoga. For the average Western student with a breathing capacity of about twenty seconds for inspiration and expiration before applying himself to any conscious extension in connection with occult discipline, it may be suggested that he can only safely extend his capacity to fifty-or sixty-seconds duration by gradual practice covering a period of between one and three years. I refer entirely to the physical aspect and the effect upon the lungs and chest muscles. From the inner aspect, a breathing capacity extended from twenty to sixty seconds effects many important changes; and unless there is a natural or long habituated mental control, a student will be practically helpless before the host of psychic and mental influences evoked by the accelerated vibration in his vehicles. I see no danger in his attempting such an increased capacity within the limits mentioned, on taking up the discipline, provided he is spiritually aspiring, has a sound sense of mental proportion, and is devoted to the idea of service. The extension in itself is but a branch of athletics.

The effects of scientific breathing upon the emotional and mental vehicles call for careful study and calculation. Some aspirants are of so powerful an emotional calibre that anything in the nature of

stimulation, even of ordinary physical exercise, vivifies the whole personality, and a well-directed suggestion would be sufficient to carry them headlong. So it is with those of very active and acute mentation. Under the exercise of profound breathing, thought forms of increasing magnitude and force possess the mental field, and unless these are consciously held and disposed of under the supervision of a certain degree of Self contact, such students become the easy victims of undisciplined intellect.

We live in an age of short cuts to supremacy, which are none other than a species of hot-house development, lacking stability, fundamental experience, or sincerity as a basic reality. One well-born and self-trained devotee who has laid his aspiring soul upon the altar of life through the years and struggled upward through light and darkness, intent upon being a force on the side of evolution and a blessing to others, will often do more real work for the Master in a day than the short-cut aspirant will accomplish in a lifetime. It is the law. We can only build upon what we have; we can communicate only what we are. The bane of our day is the want of sincerity. The short cut is a form of insincerity; it lacks the force for a true development; it is content with superficial achievement. But insincerity in the occult aspirant is a sin, and failure is its reward. It is living the life of the soul after its own law in the everyday world and taking each step of the path with infinite care and patience and humility, that unfolds in the aspirant the fine art of the technique and initiates him into the sphere of the Master.



IMPERSONALITY AND THE TECHNIQUE

THE FORMULA, “KNOW Thyself;” has been paraphrased into countless other formulas, all of which are familiar to the student of occult literature, and most of which throw more or less light and meaning upon the primary one. These formulas have a deeply cosmic import and often prove a little disconcerting when reflectively analyzed. To know oneself from the occult point of view is a comprehensive matter and one with which most of us will be well occupied for at least the term of our present incarnation. We must realize that true self-knowledge cannot begin until some degree of egoic response has been attained. Up to that point in evolution our knowledge is theoretical and speculative.

The attainment of self-knowledge is mainly the demonstration of an increasing measure of impersonality. Impersonality is the secret doctrine of practically all of the occult classics. No matter how great is the appeal of their beauty and their desirableness to the intellect or to the esthetic sense, we remain but in the outer court until impersonality becomes a factor in practical life. It is usually preceded by a long cycle of development and experience of the most varied and often perplexing character. There is a world of inner experience to be garnered before we can become living exponents of the fact; and only a genuine occult discipline compels that experience and leads naturally and lawfully to a proper demonstration.

Impersonality has many degrees. They range from the minor detachments exercised by the aspirant to that extreme spiritual aloofness so striking and natural in the adept. In whatever degree manifested, there is in its exercise something exceedingly arresting and influential

to those who witness it. Its nature is so unique, so contrary to the well-known laws of personal expression in the world, that the aspirant engaged in its culture is quickly, though tacitly, distinguished from his fellows. It is a departure from the rule of common life; it originates from a plane outside of that of everyday thought and observation; its manifestations are such as the ordinary consciousness almost refuses to sanction; it makes us aware of the divinity overshadowing human consciousness and invites to a heart surrender to its beneficent promptings. It upsets our preconceived ideas of thought and action, rejects the limitations and pride of the intellectual self and falsifies well-grounded maxims of a liberal education. And herein is the reason that so few are able or willing to enter seriously upon a culture the nature of which has a more or less forbidding aspect and is opposed to so much that is firmly established and prized in the personal life.

Yet we are considering a condition, a force, which is of supreme value in the evolution of consciousness and is imperatively demanded in the technician. Nothing so coordinates the faculties and enhances the true prestige of man as this unfolding sense of higher perception and values. A multitude of anxieties and perturbations which hitherto held undisputed sway in the soul lose their tyranny and pass away. Not that we forsake the arena of personality and deny the constant interplay of forces therein, but that we stand at a remove and survey these from a point of ascension, with a new power of self-direction and insight, and have the ability to harmonize opposing vibrations. The consciousness of this descending harmony and peace has a wonderful effect upon the disposition of the mental faculties, and its increasing momentum enables us to achieve swiftly and one-pointedly the tasks allotted to them. Indeed, it is only at this stage of development that we come to realize the true strength and beauty of mental action and create after the law of the spiritual man. Hitherto, we were very much at the mercy of the mind; it reigned over us with the authority of a tyrant; we were marshalled hither and thither at the behest of thought and often involved by it in painful uncertainty and confusion. But the dawn of the sense of impersonality reverses this condition of affairs. We consciously and deliberately impose the will of the Self upon the activities of the various faculties with marked results. The immense possibilities therefore which open before the man who has entered upon this phase of evolution are obvious.

Some of the difficulties which have to be surmounted on the way to the attainment of impersonality have been considered in the previous chapters. We shall feel little relish for the prolonged and conscientious labour necessary for its development, for the struggle with the secret forces ruling our personal life, until we have suffered all too long under their stern domination. There is a definite point in evolution when we become acutely conscious that we must come to judgment within, investigate and understand the opposing factors in our constitution and devote ourselves seriously to the task of self-discipline. Even this preliminary self-cognition brings reflections of not the happiest kind. We have traveled along the path of least resistance and taken life much as it came; we have not felt it incumbent upon us to regard too critically the swift stream of thought and emotion, the action and reaction of these upon self and others. But with this awakening the sense of security vanishes. The stable centre of consciousness around which our life hitherto revolved and to which all our activities were related becomes decentralized. Study and meditation have produced their inevitable consequences. The Self has responded to aspiration and made us aware of its existence and supremacy. The first clear sounding of the note of the Self in the personal life is of great importance. We become conscious of a division, of a painful discordance between the two. The new and stronger vibration causes a certain disruption, a disorganization among the mental faculties, which pass for the first time under the acute observation of a spiritual critic. And, conformably with the maxim of occult science that expansion of consciousness induced by the advent of spiritual truth produces pain and unrest, we realize the responsibility devolving upon us to take up the task of self-conquest and establish the power of the Self as the dominant factor in our life in the interest of the general evolution.

It is not a simple matter to put aside the physical, emotional and mental vehicles of expression, to remain apart and unhampered by their vibration, poised in the clear and undivided consciousness of the Self. Yet the difficulty of the task is a wise provision. It is interesting to note in this connection the method of instruction adopted in the Gita. The method of preparation of the disciple taught therein was not a simple one, at once received and understood, which imparted the qualifications for recognition. The instruction is many-sided, each

presentation lifting one veil after another and causing to pass from the pupil one vice and weakness after another, until we have the final declaration at the moment of realization: "Destroyed is my delusion" Now the point to be noted is this. During the series of presentations of different aspects of the Wisdom the whole nature of the pupil passed under review and discipline, resulting in the acquirement of all the necessary qualifications for initiation. Let us suppose that some magical act had been substituted for that gradual unfoldment in him of all the powers and weaknesses of his nature, whereby he had momentarily realized the Self apart from the perishable vehicles, would that have proved sufficient for the arduous work of the path? Assuredly not. The pupil is shown at the outset the goal to be reached through an organic process of unfoldment of a very special nature, and several grades of the technique are involved in it. It is only as this process is consciously undertaken and the vehicles have taken the depth of human experience and been raised to a higher power that real impersonality is achieved. It takes every phase of personal power into its province and marshals it to the main event. A magic life has to touch the heart and brain even to rightly comprehend it; and only the constantly accelerated pulse of that inner life can meet the demands of it. It evolves naturally in the vehicles of the aspirant who insists upon steady and ordered progress, with a willingness to accept unreservedly all that progress entails. Categorical denial of the personality is an aimless and unprofitable procedure, because very real and persistent are the attachments of the three vehicles in spite of their relative unreality. The surgeon's knife is a danger here. The only safe instrument is a patient and loving comprehension, even a willingness to be in bondage to the contacts of personality for the time being for the sake of a perfected experience. The aspirant in whom the technique is developing is as simple, natural and expressive as nature itself. There is something so intensely human and spontaneously affectionate in him that wherever he goes there is immediate recognition and understanding on his part of every contact, and a certain response of all to him. He confronts the world as a sane and developed personality, with the Self resting in the serenity and peace of the Master's heart. He has a heart full to overflowing with the incommunicable burden of the heart of humanity, united firmly with precision of thought, stable emotion and a hand instant in service.

The technique, then, is not a theory, but an intensely practical thing; and while the whole personality is involved in its use, the technique itself is impersonal in character. "He who is desirous to learn how to benefit humanity," says the Master, "and believes himself able to read the characters of other people, must begin first of all to learn to know himself, to appreciate his own character at its true value" The first thought of many an aspirant on reading this will be: But I do not know that I have particularly regarded my development on the path in this light. I am not much concerned about reading the characters of other people in order to learn how to benefit humanity. I am anxious to contact a Master first so that he may teach and guide me personally and set me some great work to accomplish. That attitude is a common one. Students read and meditate, and wait for the Master. The Master also waits. And I fail to understand how any student can ever hope to obtain any response whose life conforms to the above attitude. The aspirant in the West is not called to a life of contemplation; he is called emphatically, through the unique environing conditions under which he lives, this peculiarly important point of racial evolution, to a life of ever stronger personal action in service. Impersonality is a wonderful thing; but to strive after it through contemplation in a life of inaction is to miss absolutely, through wrong interpretation of the highest teaching of occultism, the strength and beauty of true spiritual culture. I beg the aspirant to turn back and consider the opening thoughts of this treatise on the master artist. Can we conceive such an artist expressing a high degree of mental and manual technique through simply having contemplated his goal through the years, however passionately and one-pointedly, without subjecting himself to the most crucial labors in perfecting every instrument of expression to that end? Can we conceive him as having simply spent his time in contemplating a master artist, with the idea in mind that all the manifold stages of discipline leading up to his fine mastery would be somehow mysteriously covered during the contemplation, and so in a few years, he too, would attain to the same facility and stand in the rank of master artists? The idea is, of course, absurd. One sometimes meets with students who have read voraciously a library of occult literature yet who are profoundly disappointed because, as they say, they are not being "used" On questioning them as to what they are doing in order

to effect any contact as a preliminary to being used, they confess they have no time for practical discipline or work. The obvious comment upon this attitude is: their attainment on the path will measure up to their personal effort, and no more. As well might a man expect to become a first-class journalist through perusing the daily newspapers, as expect to know anything experimentally of the technique of the Master by merely reading books on occultism.

No man can attain and advance in the technique who has not a deep experience in knowledge and life. Says a Master: "Read and study for there is an object" "Study and prepare" Preparation, in relation to the technique, and in connection with doing the Master's work, means experience of life. To serve, the aspirant must know; he is to take knowledge in the fullest sense of the path from those who have trodden it. But this knowledge is not to be regarded as a mere adjunct to his ordinary mental content; it is to be an actual expression of the soul, an impassioned and fervent expression supporting and animating every other mental possession he has, an expression of the soul which is nothing less than a conscious force which spontaneously and promptly infuses itself into every phase of life activity. I put it in this way so as to rule out absolutely the lifeless method so often adopted of simply adding fact to fact for mechanical repetition and to point the utter futility of this for attainment of the technique. A fine intellectual grasp of occult truth is commendable and necessary; thinking and dialectical skill possess a magnetism of their own and may not be neglected; yet these are but one aspect of the first cardinal quality we have considered—versatility of mental character. All knowledge must be translated into life: It must be passed down, figuratively speaking, from the intellectual level into the mystical recesses of the heart, to be felt and lived and expressed as experience in the very life blood of the vestures of personality.

I said that preparation, in relation to the technique, means experience of life. Obviously, I do not mean experience of life in the ordinary sense. A man of big business usually has a vast and valuable experience of life, yet his aptitude for the technique may be less than that of a devotional maiden who meditates daily upon the beatitudes of Christ and dispenses simple blessings to those in need. In every possible

way experience of life must be sought by the aspirant, but it must be appropriated and interpreted by the inner self. For at this stage of his endeavours the man will be working intimately and in a very special way with his accumulated Karma, and it is this fact that gives added importance to his daily experience. Should he fail to keep this fact in mind when meeting experiences of an unusual and perhaps exceptionally testing character, and interpret them from the ordinary worldly standpoint, he would miss the true value of the greatest factors in his development. He would resent and oppose that which his strong initial efforts have invoked. This is undoubtedly where many aspirants fail to equip themselves swiftly for the technique. They demand knowledge of the path and strenuously seek it. They cultivate steadily the occult attitudes in their mental life and feel a certain satisfaction with their growth in knowledge. At length this knowledge becomes a strong and stable mental content which insists upon expression in the personal life. The vibration of the inner personality takes a higher measure and becomes a point of attraction for higher forces. Unconsciously, the man has become the centre of a new sphere of higher mentation which attracts to him a new order of experience necessary for the expression of the vibration which has now become stabilized in his vehicles; and those experiences will have the profoundest significance for him as related to his further advancement. Should he interpret them from the narrow and limited standpoint of the personal self, they will often appear meaningless and cruelly retarding; whereas if they are regarded as the inevitable concomitants of benignant law working for strength and wisdom, he will willingly and expertly make continually fresh adjustment which the higher life-rhythms demand.

If the aspirant can accept this view of the necessity of meeting courageously and dealing firmly with aspects of exacting Karma which his earnest demand for development will surely bring to him, any elements of fearful expectancy, which ordinarily assail him in the face of unusual experiences in life, will gradually be replaced by an attitude of mind akin to that of the scientific investigator who observes phenomena with mental collectedness, intent only upon adding some further indisputable fact to discovered data. What more fascinating field of discovery can we enter upon than this of self-revelation, in which every step of advance equips us to handle more surely the work

of the Master in the world of men? Frankly, it is a task only for the mentally bold. A discoverer must be prepared to accept what comes. There can be no antedating of experience. In this fact alone is seen the possibility of unique personal culture. The invisible impinges more and more strongly upon the visible and forces the pace of life. The even path of the lower levels is transformed into one of rugged yet steady ascent. The old and well-known landmarks disappear and the only guide now is the awakening inner sense and the words of wisdom, fast in the memory, of those who have passed this way. This is one of the hard points of the path where we have to realize more than ever before the value of personal inner growth and reliance upon the lessons of experience. "Seek the way," says the Master, "by testing all experience" It is profoundly true that all experience will also test the aspirant. It will not be some exceptional or miraculous experiences, but just that of everyday life arising out of his immediate vocation and duties and personal contacts; yet a new meaning will be reflected from it, a new value will accompany it, a significant challenge will be offered by it, all demanding a higher adjustment and a unique handling in the light of the knowledge he has attained.

Let us consider a concrete instance of this. The aspirant to the technique has attained a commendable accession of occult knowledge and is using it privately or in group work with others. He seeks to exert his influence in the way of service in assisting those less developed than himself either through correspondence or personal contact. In no way will he more quickly adjudge the precise value of his own attainments and realize his own limitations. It will give him an entirely new understanding of himself and his fellow men. This work of service is absolutely essential to the man qualifying for the technique. He will never know himself or others so long as he simply imbibes knowledge and remains mute; yet the moment he essays to teach and help others on the path he will be thrown back upon his own resources in a surprising manner. He will realize how inadequate is occult reading in itself and the amenities of scholarship. He will find himself face to face with aspiring souls, each with its burning problems of a personal nature and demanding ripe understanding and sympathetic handling. Aspiring souls in evolution hate platitudes, and if these are all we have to offer them we are ill-equipped for leadership and know nothing of

the depth and intricacies of the technique. The aspirant's ability in this respect will be immediately demonstrated when he essays to deal at first hand with the manifold problems of other souls who turn to him for assistance. It may perhaps be said that a man will not be called to a task of this nature if he is not ready for it. It is true that the man who is really evolving in the technique is usually of this ripeness of faculty and does not offer himself except upon an insistent urge for the task. It is nonetheless true that many lack discrimination in this matter and offer themselves either in enthusiasm and without any sound sense of the qualifications needed, or at the behest of others whose discrimination is little better than their own and who are actuated by some kind of personal interest. But the unprepared candidate will soon be undeceived. Those who seek supervision and teaching have an unerring intuition of the relative value of those they interrogate. The method and basis of his response will infallibly declare themselves, since on this level of evolution it is not simply the spoken or written word that signifies, but a psychically perceptible vibration which informs the word and gives it momentum and enduring influence. This need not be insisted upon. It is as palpable as that specific and original content which distinguishes the classic and sets it forever apart from the commonplace.

Let the aspirant to the technique ponder upon this fact. Those who sincerely seek his help and supervision are very often not those who are ignorant of the subject dealt with, but those who have the material before them in one form or another as well as himself, and would therefore appear to be seeking unnecessary assurance. The explanation of this is, that the seeker requires the same truth adapted personally and sympathetically to the then existing particular problem of his life and applied with understanding and insight on the part of the helper, with concrete example and inspiration from personal experience bearing upon the problem. Now there is one kind of helper who sees nothing further necessary in such a case than to consult his books and give back fact for fact what some teacher has said on the subject and then feel that he has made an able response. I have been the recipient of this kind of response from so-called leaders, and have never been disposed to consult them again. It is common to meet with these leaders in the occult world; but little of importance can they give beyond the established and orthodox text of doctrine known and accessible to

practically every student who might consult them. Practically the only qualification they possess for assuming the position of teachers is that derived from the reading of occult doctrine and speaking out of the abundance of their facts. It cannot be gainsaid that there is merit in this acquisition. It is infinitely better to be so informed than to be ignorant. Moreover, there exists a foundation of knowledge to build upon, which the technique itself will demand! But in the technique it is not, nor will it ever inspire the young aspirant to great achievement. He can read doctrine for himself, and a good deal better in his own way.

In introducing here these higher aspects of experience required in the technician I may appear to be digressing. Impersonality and experience are, however, intimately related; since impersonality can only come of a full experience, and experience, in the occult sense, and as the main factor in the demonstration of the technique, derives all its real strength and value from a pure and impersonal attitude. The technique of the Master is a coordinated expression of the inner personality which has assimilated and spiritualized the experience gathered by the several objective selves of past existences, and now, at the point of right understanding and use and having merited certain guidance and inspiration from the divine psychic plane, is able to speak and act for others from its own level of attained ascension and independently of any personal considerations and interests of the objective consciousness. At this stage the technician accepts the problems of his fellow men as his own. For the time being those problems are verily his problems. His sole ambition is to throw his light upon them to the extent that those perplexed may take a higher and more detached view of the relations involved in them in connection with their immediate progress. True impersonality alone enables the technician to do this. And the only infallible criterion of success for him in this task is the unqualified assurance of those he seeks to assist that he has wisely and effectively ministered to urgent need and facilitated their advancement on the path.



THE MAGIC OF THE TECHNIQUE

FOR THE YOUNG aspirant the technique of the Master is often veiled in an atmosphere of glamour and romance. For the man qualifying for discipleship the atmosphere is cleared, and the technique is realized as a force of the soul expressed in the terms of keener living. It is interesting to read the many presentations of writers on the subject of the magical power of the Masters and to allow the imagination full rein in the realm of wonder and miracle; and in good time it is well to put them aside and calculate the present force of the soul in order to discern what range of application it possesses for working upon other lives in the humble way of service. One could almost wish that a good deal that has been written on the powers of the Masters had never passed into the hands of immature aspirants, since it breeds a sense of easy conquest in the most difficult of all sciences and inspires a belief in present personal power which does not exist. It is surprising how much an aspirant sometimes considers himself capable of achieving in the way of magical power, even before the personality has been initiated into the first stages of realization of the force resident in the soul, which makes advance possible. It is a fact in the experience of the older aspirant that once the magic of the soul has been grasped by the personality, the soul steadily dominates and can be trusted to carry forward the training of the man. But the credulity before mentioned—a credulity fraught with danger when acted upon—which is common among those on the early stages of the path arises entirely because the personality has not been self-initiated into the magic force of the soul; and until this point is reached any dominant utility on the part of the soul remains for the future.

The self-initiation of the personality into the magic force of the soul which makes possible the application of the technique is the problem before the aspirant; and the credulity which is often so marked a characteristic in him is due to non-discrimination in that he is prone to apply to this study of the science of the soul the same overbearing confidence, feeling of certitude and expectation of immediate results habitual with him in connection with matters pertaining to his personal or professional life. Here we have a trinity of factors of undeniable value and of first importance in the character, confidence, certitude and expectation of results, all which will be demanded in the technician and in harmonious union, in the utilization of the force of the soul, but which, in the inexperienced aspirant will require to be cultured through a period of long duration in the most ordinary affairs, as well as in the exigencies, of everyday life. It is interesting to note, and it is a part of one's occult education to thoroughly realize it, that these basic qualities in the aspirant which are liable to foster in him all kinds of exaggerated ideas of his personal possibilities, are slowly transmuted under occult discipline through the years and become actual powers in his hands for skillful right action. But this is never so for the mere wishing for it. Indeed, it is a revelation to the technician what keen and profound experience has been necessary in order that the magic of the soul should be grasped by the personality and utilized in the work of the Master. And the point I would emphasize is, that it is the experience of life which has been the main factor in effecting the transmutation, and that this is one of the last things the aspirant is likely to appreciate.

The position is this. The aspirant enters upon a cycle of occult study, no matter in what particular school or under what name, and the inspiring and liberating effect of the new knowledge carries him a good deal further in imagination than his reason has grasped or his soul experienced, and upon this illusion of the imagination is based his expectation of immediate results. I have a case in mind, where an aspirant, having gone a little way in the knowledge of the science, expected to demonstrate per-feet health in the body at will, dissipate the mental ills of others likewise, build a swift fortune for himself almost by a magical word of power, and thereby annul every law of Karma decreed and override all experience to be known in his members and destined to force him steadily forward to self-mastery.

His programme of effort was founded upon an illusion of the imagination. This attitude is very common among aspirants and works out inevitably in disappointment at non-achievement and subsequent anxious questionings and probable doubts about the teaching in hand.

One of the first effects of serious application to the science is a certain clarification of mind and intensification of emotion. It is a call to the soul to declare itself in and through the personality; and according to the temperament and application of the aspirant will be the nature of the response to his demand. It may be said that the swifter and stronger the response at this initial stage is, to a greater degree is the likelihood that the imagination will raise up the illusionary expectation of some remarkable demonstration without prolonged and conscientious endeavour. It is granted that in some few cases there may be no illusion about the matter. It is conceivable, and such cases are known, that an aspirant may possess a latent capacity and all the potentialities of a technician, so that even at the initial stage the force of the soul emerges, is grasped by the personality, and the man becomes both pupil and teacher almost simultaneously. But these are exceptional cases and are noted only for guidance and encouragement. In the majority of instances the aspirant is prone to anticipate unusual developments at very little pains, and the disappointment experienced on realizing the truth of things constitutes one of his first tests.

The clarification of mind and intensification of emotion which result from the initial efforts should reveal the need for a revaluation of experience. The settled rhythms of life are not to be changed in a day. The early efforts on the path do but bring into the conscious field a realization of their measure and force. What is their measure and force? That knowledge will be something of a guide as to what may be expected from either brief or prolonged endeavor. Some aspirants have the psychic idiosyncrasy; others have not: some have a predisposition towards the spiritual; others are entirely scientific in nature and aim. The vibratory measure of the personality and the nature of the soul force differ in each. Very often the highly intellectual aspirant will be far less certain of himself at this stage than the mystically minded devotee, in that he imperiously demands results on a higher plane commensurate with the ease with which he produces them on the intellectual plane;

whereas the patient and aspiring devotee, with the spirit of service in his heart, will come to know the force of the soul quickly and experimentally because of a reciprocal response with the Master's sphere. It has been said that the Master tests out the technician in various ways in order to adjust the measure and force of his reactions to certain circumstances and when dealing with specific problems. This is precisely what the aspirant has to do for himself when he sets out on the path of the occult. The established rhythms of his life, which obviously are but the assimilated experiences of action and reaction in the objective and subjective spheres, must be brought under close scrutiny and their value fully appraised in the conscious realm. These rhythms are largely subconscious in their action and influence; and only when he begins to test himself out in regard to them does he realize what a dominant part they have played in his life. That is one of the early awakenings on the path; he finds that his life rhythms are far too circumscribed for the task he sees before him, since they arise almost wholly from an experience hampered by the thoughts of time and space. It is the content of that experience which he has to adjust to the study and work to be done, and augment and deepen it in perfectly commonplace ways in everyday life.

Here we arrive at the crucial point. It takes an aspirant worthy of the name to rightly assess and wisely adjust himself to the exigencies of the initial stages, so that there shall transpire neither eccentric emergencies in mind or manners, arrogant assumption of that which he does not possess, nor impatient demand for that which the law cannot give; but a steady recognition that those life rhythms can only safely be extended by sane and normal living, here and now, in his own place. I am aware that there will appear to be very little of the magical or the sublime in so commonplace a conception. But the fact is, that there is little of the magical or the sublime for the aspirant at this stage. It is his fault if he adorns the word of science put into his hands with the false colours of imagination and straightway thinks in the terms of transcendental miracles. I recently heard of a lady who became devoted to the study of Theosophy. Previously she had been immersed in church work, and was highly appreciated in that sphere. Now she has retreated from the touch of her friends and insists that her real friends are living on a higher plane. There is an instance of inverted growth, a forcing of the

life rhythms beyond the legitimate sphere through a refusal or inability to take their true measure and force, and a subsequent arrestment of sane and orderly development in the personality. This is an extreme instance; but something analogous is often seen in the awakening aspirant, and if it is not quickly offset he is guilty of an offense against occult law and will suffer the penalty for it.

We are all more or less ignorant of the past career of the soul, even after considerable advancement on the path. It requires a highly cultured intuition to discriminate among the contents of consciousness that which is the expression of the enlarging faculties of the present personality and that which is resurrected from the past and offers itself mature and efficient for immediate use. Nor can it be said at what precise point of endeavour this hidden life will begin to emerge. The measure and force of the aspirant's rhythms directly he enters upon his training will, however, in some degree foreshadow the knowledge and growth inherent in the self and awaiting recognition and use. It is to be remembered that the aspirant is vibrating between the condition of soul awareness and form awareness. It seems to me that certain elements of the past career of the soul, entering into the receptive consciousness through willful endeavour on the part of the aspirant are often the cause of this duality. For directly the soul is becoming active, we may be certain that the life rhythms we know so well and are adjusted to will be unconsciously accelerated. This will result not so much from the facts we are putting into the mind, as from the force we are bringing down from the self. There will often emerge into consciousness an accession of knowledge and impelling force beyond anything we have calculated or expected, since we are as little conscious of its source as we are able to adjust to it with skill or wisely utilize it. And it is this essential faculty of former personalities impinging upon the present one that will give rise in the aspirant to a good deal of speculation, and perhaps misgiving, when he feels himself subject to its powerful influences.

This applies to the aspirant at the initial stage. In the case of the man who is graduating in the technique, whose vibration is raised and stabilized and the force of the soul recognized, I believe that the accumulated faculty of the past will be working very strongly in

consciousness. Discrimination in this matter will be no less difficult at this stage; but there will certainly be marked effects in consciousness and so vast an advance, relatively, in the sweep and content of the life rhythms as development proceeds, that the concentrated faculties and abilities of the past career of the soul rise and plead for recognition and expression through him. I can put it no less poignantly than this. You, the aspirant, may think that this is an entirely enviable condition and will welcome the hour when the assertion of it can be made in your case. It is to be welcomed, because it signifies advancement, and it is inevitable at some time. But it brings with it infinite yearning and large responsibility. This may not be invariably so; but I think it is likely to be so where the man has a fine and full mental life. I will refer to a specific type, which will serve to unfold and illustrate the concept I have in mind. This type is an initiate and is well along the path; and the technique of the path is strong and operative in his personality. He is a force on the side of evolution and is aware of it. His service is rich and demanded by many who feel the influence of the Master through his work. He is well balanced and attuned on the inner side. Nothing can turn that man back from the life of the Masters. His life is an inaudible cry to them to hold him up and per-foot him in their strength. But this is not all. There are several personalities playing into the man by virtue of the descent into consciousness of the storied past which is sounding forth from higher planes; and while he plays his humble part within the present circumscription of time and space, and in so doing appears no doubt to his fellow men recollected and able and intent upon the one aim of dedication and service—nor are they mistaken in this—he feels that insistent past striving for expression, too, in an environment which does not provide a medium for it. There is an orator in that man who has stirred men to action; there is a priest who has ministered with the multitude in the temple; there is a musician whose transcripts of harmony come back with haunting emphasis for reiteration. These hidden personalities are with him; they possess his hands, brain and heart, and would live in their fullness again. They must not be slain. They give him keys to the soul of the world and for the interpretation of the hearts of men. That is what I mean by infinite yearning and large responsibility. It is a phase of the double vision; and I conceive it to be one of the hardest stages in the initiate's

progress. It may be that a little further on, when he steps right out into the light, a wonderful adjustment will be made. It may be that, with the soul fully dominant, he will have the power to use each of these several personalities at will as a master, and at will put it aside and remain in peace. There are such instances recorded in occult biography and they indicate a condition of high initiation. It is sufficient to note that the above is a possible problem of the graduate in the technique; and that while this strong sense of duality persists, of the present personality grasping steadily the magical technique of the soul and the combined personalities of the past active within the soul and insisting upon a classic expression, there must inevitably be pain and stress and all the manifest symptoms of the highest ambition pressing forth to mastery in many fields of endeavour.

I believe in the fullest endeavour to recognize and further nurture the awakening mature faculty of past personalities. The statement, "Kill out ambition," would seem to run counter to this belief, but I do not accept it in that sense. If our higher work on the path brings into recognition strong powers and evolved faculties, it would be a sin against my deepest intuition to refuse them the very highest possible expression environment affords. And it is just because the environment of the technician is often such as impedes the expression, that is, through inadequate means at his disposal for it, that pain, stress and a divine yearning accompany him at every stage. I certainly believe that this has a highly educative value for the man. It would seem, too, that it is precisely the rapid growth of the soul which is responsible for this cumulative activity in the mental life, that it throws into the conscious field so many lines of splendid possibility that he cannot see the wisdom or the justice of deliberately turning away from them because they will exact some measure of attention and interest in directions which are not purely spiritual in character. On the contrary, I feel he has no right to neglect to give complete attention to any voice that sounds dominantly in the mental life. I am of course referring to voices of a high and idealistic nature, not to any lower ephemeral voice inconsistent with noble living.

The idea of slaying that which is the finished product of past fervent ambition does not appeal to me. I believe in the completest personality

expression; but in the case of the technician I make this distinction. All those finished products of the past, all this beautiful flowering of the mental life, should minister to the highest. Nor do I doubt there will be the slightest doubt on this point of dedicating all to the Master's use in the man who is consciously grasping the technique of the soul. Whatever he may experience of repression through environment not permitting him to build into finer and more expressive forms ideal products from the past, he will not allow this to deflect him in the least from his central purpose of wielding all he is and has into a greater service for others. Indeed, he has come so far that he cannot do other than this. The cries of other souls reach him and demand some note of his evolving wisdom to dissipate the shadow or strengthen the will, some token of understanding affection and sympathetic response; and knowing his own secret travail in the arena of many conflicting forces, the power will be his to minister with certain effect in practically any instance which comes within his legitimate sphere of development.

The magical technique of the soul is life expressing in larger and more powerful rhythms of vibrational response. It is not a reposeful contemplation calculated to put a man to sleep; it is an awakener which increases his auric intensity to an incalculable degree. It makes the man a focal point for the reception and transmission of most potent influences. Seasons of quietude there must be; but if they leave the conscious field void of reactionary tendencies leading to diverse and increasing activity, the soul still sleeps. The necessary thing is, that he should not permit himself to be turned back by these reactionary tendencies because of any unusual elements in them, nor allow the new impetus in consciousness to divert him from the path of sober and lawful action. For a time he has to maintain the old rhythm in conjunction with the new; since it is in sudden and unbridled enthusiasm and from the inclination for drastic change, that illusive imagination reveals itself and relative failure arises. At this point of awakening it is possible for the personality to begin to grasp the magic of the soul. The results of his coordinated efforts may appear small, but if he is keenly introspective he will realize that there is quite enough for him to take care of and adjust to in the increased vibrational measure set up in the personality. Aspirants to the technique differ in mental calibre. For the majority, a long period must elapse before they become

safely polarized in the conditions produced by even the first degrees of magical force response. Remember, it will *work out* in the individual life, and in each man in a different way. It will be like a strong light thrown across the arena of circumstances, revealing the presence of many secret things which prefer to remain in semi-darkness, quickening living entities to assert their right to dominate and hold the sphere of their native habitation, bringing with it new instruments of thought and action which insist upon immediate use for the refinement and culture of the whole personality of the man. It is indeed a day of judgment between the personality and the soul, and the trial will be long, with able witnesses and powerful advocates on both sides.

It is during this time of trial that the aspirant gradually attains to a use of the technique and becomes a recipient of the magic force of the soul. He will then be receptive to the influence of the Master, will have a right intuitive understanding of the impressions received, and be able to project the imparted ideas suitably for service. Unquestionably, the trial will be far advanced before this objective is in view. The keenest contest will have been fought and won before the man masters the elementary technique of the path and renders willing obedience to Cosmic decision. But, lest the elements of trial should loom too largely before the aspirant anxiously surveying the prospect or the more advanced man who has impelled himself into the centre of the arena and is doubtful of the issue, let it be said for encouragement that there is light and leading for the right man, that the austere silence of the onlooking Powers is not indifference to persistent and well-directed effort, and that every step of achievement is a compelling demand upon the magic of the soul to inform his tongue and descend into his very hands in a kindling fire of noble speech and instant action.



THE MASTERS OF THE TECHNIQUE

LIFE AFFORDS NO greater privilege than to be consciously active in some aspect of the evolutionary effort. Yet the technique of the Master is not easy to understand or to translate into life. He knows too well the extreme rigour of its laws to demand from any soul what it has not yet found the power and insight to give. For the first step is entirely a spontaneous one and arises from a soul vibration which is the culmination of a mature experience in psychic response. This experience is usually not an acquirement of the present incarnation, but exists as subjective memory. The history of its direct attainment is hidden in the past and is now chiefly shown in swift and sure response to occult truth in any form and accompanied with exceptional ability of some nature for its expression. Wherever this response exists and is of a pure and powerful character, there we may discern the silent influence of the Master's realm upon an awakening soul in the far time. He is now ready for the technique of the Master. There will be for him in the scripture of wisdom a geometry of the Spirit which he will delight to ponder and apply to the infinite intricacies of life and character. Humanity, passing and re-passing between the two eternities, will no longer appear to him as an uninteresting pageant and unrelated to himself. The power and passion of its living blood will create a mighty music in his soul, often very hard to be borne. Vibrant harmonies will arise within and sweep to celestial heights; strange chords of sombre pitch will mingle with his song of life. The keen breath of a superhuman strength must have touched both heart and brain to enable him to stand before the knowledge that this symphony of a thousand voices of joy and sorrow is indeed his own collective Karma in martial array opening the gates of self-cognition. It is the Master's response to the soul's endeavour. It is the

Master's technique demonstrating within him, whose inexorable law is: that every latent germ of good and evil in the personal life shall be awakened and declare itself.

Many are the misgivings of the aspirant when that law begins to operate in his life. He may well think that, far from making the good progress expected, he is on the path of retrogression. "It is not enough," says the Master, "to know thoroughly what the disciple is capable of doing or not doing at the time and under the circumstances during probation. We have to know of what he may be capable under different and every kind of opportunities" A stern and exacting law of which the world knows nothing. Therefore the aspirant must be perfectly ready and willing to withstand its criticism. There is nothing intentionally mystifying in the procedure; it is simply a procedure which runs counter to all other procedures he is conversant with and for which he has to develop a rare discrimination. It cannot be expected that he will be entrusted with new and altogether higher responsibilities in a totally different realm of mentation and action unless he has been drastically probed and tested by the searching influences proceeding from a higher plane. New faculties emerge under stress, not in the unexercised nature of him who fears the consequences of self-discovery. There is no smooth and easy path of ascent here. With that assurance the aspirant must be prepared to find the confidence which the Master will certainly demand in him for the initial trials.

The aspirant is here dealing with the intangible self, pregnant with undelivered Karma, and the word of knowledge of the right vibrational value may be all-sufficient to precipitate a phase of circumstances, perplexing and painful, but written largely in Nature's great law and which must be met and understood. It is the conscious effort to progress on the path which is the determining factor. Until that moment life moves slowly onward at its appointed pace. There is an established rhythm in the personality which imparts a relative sense of ease and adjustment in the various contacts of life. The furniture of the mind is well known and thoroughly catalogued, the selection considered excellent and becoming, nothing eccentric or revolutionary, nothing at variance with the preconceived scheme to disturb the aesthetic taste of its possessor. But the counterfeit peace of stagnation

and conformity is not for the pioneer. The tidal wave of evolution will surely agitate the still waters in good time and compel advancement. And if, through fervent aspiration the aspirant deliberately seeks the feet of the Master, sooner or later the trial comes to the soul, and well is it for him who, even through disappointments and tears, recognizes the guiding hand and clasps it in firm faith. The Master has said, "The mass of human sin and frailty is distributed throughout the life of the man who is content to remain an average mortal. It is gathered in and concentrated, so to say, within one period of the life of a disciple—the period of probation"

This period of probation is the paramount period wherein the technique of the Master is so unexpected and penetrating, that the aspirant's intention must be at once steadfast, pure and spiritual to intuitionally grasp and personalize it. It is common to be confronted with the lamentations of aspirants who do not realize that occult progress must be slow, that trials met and overcome are of the very essence of advancement. "The iron rule is," says the Master, "that what powers one gets he must himself acquire". . . "He must not even desire too earnestly or passionately the object he would reach; else the very wish will prevent the possibility of its fulfillment" The aspirant is working upon himself, upon the texture of his vehicles of expression, not upon external matter as an artist fashioning material after his own conception. He has been so accustomed in the physical world to impose his will objectively upon men and things and receive an immediate response, that it is long before he comprehends that the deeper laws of the psychic and spiritual are alien to this. There is no time in occultism. The liquidation of Karma transpires in accordance with an inner law which it is not in our will to hasten or delay. That is why the voice of the Masters, though often foreboding and tinged with warning, is ever a voice of encouragement. He knows that a persistent and courageous spirit will ultimately triumph over all. Has he not, as mortal man, himself triumphed? In every aspirant there is that which is akin to the Master's own immortal nature—the vital, dominant, irresistible seed of immortality which is destined to bloom into adeptship. But adeptship is a starry altitude difficult of attainment. At every step of the way the Master has progressed scientifically and spiritually under the stern imposition of iron rule. Obviously then,

no one is better equipped than he to involve and guide the aspirant through the manifold intricacies of that rule, imperative for his complete knowledge and mastery of personal forces. Only through ceaseless application and after pains incredible do the masters of the arts and sciences attain their superb insight and mastery, and inspire and redeem humanity from the commonplace and trivial, and entrance the dreaming idealist into ecstatic yearning for the Infinite. Only through steadfast service and never-failing aspiration, through love and compassion and sacrifice, through success and failure, through lonely vigil and impassioned admonition, through all the heights and depths of thought and emotion of which the eager heart and the awakened mind is capable, shall we gain a true perspective of the pure and perfect action, and become worthy exponents of, the Master's technique.

We may expect a very marked characteristic in the aspirant as the result of consciously passing through such an eventful inner discipline. He will be spiritually positive. A passive character can never hope to handle the work of the Master. It is not in the nature of things. The master of art uses his vehicle or material of expression with power. He will undoubtedly be responsive to superior influences and often appear to be a tool in the hands of the genius of his art. But there is a world of difference between a highly cultured receptivity and a passivity without strength and poise. The Master is very direct on this matter: "It is not enough that we should set the example of a pure, virtuous life and a tolerant spirit; this is but negative goodness—and for discipleship will never do. You should even as a simple member learn that you may teach, acquire spiritual knowledge and strength that the weak may lean upon you, and the sorrowing victims of ignorance learn from you the cause and remedy of their pain" That is one of the hard sayings of occultism, but it must stand. Conventional goodness, and all the qualities which constitute a well-tempered character, are to be prized. But the aspirant who intends to take the stages of the occult path must possess, or must resolutely cultivate, a certain aggressiveness of spirit which compels every difficulty to yield its secret and grows stronger for the struggle. I write for the aspirant who aspires to be a light and guide to others, who feels this deep call in his nature, who can take defeat in the arena of life and yet pass on, that thereby the qualifications for higher service may be born and raised to power within him. And

one of the reasons for this insistence upon interior assertiveness is, that we have to deal subjectively with powers and influences on planes other than the visible which work actively into the personal life. "The aspirant is now assailed entirely upon the psychological side of his nature" . . . "The dark hosts of the Brothers of the Shadow always on the watch to perplex and haze the neophyte's brain," is not an imaginary menace. It is a Karmic heritage ranged along the path for opportune attack, before which the strong survive and the weak fall back. However keenly the sensitive nature may suffer and recoil before the inimical and unsuspected vibrations which impinge upon it, the inner self must have reached that measure of strength which can do and dare and be silent,

Through conscientious study of himself in the light of such reflections as these the aspirant comes to realize the full significance of the outworking of Karma in his life. On this matter he cannot be too rightly introspective and discriminative. The Master's comment is: "To unlock the gates of the mystery you must not only lead a life of the strictest probity, but learn to discriminate truth from falsehood. You have talked a great deal about Karma but have hardly realized the true significance of that doctrine. The time has come when you must lay the foundation of that strict conduct—in the individual as well as in the collective body—which, ever wakeful, guards against conscious as well as unconscious deception" The aspirant's endeavour on the path will develop this discrimination and so clarify his vision that the truth of things will respond to his right mindedness. For the Master is truth. He has no pleasure in the error of the aspirant; nor will he be subject to error if he persistently tries to identify his thinking with the thought of the Master. There is a pregnant admonition of the Master which he will profitably ponder: "My chelas must never doubt, nor suspect, nor injure our agents with foul thoughts. Our modes of action are strange and unusual, and but too often liable to create suspicion. The latter is a snare and a temptation. Happy is he whose spiritual perceptions ever whisper truth to him! Judge those directly concerned with you by that perception, not according to your worldly notions of things" That spiritual perception is the basis of the technique. It will contradict much which the aspirant has always believed to be true. He will experience pain in renouncing that which is so firmly woven into

his world of facts. His greatest help will be dogmatic faith, although his world crumble around him.

From this new strength indifference to opinion will arise. The aspirant must let appearances go. What his inmost heart dictates is the law, not the urgent voices of external authorities. The Master's word is: "He who damns himself in his own estimation and agreeably to the recognized and current code of honour, to save a worthy cause, may some day find out that he has reached thereby his loftiest aspirations. Selfishness and the want of self-sacrifice are the greatest impediments on the path of adeptship" We can rest out cause implicitly on adept assurance. There can be no half measures in occultism. We either want the Master life or we do not. If we do, there is but one law of conformity for us, and the technique of that law embraces every circumstance of life. It does not complicate, it simplifies life, if the necessary preparation has been taken.

The technique of the Master ramifies every phase of experience past and to come. It touches the inmost secret of his own supreme altitude and passes back to the common task of the present hour. Nothing is veiled to the eye of occult omniscience; no circumstance that cannot be divinely adjusted in the evolutionary scheme. We have to make the adjustment, whether in sorrow or in joy, and emerge more purified from the fire. "It is with armed hand, and ready either to conquer or perish, that the modern mystic can hope to achieve his object"



THE MASTERS OF THE TECHNIQUE

THERE IS AN important and palpable fact about the personal communications of the Masters, and that is, their complete and unassailable expression of the phase of truth under consideration. When the Master speaks for the guidance of the soul, we feel and know at once and for all time the indubitable certainty of his word. There is no need to compare it with any other utterances; no textbook is required to corroborate it. It is a phrase from Cosmic experience and true to the experience of the evolving soul. We may not be ready to accept it now, but the time will come when we must accept it if we wish to advance. This indubitableness of the Master's word in its immediate or remote relationship to our human experience is a fact which always appeals to me as unique in literature. It is not difficult to see why it is never open to question or subject to qualification. There is no hidden depth of the soul which the Master has not sounded; no problem which he cannot instantly detach from every hampering consideration and observe it in the clear, cool light of illuminated intellect. I use the word intellect intentionally. I see no reason for assuming, as many seem to assume, that the Master, because of his lofty spirituality, condescends not to use so poor a tool as intellect. Observe the vexations and perplexities that hedge round our problems because of the ever-fluctuating and darkening shadows of the emotional and mental life, obstructing the clear light of the thinking principle and raising a host of discordant vibrations which involve us in sore distress. The Master is entirely free from that. When he surveys the problem of the soul he stands above, not within it; it is reflected comprehensively and alone upon the clear and illumined mirror of the intellect. He knows just what it means to us. He sees the defect of knowledge or foresight which gives it birth, the keen

struggle of the soul to find a solution, or the resultant reactions upon our future growth. How often an aspirant questions the wisdom, justice and compassion of the Master because the particular burden of life is not at once removed for the asking. But if the Master is a living example of adjusted Karmic forces every conceivable problem must be known to him, and he also knows the beneficent reactions of every Karmic problem which besets us. We cannot behold the Master's countenance, or those of any of his high initiates, without discerning deeply characterized there the blessed memorials of manhood perfected through ancient suffering. It is this immense world experience, this agedness of the soul in the Master, which vibrates in his world of guidance with such sombre emphasis and holds us true to him even in the darkest hour. I have known a trembling soul to hang upon the Master's word when nothing in life or circumstance seemed to justify it; but the soul knew even though it could not understand, and that link of imperishable force and sympathy was all-sufficient.

The necessity for specialized culture of the will in occult work is a matter upon which most of us are in agreement. In all world progress it is the great driving force. But the will to tread the path is of a higher nature. It is in reality the inner spiritual self acting steadily and unceasingly through the personality. And when, through study and meditation and one-pointed determination to achieve master hood, this inner self or spiritual will is gradually released and begins to act powerfully in the personality, only then do the real problems of the path emerge and call for the greatest strength to deal with them. Then it is that many grow profoundly doubtful of their progress and are ready to turn to the former relative security which was theirs. So long as we do not think too deeply or demand too much, the normal rhythms of life remain undisturbed; but to have thoroughly visualized the higher possibilities and sent forth a petition into the Master's realm to share in the responsibilities and blessings of a larger service, is a direct request of the soul to be subjected to that keener discipline which alone will make the greater service possible.

The aspirant who is not yet sure of himself, who has not realized fully the depth and reality of his pledge of allegiance to the Master, is often greatly perturbed at the definite changes occurring in his mental

life and the altered aspect of circumstances. Yet this is but one of the tests which sooner or later confronts every aspirant; and if the general trend of his life has not evolved a measure of strength and ripeness in his faculties, he will be compelled to actively school himself in further world experience in order to successfully meet the test. That life itself is the great initiator is a profound occult truth. It can be observed in the world of men every day. There are individuals around us who have no leaning towards the occult, yet so intense and varied are their labours, so strenuous and devoted are they in manifold works of ideal service for the race, that they have all the mental and inner equipment for rapidly passing the tests of the occult path. For these men the will has reached its strength through long and versatile response in world experience; they stand at the point of mature mentality where they can receive the deeper knowledge of the soul. The sharp conflicts and pain of life have rounded off a whole cycle of minor attachments and give them clear judgment and a high degree of detachment from purely personal issues whereby they are able to bear the accelerated vibration which will eventuate when they take up the discipline of the path.

This is a factor for reflection. If the common experience of life has not been such as to initiate the aspirant into the true value and force of the will in some of its higher aspects, his allegiance to and active work for the Master will surely demand this at no distant time. He will be thrown back upon his own inner strength in the very act of demanding that strength from the Master.

The Master Serapis of the Egyptian Brotherhood refers specifically to this matter of energetic direction of the will. "For he who hopes to solve in time the great problems of the Macrocosmal World and conquer face to face the Dweller, taking thus by violence the threshold on which lie buried nature's most mysterious secrets, must try, first, the energy of his will power, the indomitable resolution to succeed, and bringing out to light all the hidden mental faculties of his Atma and highest intelligence, get at the problems of man's nature and solve first the mysteries of the heart" It is useless for us to attempt to shirk the issue by saying that the human element is lacking in phraseology of this kind. If we are still children and require our disciplinary instruction well sugared, nay, lived for us, the divine admonition of the Master will

certainly prove too much for our human nature, and repel us. It is to be hoped that the aspirant is beyond that stage; that the experience of life has compelled the assertion of his manhood; that he is aware of his deepest need and the need of his fellow men, and is not likely to turn back from the path he has studied and the truth he knows because of what may appear to be a strain of severity in the word of the Master which foreshadows a higher discipline and consequent renunciation perhaps of certain common interests which have had their day and dissipate his energy. There may be many a secret struggle between these interests and the graver aspect of truth which silently beckons us on. It cannot be otherwise in view of the strong momentum of unspiritual mentation established during the past in the subjective consciousness. Those of us who have persistently fought our way along hard phases of the path know well enough the painful misgivings, the harassing doubts, the solitary questionings of the heart, which have beset us. Yet I believe there are few but would testify on emerging from the shadow, that it is well. What matters the difficulty if we have comprehended the way, the truth and the life that the Master offers us? There is no other way by which the will can reach its strength, or the Master would certainly have told us. No matter to what Master we look for guidance, one admonition characterizes them all in regard to passing from our world into theirs. The necessity for the dominant force of the spiritual will is ever insisted upon.

The technique of the Master is pre-eminently active, not passive. Observe the leading thoughts of the above quotation: "Compel, take by violence, try, indomitable resolution, bring out, get out"—The whole process is one of intense inner action. I venture to affirm there is not a great character in universal history in which this supreme motive power is not seen to be a compelling factor. At first sight it may not always appear to be so. According to the manifold types and careers this central force of the awakened will may be strongly objective or more or less underlying, but is there, organized, concentrated and potent. Only, on occult levels, a different order of experience ensues. The great character on the stage of world history does not necessarily enter consciously and with specific intent upon the secret domain of the Spirit. His direction in life is technically unspiritual. Great as are his works in the manifold fields of human endeavour, strong as his ray of

individual genius may be, he is not an occultist in the accepted sense of the term, nor is he subject to the laws of the occult. The faculties of intuition and reason developed to a high degree and directed to worldly affairs make him what he is. He is not engaged in a culture the discipline of which would carry him beyond the frontiers of human consciousness. The purely occult tests are withheld. From such he may as surely shrink as would the average human being.

Now, the Master exercises all the prerogatives of genius. All the faculties of human consciousness in him are raised to their highest potency, and, in addition, the spiritual counterparts, so to speak, of these faculties, are operative and under perfect control, hence his vast authority and supreme value and august ascendancy over the highest manifestations of human genius. It is to the development of these deeper faculties, the spiritual counterparts of the finest faculties of human consciousness, that the attention of the aspirant to the technique is given. Hence the note of severity which characterizes the discipline inculcated by the Master. And in attempting to pass beyond the frontiers of common worldly experience, no matter to what height in any of its varied forms natural genius may have carried him within this experience, in the deliberate, conscious attempt to take the word of the Master and occultly speculate into the silent and mysterious domain of the Super Experience, the will is subjected to the finer and superphysical tests which are the unalterable laws of that domain. No man can offer himself sincerely as a candidate for the technique without setting up within powerful reactions of a peculiar and intimate character which will surely try out what sort of man he is. It is the initial stage of a process of readjustment of all his values.

There is nothing to be feared in the quest. Conscientious study and meditation will fit him for it. Nor has he to prepare to lose that which is dear and valuable to him, or renounce any talent or prestige he possesses in the world of men, or throw up any business or domestic obligations to which he is committed. He has simply to cultivate the strength to realize himself as he is—which implies far more than we usually think. For when the force of concentrated will is focused steadily and over a long period upon the psychic and spiritual self, every motive and tendency buried in the heart of the aspirant is awakened to palpitating

life and activity; all that Karma has written in his members arises and confronts him. That is one phase of the great problem to which the admonition of the Master applies; and *there* it is, before that intimate personal disclosure of the man he is, that the aspirant has to stand firm and undismayed in the face of much that he would hesitate to utter. Is there then any wisdom in averting the eyes from that which the Spirit demands that he should fearlessly confront and steadily overcome? We have called upon the name of the Master and the answer comes in the form of the vital refining fire that descends within to purge and purify every one of us who aspires after the hidden mysteries. Shall we weakly decline what we have deliberately invoked and postpone the blessed work of personal redemption because of the imminent possibility of the mortal self which we love so well being stretched psychically up on the cross which rises mystically on the path before us? Is there any tragedy in life like unto that in which the aspirant, having taken knowledge of the way, retreats from the call of the Cosmic when the dark hour comes in which he must find his own light and press steadfastly on? It has been my privilege to have this problem again and again raised by aspirants who have stood face to face with the shadow of the dark night of the soul to which their strong and persistent efforts on the path had brought them, and one of the greatest inspirations to me has been to note their firm grip on themselves, their philosophical stand in their trial and the deep spiritual assurance they have had that all must be well and the goal would be reached. They are right. The Master's word has not gone forth for naught. We can prove this by taking the austere ritual of the conquering will uttered by the Brother and working it out in the silence, until all that is hidden in the inmost recesses of the heart is brought to light and understood, and the baser metals transmuted into the pure gold of interior illumination.



VOCATION AND THE TECHNIQUE

A SUBJECT WHICH gives rise to a good deal of speculation in the minds of aspirants is that of vocation. It is not uncommon to meet with those engaged in business or professional life who, after certain reading in occultism and association perhaps with an occult group, grow dissatisfied with their chosen career and forthwith think they have a call to devote themselves entirely to occult work. I would not criticize the good intention of any aspirant, but I often feel that this attitude is not justified. In many cases it arises from too little knowledge of the path rather than from a sound and balanced conception of the requirements for authoritative leadership in a school or order. Not seldom it is the desire for personal prestige and an ordinary type of worldly vanity or ambition which prompts this attitude. In either case the strongest indication is shown that the person has no definite call to handle responsible work entailing leadership in occultism. It is well to be frank on this subject because it may save some from unwisely throwing aside a useful task for which they are normally fitted and to which they are Karmically bound, upon the rightful discharge of which their development depends.

In the first place, the technique in itself has little to do with the immediate vocation of an aspirant. It is a condition of the soul and may underlie any type of personal activity in the world of men. Further, the technique, to be of real service, as has been shown, requires the broadest possible basis of practical efficiency only obtainable through contact with some aspects of daily affairs. To the average student the position of leader or teacher has something romantic about it which makes it very desirable to him. That is one of the illusions of appearance. I believe it to be true that practically none of those in such positions

of responsibility and trust asked for or expected them. The Cosmic powers placed them there under the law of Karma because they had all the necessary qualifications and the selflessness to lawfully fill them. And the technique demanded of them to carry that responsibility and discharge its duties is only slowly realized by those who contact them. It is silent and deep in its influence and enables the possessor of it to fulfill his office with a sureness and facility, that the happy effect upon those who profit from it is apt to lead to one-sided conclusions about it.

I am not suggesting that a student who, having made a specialized study of some branch of knowledge in the occult field, such as healing or astrology, should not relinquish a vocation he has outgrown, or which no longer has interest for him, and speculate in a more desirable direction. He may have a call to it and be fully equipped for it. But the technique of the Master, brought to that point of recognition and efficiency where it places a man in a certain privileged position to be of outstanding service to his fellow men, is of a totally different character. Close observation of such leaders and teachers convinces me that they have qualified severely in the past and gravitated naturally to the life of service. I believe, too, that nearly all of these characters have been, early in their present incarnation, more or less unconsciously qualifying in the various vocations they have followed for the work and responsibility they eventually assumed. I could instance several prominent in the occult world today whose early years were spent in business and professional vocations which formed the sound and necessary basis for the greater work of the path that awaited them. Some of them had not the slightest hint of their future possibilities. But they were all serious students in their chosen departments. They felt the inner necessity of self-preparation. Their affiliation with the Master was ripening in the silence; and when the time came they found their election had been made and entered upon their task with assurance.

There is a maxim current in occultism which is very difficult to reconcile with its apparent antithesis, except after a good deal of reflection and experience. We are assured that the Master takes thought for the aspirant; we are also assured that the Master is not concerned

in the least with the details of the personal life of the aspirant, but only in his soul life and in so far as he is qualifying for discipleship. Yet these are not contradictory maxims. They are two aspects of one fundamental truth to which Karma, vocation and the technique are related. The Master is interested in the aspirant in a most real sense, but not personally until the development of the technique affords him an opportunity of contacting the aspirant from that level whereon the technique is operative. The development of an aspirant is a matter of graded ascents in consciousness, and throughout that period, right up to the time when his soul apparatus becomes consciously forceful in the occult sense and capable of original action and initiative, he receives instruction and guidance and many kinds of assistances from appointed deputies of the Master. These deputies are initiates with evolved technique, agents of the Master in the world of men, the leaders and teachers to whom the aspirant is indebted for the steady unfoldment of his own powers. They are men with certain Karma liquidated and so are free to devote their lives to service on the path. They are qualified to inspire and lead aspirants to evolve the technique in themselves that they, in turn, when Karma permits, may be similarly elected to a position of truth under the Master.

It is well to recognize this method of graded responsibility and teaching, from the Master down to the neophyte on the path. It should help to eliminate the false idea so prevalent that because an aspirant is attracted to the path and desires prestige quickly, and influence in other lives, the Master is personally concerned with him and therefore his desire should be granted. Observation and reflection may prove to him that this is not so. He will find that he has much to do for a long time to come even to become reasonably conversant with the technique consciously utilized by the technician under whose influence he has come, before he can expect to be sensitive to the more interior and exacting requirements of the Master working directly with his soul. Yet instances of this mistaken attitude abound among students. If for some reason their ordinary vocation becomes difficult or fails, they straightway seek for what they call an occult position where the task is fight and agreeable, or expect the Master to be personally interested in their welfare in this respect and provide some exceptional opportunity.

If these aspirants were taken at their personal value and immediately thrown into the positions they covet—they would fail, miserably. But there is little fear of this happening. An inexorable law will keep them back from that for which they are not ready, as surely as it will hold them to that concatenation of circumstances through which alone their Karma can be fulfilled. This is where the apparently contradictory maxim, that the Master is not concerned with the details of the personal life of the aspirant, is exemplified. The fact of the inaccessibility of the Master is a sufficient confirmation of this. It has been stated on good authority that the number of accepted disciples of Masters, those who through the most arduous training and trial have won personal recognition at their hands and share consciously in their work, is a comparative handful compared with the number of aspirants who seek them. That work is so vast and complicated that it would be a physical and Cosmic impossibility for the personal lives of these aspirants to receive individual guidance and fostering by the Masters. Doubtless some aspirants who have built up their own pet theory of occult guidance will resent a statement of this kind. It is so easy to wish for a certain condition of affairs and pass on to the belief that the condition exists. I have contacted aspirants of many schools of thought, but I have never met with one who could truthfully claim that a Master had become a physical-plane mentor to him. Observe, I speak of aspirants, not of those who are inwardly technicians, or who preside over and execute the plans of certain schools. Indeed, their personal contact with a Master is the reason for the existence of these schools.

It is surely time that the many misunderstandings about this subject were cleared away and the average aspirant given a chance to find his proper bearings in relation to it. Personal assumptions have been carried to almost incredible lengths with nothing but personal wishes and beliefs to support them. Masters do not visit the rooms of seekers to teach them personally just because they have read and meditated for a little while and believe themselves worthy of all acceptance. One might as well expect the great masters in art to spend their precious time instructing novices before they have had a thorough preparatory grounding under competent teachers, enabling them to be carried on to public work. The vocation of the aspirant is the preparatory

school for the development of his personality to thoroughly practical issues; and if he is so privileged as to be working under an initiate in an occult school, he has every opportunity to perfect in himself those qualifications which will make him a worthy member of the school and extend his influence in service. In this way alone is the technique mastered.

It is difficult to see on what ground the notion is entertained that those who are settled in specific vocations should not have opportunity therein to make progress on the path at the same time. So far from anything in occult literature to the contrary, it is enjoined on a student to utilize his vocation in a very practical way to facilitate his progress on the path. The means to do so are now in his hands. What he does to obtain a living is immaterial to the technique, provided it is honourable. The influence of an unfolding soul cannot be hidden. A student's vocation, whatever it is, provides an avenue for its expression. It is a point worthy of consideration, that some of the most prominent men in big business, as well as artists who are world-famous, are using a measure of the technique and are fully conscious of a mission of service in and through their business and art. The same applies to the unknown aspirant in the humblest vocation. The soul has chosen its field of labour and in fulfilling the task humbly and conscientiously larger fields of service will offer themselves as soon as he is ready for them.

The disciple of the Master whose perfected technique enables him to work chiefly with human souls, is a link in the world of men between the Master and the aspirant. His position is proof that he has served a long apprenticeship in vocations of various types. Without that experience fully assimilated he could never be utilized as an occult force centre in the service of others. I think it may truly be said that he is also one who never covets positions of office on the path. He is too conscious of his own shortcomings and feels too deeply the need for strenuous work upon himself for the efficient discharge of his duties to waste time gazing afar off to the future. It is that man whom the Master can trust to work unselfishly in his own place. In so doing he is making his election sure.

ADJUSTMENT TO THE TECHNIQUE

THE PROBLEM OF adjustment is an ever-pressing one for the aspirant to the technique. No matter what expansion of consciousness he has attained, this problem meets him. Directly he begins to seriously meditate the enemy is in his path. The enemy resolves itself into the new point of view to which he has almost unconsciously advanced. He becomes slightly out of focus with life and experience as he knew and lived it and must consequently restate it in new terms. Once again art will provide us with an analogy. The artist passes from one grade of technique to another with more or less rapidity according to inborn capacity. Each grade has its special difficulty, and requires a fresh adjustment of mind and hand. But there is the sense of difficulty overcome, and that which appeared insuperable in the early grades becomes automatic and can be reproduced at will with ease and certainty

Adjustment and growth in the technique is like that. Meditation is the instrumental means by which the aspirant passes from grade to grade. Each little cycle of growth produces its characteristic unsettlement in the mental life. It has been well said that the first efforts to still the mind preparatory to right meditation has the effect of making it adopt every possible attitude of disobedience and resentment of the restraint imposed upon it. The mind likes to go on its own accustomed way, uncontrolled and occupied objectively with unceasing restlessness with every passing matter of interest and of no enduring value. When the resolve comes to set to work to overcome wasteful activity and confine thought to well-defined channels of expression for higher purposes, the mind takes a determined stand to maintain its old routine. This preliminary difficulty soon passes with practice, and the real problem

is to adjust to the new ideas, the larger views, the increasing force registered by the mind as the inner personality is compelled under discipline to impose its nature upon it.

There is practically a uniform experience among aspirants when this unfoldment is in progress. They receive an impetus to speculate along new lines of mental activity. In many cases entirely new fields of possibility open up to them. The self within, rich with the products of many lives of struggle and development, begins to declare itself and project into the conscious field the mature powers and faculties of the past. The aspirant is aware of these insistent voices of the past mingling with the tones of his personal life, strong, perplexing, only half understood, awakening fervent desire to interpret them rightly and make them blend and harmonize with the octave he knows and in which everything, up to the present, has had its appropriate keynote. But a new situation now arises. That which is coming to him now belongs to a different octave of the Cosmic keyboard and demands its own interpretation. The faculties which he knows and uses may receive a fresh impetus and be strengthened for larger uses; and that is a wholly satisfactory aspect of the matter. But his daily discipline is carrying him steadily into the psychic realm of faculties and forces, and the silent emergence of these, as a new dim, twilight consciousness impinging upon the mind, brings with it the constant problem of acceptance and adjustment to the known factors of mind, life and experience. It is like suddenly detecting in one's abode, in which every article of furniture and ornament is familiar to us, strange objects of curious dimension and character which henceforth must be recognized and their meaning and mission understood. This is not an experience to be met once and finished with. It continues throughout the whole period of the unfoldment of the technique. The problem of skillful adjustment of these incidents of expansion of consciousness is ever before the aspirant. The period will be long or short commensurable with his ability to raise and intensify his vibration and adapt the physical, emotional, and mental life to the resulting disclosures.

The idea may be otherwise expressed. If it is a task of some difficulty to adjust to the life the aspirant knows before occult training, to control and direct the mental and emotional life he has built up in

this incarnation, what kind of task may he expect when he begins to meditate and explore the recesses of the inner self wherein lies latent the experience of many past lives? I am not one who regards occult training as a simple process of meditation and affirmation and thereby entering into possession of unusual sources of power and wisdom at small cost and pains. I know that the enfolded life of the past has to be unfolded into the present, understood, compensated for, adjusted to and thoroughly assimilated with the conscious experience of today. It takes but a moment to read this, but many years to make the word a fact. The burden of the whole theme of the technique is this of conscientious effort and endurance, exceeding in character and scope anything required even in the highly technical fields of the arts and sciences.

I should be frankly doubtful of the progress of any student who did not meet with the difficulties of adjustment in one form or another. Many concrete examples have come to my notice. A very prevalent obstacle encountered is that of the strength and insistence of the passional nature during the probational period. The student is often discouraged and thinks there must be something radically wrong with him because, long after he has set his mind upon spiritual culture, he finds undesirable habits and tendencies which he hoped had passed away from him forever reassert themselves with added strength and the demand for expression. Yet there is nothing unusual in this nor should it be a cause for discouragement or self-reproach. The emotional nature is by far the strongest force in man at this stage of evolution, and it is not to be raised to the spiritual plane of expression without the cost of long aspiration and many temporary resistances to the will nature imposed upon it. What the aspirant is apt to overlook is that the same basic problem confronts everyone on the path, with different modifications, depending upon evolutionary equipment and habituated forms of expression. A large percentage of students at the present time are very strongly polarized in their emotional nature, and their studies will be approached from and related to the emotional aspect. It is one of the main difficulties with students today that they are unable, without considerable study and meditation, to shift the polarity from the emotional to the mental level and work from that level simultaneously in two ways; by holding a steadily receptive

attitude to the inflow of force from the Cosmic plane, and at the same time compel the emotional life to respond in measure and intention to higher inspiration and direction. This is always a variable period for the aspirant, in intensity and duration, comparatively brief for some, all too prolonged for others. Many secret battles are lost and won during this period, with always some increased gain in mental and moral stamina to the aspirant. Little cycles of struggle will succeed those of relative calm and happy progress. This all brings more and more into prominence every tendency and recognized or unrecognized inclination of his nature, whether of strength or weakness. The correct adjustment to this constant self-revealing is the problem of every aspirant.

Let us think for a moment about this intensely interesting and important phase of the subject, the cycles of the aspirant's development and his adjustment thereto. I wish to avoid criticism of anything that appears of value to him, anything in any particular teaching or method of approach which has seemed of importance to him and which he may not feel disposed to consider inadequate for the simple reason that he is fully adjusted to it. I seek to bring him to a deeper realization of the requirements which the technique demands. If he will remember that it is precisely that viewpoint which antagonizes his own which may prove on reflection to be of peculiar value, he will then willingly comply with the fundamental canon of true growth. The one enemy in his path is stagnation of thought; and many are in the grip of that enemy, professed occult students though they be. I refer to textbook students. If there is one thing the aspirant must assure himself of, it is that the technique of the Master is not taught in textbooks. He may study and tabulate them and pride himself upon the assemblage of facts stored in the memory relative to races, planets, and periods, but all this is but the alphabet of the path. I have known students who have steeped themselves for years in such facts, yet before their own problems and those of others they were helpless. They failed to realize that the accumulation of facts is not the development of esoteric power, but only a preliminary to it. The textbooks almost invariably contradict one another regarding these facts. Some writers are frank enough to remind us that their presentations are not to be taken as authoritative, but are merely their conception of the subject. Others assure us that what is imparted is only suggestive, that much of what

is given is problematical. In a word, the student is thrown back upon his own intuition to seek the esoteric power in his own way. That is the point where I endeavour to meet him in this treatise on the technique.

I counsel the aspirant to place in the background for a while the burden of theory and speculation and simplify the issue for himself. Only what he experiences in and for himself is truth for him. The rest can wait its appointed time and nothing will be lost in the waiting. To be unmindful of the supreme value of the experience of the present by throwing the mind back upon the stereotyped records of remote periods, no matter by whom recorded, or forward to perfected conditions out of perspective with the living hour, is to miss the great opportunity of self-knowledge. The technique is a series of cycles of self-revealing, and the swiftness and intensity of these cycles will depend upon the force of the soul. And the question for the aspirant is, what is this self revealing to me? His meditation should be active to that end. "Look for the warrior, and let him fight in thee" The aspirant is affording the warrior, potent and wise, holding the secret of all his future evolution, whose strength is unknown and untried, an opportunity to declare himself on the battlefield of the personality. Through active meditation directed inward and upward he opens the path for the warrior of the ages to manifest his power and faculties in ever-widening circles of knowledge and experience in the personal life.

Therefore the paramount question is, what is the present cycle of growth revealing to me and how am I adjusting to it? When a cycle of sufficient intensity has been reached the reaction of the personality to the increased force of the soul will be very pronounced. The voice of the personality will be stronger and more insistent than ever before. This is often a matter of surprise to the aspirant. He thinks that the personality should become more and more quiescent as he gives attention to the soul informing it. At an advanced stage of the technique this may be expected. It is imperative.

The personality is then known, its measure has been taken, and its expressive life is controlled and directed as an obedient vehicle of the soul. But this is not the case in the early stages of training. Each little cycle of growth brings the latent faculties and recognized ambitions of the personality into greater prominence. Some of these must be

brought to full efficiency through close attention and discipline; others must diminish in force and pass away from the consciously active state in the interest of the larger vision of the soul. This is a twofold problem requiring continuous assertion of will and the exercise of keen discrimination. I have referred to this in the chapter on delusions, where the student is enjoined to take an inventory of his mental faculties with a view to their highest development. In doing this what has been called the "curse of ambition" will confront him. I do not like the term, but it has great significance for the aspirant as he pursues his path to the technique. It means that some lines of personal ambition which were quite consistent with his way of life before entering upon the path, must now lose ground or be transmuted and given a more spiritual direction. It is a problem for each aspirant to deal with in his own way. There are ambitions which will accelerate his progress on the path, others which will hinder. The cultivation of discrimination will enable him to calculate the force and value of each, and to what extent it will serve him in the future in the interest of his fellow men. That is the one standard by which he will ultimately have to judge his mental acquisitions and forces, since the technique in its higher stages demands the whole man in world service. That is why the anxious problem of deeper and deeper adjustment to the requirements of the unfolding soul is of the highest value and cannot be spared him in any single phase of its discipline. The objective is a complete knowledge of the forces of the soul evolving within the personality, to enable him to know experimentally any aspect of that evolution which he encounters in others. With that thought and intention firmly in mind throughout his novitiate, the will-nature will come to its strength, holding him to the task of the steady enlargement of the mental field, the while his discrimination is sharpened to discern what to relinquish and leave behind as no longer worthy of or necessary to the developing technique.

The flowering of the personal life comes before the rare bloom of the technique. The garden of the personality, rich and scent-laden with the choice and cultivated growth of past lives, has served its purpose of pleasure and expression in its own place and time, and must now yield itself in all its force and beauty to the nourishment of the tree of spiritual life to dispense knowledge and healing to those who seek the way.

THE NEOPHYTE AND THE TECHNIQUE

THE NEOPHYTE WHO has made his choice and is steadily working up to the technique, will do well to fortify himself against criticism. Criticism is one of the most prominent features of intellectual life in the West. It is a time-honoured national trait. But a national trait may be also a national evil; and with us, to a great extent, the habit of criticism is an evil. Unquestionably, through every department of culture there runs a strain of noble and helpful criticism which opens the mind to a real appreciation of the highest in human production. There is, too, an accompanying strain, strong and pernicious, which is steadily bent upon a sinister campaign of damnation, the sole object of which is to arrest the propagation and influence of unfamiliar truth and attain for itself a cheap notoriety at the expense of those who will not think for themselves. It is this latter class of criticism which, with a counterfeit air of omniscience, robustly applies its narrow canons to the revelations of occult science, and in so doing becomes the object of well-merited contempt.

It is a truism that the criterion of just criticism is a knowledge of the principles and practices of the subject under consideration. But the main stream of criticism provoked by occult disclosures has its sources in a most profound ignorance of even first principles. We have grown so accustomed to this purblind treatment of advanced research that, for ourselves, we are not disquieted. We recognize its impotence to stay the upward progress of the soul. But there are students who are peculiarly susceptible to the imperious onslaughts of ignorance and who experience no inconsiderable anxiety and doubt when exposed to cross-questioning and ridicule in their immediate circle on account of their occult persuasions. The foothold of these students is not

sure; the period of their probationary study is not far advanced; they have taken but a few steps on the path of self-knowledge. Doubts and questionings spring up at every step, and time must elapse before the mind can thoroughly assimilate the deeper truth. This is the critical period for the neophyte in occultism and he must prepare to deal with it.

If he means to progress he must cultivate a cool indifference to this criticism. He must not fear in the least being proclaimed a fool for his ideas. Not having yet penetrated deeply enough, the edifice of occult knowledge does not stand foursquare in his vision; and because of that lack of growth his thought is infirm and he cannot give a satisfactory account of himself. His opponents will feel his uncertainty and take advantage of it, until he is inclined to believe at times that he is resting his soul on a chimera. There is only one thing about which he needs to be solicitous, his inner unfoldment. As he wrestles with the divine facts his thoughts will grow strong. Defeats may conspire against him, but he must get used to them and draw strength from them. In time he will realize just where he stands in the scheme of things and a new power of speech will be his for all emergencies.

We need to remember again and again that the unfoldment of the technique is different from any other kind of growth. We cannot register our progress day by day like a student in art. It has nothing to do with that culture which is often only a synonym for arrogance. Neither brilliant accomplishments nor social prestige will provide the aspirant with a passport. It is no respecter of persons. Jesus was a carpenter; Buddha was a prince; both became adepts. The thing that avails is a fervent soul. Learn to serve. The adept is a servant. The crucifying struggle of life around you, inscribing the sign of the cross indelibly in the brow of humanity, is it anything to you? Is the sombre panorama of the human soul, passing and re-passing between the two eternities, and feeling blindly and unknowingly after the great secret, anything to you? Because here is the basis of the technique. The human soul must draw you irresistibly. To be, to know—these are the angels of aspiration which must stir the waters of life within and urge you to activity. The suffering of the soul must become personal to *you*. And the initial step lies in the cultivation of the fullness of that broad

humanity of which we have spoken. A head full of theories will make you a tinkling cymbal and known of men; but only from real depths of nature proceeds an understanding sympathy. Your development may cost an incarnation; nevertheless, the true aspirant forgets the price of achievement. He accustoms himself to think in terms of incarnations, not years. The magnitude of that contemplation sets its ineffaceable seal upon his thought; and those who cannot appreciate his ideals will yet be unable to forget them.

The transformation wrought in the inner life of the aspirant, though silent and unperceived by others, will yet affect in many ways his relationship to the world at large. He will mark the change in himself and, whether he speaks of it or not, others will mark and question it. This is where he will meet with criticism. His right to grow will be severely questioned. By whose authority does he aspire to spiritual things? In the opinion of some this departure from the plain path of conformity will be rank heresy, calculated to call down upon him the wrath of heaven. Well, most of us on the path are heretics, and greater heretics have preceded us. Let him not hesitate to deal with these critics peremptorily, if need be, once and for all. Let the aspirant be a heretic and stand out. He will be tempted to argue, pro and con, but it will be of little use. He has gone on before and they have resolved to stand still, and reconciliation on these terms is impossible. He has elected to be a light in the world, whatever the darkness he may have to pass through, and it would be unwise to retreat to the open arms of the majority for the sake of a merely ephemeral popularity and peace.

The aim of the technique is to make the aspirant a spiritual artist, possessed of an exquisite intuitional awareness of inner processes. This will evolve as he gradually molds the constitution to respond to keener and unusual vibrations. He will become receptive to a widening area of psychic influences. One of the earliest signs of this development is the pronounced occult tone of the personality. Responding now to a higher vibrational ratio, the breath of life circulates as a peculiar power. However faintly perceived outwardly, an actual spiritualization of self ensues. Sensitiveness is increased to a remarkable degree; and while it is not to be implied that his aim is to become so etherealized as to preclude the enjoyment of a natural and healthy existence, it is

clearly necessary to take thought for much which formerly did not concern him. Whatever the objections raised by those who understand nothing of the goal in view against the ultimate issue of this process of refinement, one of the chief aims must be the growth of sensitiveness. And in the pursuit of this, any discomforts incidental to the alchemical process will be regarded as inevitable, and not in any sense as a deterrent. He will know that he is deliberately fitting himself for the reception of a greater power of human helpfulness to be used in a career of sublime service.

Let the aspirant fear no criticism. Only when the critics realize that he possesses a more precious gift will they receive the first hint of their blindness. Only then will they realize that all the accumulations of worldly knowledge are indeed a very little thing when compared with an insight which is divine, when he becomes in all simplicity an oracle of the soul and reveals a new scale of values. No higher service can he render than that. No other reward is greater than the reward of that service. Before the contemplation of that ideal the glories of lesser ideals of men will suffer a peaceful eclipse. The voice of criticism will have lost the power to wound, because his thought has blended silently with the Cosmic purpose, in which is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.



PROBATION AND THE TECHNIQUE

SPEAKING OF THE inscrutable mystery of existence, Carlyle, in a moment of true mystical insight, said, "Force, force, everywhere force; we ourselves a mysterious force in the centre of that. . ." This is the basic fact for the technician in philosophy and practice. The technique is the science of applied force. When a man attains to a scientific use of this force through concentrated will and enlightened understanding in world service, he is no longer an aspirant, but a disciple of the Master. He is a conscious manipulator of the one force of the Cosmos manifesting through the awakened centres of his inner personality. Through the long day of trial and experiment, of comprehensive living experience, he has brought into activity within a subtle apparatus for the reception and transmission of energies infinitely more potent than anything operative on the physical, emotional and mental planes of his being. It is a preliminary attainment on the path of infinite promise—for others.

Is this status of the disciple among men an enviable one? From the worldly point of view, it is not. It is not easy living in this Western World as it is today, surrounded with pressing problems and perplexities, and its imperious demand that every man should not only be in it, but of it, and conform to its ideals and participate in its interests. From the Master's point of view, it is otherwise. It is a blessed thing that there are men who, in past incarnations, have passed their novitiate and now find themselves accepted disciples of the Masters, with a definite mission to their fellow men. Links of old association have brought them once again in this life into the secret occult schools to graduate further in the technique and fill more responsible positions in the Brotherhood of Masters. The world knows them not; but their

compeers throughout the world recognize them by those unmistakable signs of soul development and personality equipment referred to in this treatise.

The world does not know the disciple, but it does know that he is different from other men. A man with the mission of a disciple of the Masters cannot hide his light under a bushel. What he is, is not known; that he is different, is. That is enough for him to be made a target for criticism and for his way of life to be questioned by those who cannot but recognize that they confront a different type of man. "The one who has passed through is unrecognizable until the other and altogether new condition is attained by both" So says the scripture, and it is a fact of experience in the life of the disciple. His life is a paradox, and any attempt to justify it in the eyes of those who cannot understand paradoxes will only result in making his life appear the more hopelessly contradictory. The disciple must accept this condition of his development with complete understanding. Through certain evolutionary advantages, distinctly his because earned in the past, he conforms to a code of ethics and is amenable to laws, foreign to and unrecognized by his fellow men. That is why the technique working through a disciple so baffles astute men who hold sway on the plane of mind. "He has taken on him a duty which does not exist for other men" It is sufficient that the disciple knows this. That knowledge gives him strength and ascendancy over opposing influences.

What, then, has been the main factor in bringing the technician to this point of ascendancy and efficiency in the scale of human evolution? I have given some idea of the nature of the technique, outlined its main constituents, and shown the extent of the discipline which has to be undertaken if its requirements are to be filled. Now, there is a word which is ever present to the mind of the technician throughout the long period of his training. It is the word, probation. It implies a condition which is often regarded with some suspicion by students. Yet it is common enough to hear of a person being under probation, or upon his trial. It simply means that he has to show his fitness for the position he aspires to. He is submitted to a period of trial of his abilities to fill it competently and be entrusted with the powers and privileges that accompany it. And in the occult sense it

means precisely the same thing, except that, in the case of a worldly office, the probation will be relatively brief; whereas the probation of the technique may occupy the major portion of an incarnation.

For years the technician is known to the inner side to be graduating in a secret school in which he is taught the correct manipulation of force. When I say secret school, I do not refer to any special external organization with which he may be affiliated and in which he is working. The secret school lies behind that. He knows nothing of it objectively. His intuition assures him of his alliance with it. In that school he is known, has his place, and is guided silently in his associations in work on the objective plane. Opportunities are afforded him to liquidate his Karma, and the way in which he uses these is observed and recorded. Temptations in the most disguised forms offer themselves to test the stability of his moral and intellectual character. They come to him in alluring personalities and aspects of circumstances, intense in their appeal and with terrible power of fascination. He will be faced again and again with these stern alternatives of self-gratification or impersonal service. The force which impinges upon his sensitive soul apparatus from the Master awakens the whole man to action in every phase of his nature. He has to learn how to hold that force as it energizes through him and draws into his sphere other souls who understand it not and seek response from it on their own level of life. He has to learn how to adapt the various measures of that force to those he contacts in the way of service. That measure which would inspire and raise one would as surely antagonize and overthrow another. For remember, the technician does not deal with personalities as they fall into this or that category; he deals with souls from the angle of their evolutionary standpoint. It is the fact which conditions the entire attitude of the technician towards others in his work. His aim is to do for others on a lesser scale what the Master is doing for him. He permits an appropriate measure of his force to play upon them, that an awakening and recognition of deeper sources may ensue.

Observe then the long and exacting probation which is involved in this simple fact of the reception by the technician of the force of the Master through the years of novitiate, and the transmission of that force by the technician to those pupils associated with him in

occult discipline for their advancement. The psychic centres of the technician will be active and in rapid evolution, and his voltage will be correspondingly tense and high, considerably more so than is the case with the majority in the groups he works with. I have mentioned how this peculiar training intensifies everything latent in the constitution, how strength and weakness are brought to the surface in every possible way, how every faculty and ability is brought to light for recognition and direction. The man stands revealed to himself; and the purpose of the revelation is to see what use he will make of it. It is in his power to use in service, or misuse for self, a sacred trust. Countless opportunities are his to take the easy or the more difficult path, to direct his forces consistently on the side of evolution for others in noble, self-denying service, or deflect it into channels of selfish aims, even to the detriment of others who look to him for example and guidance. The issues are clear to him and the choice is his to make. It is a stem trial. The technician has the opportunity to prove himself and the issue rests with him. In his own heart lies the battlefield, and how few, how very few, know anything of the secret battles fought and won there! He seeks no sympathy from without; he cries for no quarter from the forces ranged against him, whether of personality or circumstance. The magic of his own dominant soul has raised them into life for its own demonstration of mastery, and rather than lose in the self-initiated trial between the spiritual will and the Karmic hosts that would dethrone him, he would lose life and any fortune. That is indeed so. The love of the disciple for the Master who knows him and whom he seeks to know is such, that when these supreme tests of his allegiance and strength come to him, he does not wait to count the loss or the gain, he cares nothing for reputation or opinion, neither criticism, nor misunderstanding, nor opprobrium, or any worldly consideration sways one iota against the clear issue of proving himself a faithful servant and worthy of the trust reposed in him.

These issues, briefly glanced at, arise out of the conscious reception by the technician of the force of the Master. What of those associated with the technician in occult discipline, who are recipients of the force consciously transmitted by him? Their probation proceeds along similar lines, but obviously it is not yet so keen and crucial. In dealing with young aspirants who come under his observation and guidance,

the technician has the task of exercising his educated intuition in such a way in their behalf that a truly esoteric probation is afforded them. It is an intimate matter and difficult to write about. I can only say that the technician, drilled in the intricacies of his own probation, comes to adapt effectively the Master's methods, tempering them kindly and adequately to the strength and need of the aspirant; and there is probably no greater joy known to him than that he experiences in noting how an eager aspirant grasps the intimations and hints of deeper truth and quickly moulds them into his life and development. Appropriate sympathy may be shown here, the imposition of the will in hard admonition manifested there; patient forbearance in misunderstanding, silence and watchfulness where the aspirant must grow in his own way; sometimes almost indifference to the perplexity and pain of mental experience when that is culturing the young soul to stability and the beauty of spiritual insight:— these are glimpses of technical adaptation which are matters of constant personal concern on the part of the technician.

In giving prominence to the fact of probation which is methodically adapted in the case of every aspirant qualifying for the technique, there is this to be added by way of caution. Let the aspirant accept this fact as undoubtedly true and operative in his own development; but let him not perpetually watch himself and everything connected with him in his affairs, whether of thought or action, with that anxious scrutiny and self-questioning, that his life becomes a burden to himself and a nuisance to other people. I have a case in mind of a student who is a victim of this perverted idea of probation and development; so much so, that he is mortally afraid of himself and of every contact with others, fearing that he is losing grace in being a natural human being, and thereby holding at arm's length the conditions that await his embrace and conquest. He thus refuses to be put on trial and defeats the very aim he has in view. The probationary period is not set with traps at every step to make the student walk crooked and act at cross purposes all his days for fear of falling into them. There are definite points of crisis along the way, and in all probability he will meet and decide them in total unconsciousness of their far-reaching esoteric import. These crises are not charted so that he knows beforehand the time of their precipitation. He brings them to his own hands, soon or

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late, by his steadily onward and expressive living. The technician will tell him that often the momentous crises in his own life have been met and dealt with, with no thought of the issues other than obtaining a solid conquest in the name of manhood.

That is a point for the profound consideration of the aspirant. Let him observe that the technician with whom he works is a man in the true sense of the word. He fulfills the duties of his manhood according to the laws of occultism. Let the aspirant study those laws and give them practical expression in a well-ordered personality technique such as is outlined herein. The probation he needs for its perfecting and use will evolve naturally and efficaciously without deliberately seeking it. It will come because he has desired with fervent heart and single aim to be an exponent of the technique. He will have the strength to surmount every trial incident to it if he remains steadfast to the ideal of service in the name of the Master.



THE ROSICRUCIAN ORDER, AMORC

Purpose and Work of the Order

The Rosicrucian Order, AMORC, is a philosophical and initiatic tradition. As students progress in their studies, they are initiated into the next level or degree.

Rosicrucians are men and women around the world who study the laws of nature in order to live in harmony with them. Individuals study the Rosicrucian lessons in the privacy of their own homes on subjects such as the nature of the soul, developing intuition, classical Greek philosophy, energy centers in the body, and self-healing techniques.

The Rosicrucian tradition encourages each student to discover the wisdom, compassion, strength, and peace that already reside within each of us.

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