

Mahatma Letter Two

K. H. to A. P. Sinnett, Oct. 19, 1880

Much Esteemed Sir and Brother,

We will be at cross purposes in our correspondence until it has been made entirely plain that occult science has its own methods of research as fixed and arbitrary as the methods of its antithesis physical science are in their way. If the latter has its dicta so also has the former; and he who would cross the boundary of the unseen world can no more prescribe how he will proceed than the traveller who tries to penetrate to the inner subterranean recesses of Lhasa—the blessed, could show the way to his guide. The mysteries never were, never can be, put within the reach of the general public, not, at least, until that longed for day when our religious philosophy becomes universal. At no time have more than a scarcely appreciable minority of men possessed nature's secret, though multitudes have witnessed the practical evidences of the possibility of their possession. The adept is the rare efflorescence of a generation of enquirers; and to become one, he must obey the inward impulse of his soul irrespective of the prudential considerations of worldly science or sagacity. Your desire is to be brought to communicate with one of us directly, without the agency of either Madame Blavatsky or any medium. Your idea would be, as I understand it, to obtain such communications either by letters—as the present one—or by audible words so as to be guided by one of us in the management and principally in the instruction of the Society. You seek all this, and yet, as you say yourself, hitherto you have not found “sufficient reasons” to even give up your “modes of life” directly hostile to such modes of communications. This is hardly reasonable. He who would lift up high the banner of mysticism and proclaim its reign near at hand, must give the example to others. He must be the first to change *his* modes of life; and, regarding the study of the occult mysteries as the upper step in the ladder of Knowledge must loudly

proclaim it such despite exact science and the opposition of society. "The Kingdom of Heaven is obtained by force" say the Christian mystics. It is but with armed hand, and ready to either conquer or perish that the modern mystic can hope to achieve his object.

My first answer covered, I believed, most of the questions contained in your second and even third letter. Having then expressed therein my opinion that the world in general was unripe for any too staggering proof of occult power, there but remains to deal with the isolated individuals, who seek like yourself to penetrate behind the veil of matter into the world of primal causes, *i.e.*, we need only consider now the cases of yourself and Mr. Hume. This gentleman also, has done me the great honour to address me by name, offering to me a few questions and stating the conditions upon which he would be willing to work for us seriously. But your motives and aspirations being of diametrically opposite character, and hence—leading to different results, I must reply to each of you separately.

The first and chief consideration in determining us to accept or reject your offer lies in the inner-motive which propels you to seek our instructions, and in a certain sense—our guidance. The latter in all cases under reserve—as I understand it, and therefore remaining a question independent of aught else. Now, what are your motives? I may try to define them in their general aspect, leaving details for further consideration. They are (1) The desire to receive positive and unimpeachable proofs that there really are forces in nature of which science knows nothing; (2) The hope to appropriate them some day—the sooner the better, for you do not like to wait—so as to enable yourself—(a) to demonstrate their existence to a few chosen western minds; (b) to contemplate future life as an objective reality built upon the rock of Knowledge—not of faith; and (c) to finally learn—most important this, among all your motives, perhaps, though the most occult and the best guarded—the whole truth about our Lodges and ourselves; to get, in short, the positive assurance that the "Brothers"—of whom everyone hears so much and sees so little—are real

entities, not fictions of a disordered, hallucinated brain. Such, viewed in their best light appear to us your “motives” for addressing me. And in the same spirit do I answer them, hoping that my sincerity will not be interpreted in a wrong way or attributed to anything like an unfriendly spirit.

To our minds then, these motives, sincere and worthy of every serious consideration from the worldly standpoint, appear—*selfish*. (You have to pardon me what you might view as crudeness of language, if your desire really is that which you profess—to learn truth and get instruction from us—who belong to quite a different world from the one you move in.) They are selfish because you must be aware that the chief object of the T.S. is not so much to gratify individual aspirations as to serve our fellow men; and the real value of this term “selfish,” which may jar upon your ear, has a peculiar significance with us which it cannot have with you; therefore, and to begin with, you must not accept it otherwise than in the former sense. Perhaps you will better appreciate our meaning when told that in our view the highest aspirations for the welfare of humanity become tainted with selfishness if, in the mind of the philanthropist, there lurks the shadow of desire for self benefit or a tendency to do injustice, even when these exist unconsciously to himself. Yet, you have ever discussed but to put down the idea of a universal Brotherhood, questioned its usefulness, and advised to remodel the T.S. on the principle of a college for the special study of occultism. This, my respected and esteemed friend and Brother—will never do!

Having disposed of “personal motives,” let us analyze your “terms” for helping us to do public good. Broadly stated these terms are—*first*: that an independent Anglo-Indian Theosophical Society shall be founded through your kind services, in the management of which neither of our present representatives shall have any voice; and *second*, that one of us shall take the new body “under his patronage,” be “in free and direct communication with its leaders,” and afford them “direct proof that he really possessed that superior knowledge of the forces of nature and the attributes of the human soul which would inspire them

with proper confidence in his leadership." I have copied your own words, so as to avoid inaccuracy in defining the position.

From your point of view then, those terms may seem so very reasonable as to provoke no dissent; and, indeed, a majority of your countrymen—if not of Europeans—might share that opinion. What, will you say, can be more reasonable than to ask that teacher—anxious to disseminate his knowledge, and pupil—offering him to do so, should be brought face to face and the one give the experimental proofs to the other that his instructions were correct? Man of the world, living in, and in full sympathy with it, you are undoubtedly right. But the men of this other world of ours, untutored in your modes of thought, and who find [it] very hard at times to follow and appreciate the latter, can hardly be blamed for not responding as heartily to your suggestions as in your opinion they deserve. The first and most important of our objections is to be found in our *Rules*. True, we have our schools and teachers, our neophytes and shaberon (superior adepts), and the door is always opened to the right man who knocks. And we invariably welcome the new comer; only, instead of going over to him he has to come to us. More than that; unless he has reached that point in the path of occultism from which return is impossible, by his having irrevocably pledged himself to our association, we never—except in cases of utmost moment—visit him or even cross the threshold of his door in visible appearance.

Is any of you so eager for knowledge and the beneficent powers it confers as to be ready to leave your world and come into ours? Then let him come; but he must not think to return until the seal of the mysteries has locked his lips even against the chances of his own weakness or indiscretion. Let him come by all means, as the pupil to the master, and without conditions; or let him wait, as so many others have, and be satisfied with such crumbs of knowledge as may fall in his way.

And supposing you were thus to come—as two of your own countrymen have already—as Madame Blavatsky did, and Mr. Olcott will; supposing you were to abandon all for the truth; to toil wearily for years up the hard steep road, not daunted by

obstacles, firm under every temptation; were to faithfully keep within your heart the secrets entrusted to you as a trial; had worked with all your energy and unselfishly to spread the truth and provoke men to correct thinking and a correct life—would you consider it just, if, after all your efforts, we were to grant to Madame Blavatsky or Mr. Olcott as “outsiders” the terms you now ask for yourselves? Of these two persons one has already given three-fourths of a life, the other six years of manhood’s prime to us, and both will so labour to the close of their days, though ever working for their merited reward, yet never demanding it, nor murmuring when disappointed. Even though they respectively could accomplish far less than they do, would it not be a palpable injustice to ignore them as proposed in an important field of Theosophical effort? Ingratitude is not among our vices, nor do we imagine you would wish to advise it. . . .

Neither of them has the least inclination to interfere with the management of the contemplated Anglo-Indian Branch, nor dictate its officers. But, the new society, if formed at all, must (though bearing a distinctive title of its own) be, in fact, a Branch of the Parent body as is the British Theosophical Society at London, and contribute to its vitality and usefulness by promoting its leading idea of a Universal Brotherhood, and in other practicable ways.

Badly as the phenomena may have been shown, there have still been—as yourself admit—certain ones that are unimpeachable. The “raps on the table when no one touches it,” and the “bell sounds in the air” have, you say, “always been regarded as satisfactory,” etc., etc. From this, you reason that good “test phenomena” may easily be multiplied *ad infinitum*. So they can—in any place where our magnetic and other conditions are constantly offered; and where we do not have to act with and through an enfeebled female body in which, as we might say, a vital cyclone is raging much of the time. But, imperfect as may be our visible agent—and often most unsatisfactory and imperfect she is—yet she is the best available at present, and her phenomena have for about half a century astounded and baffled

some of the cleverest minds of the age. If ignorant of “journalistic etiquette” and the requirements of physical science, we still have an intuition of the effects of causes. Since you have written nothing about the very phenomena you properly regard as so convincing we have the right to infer that much precious power may be wasted without better results. By itself the “brooch” affair is—in the eyes of the world—completely useless, and time will prove me right. Your kind intention has entirely failed.

To conclude: we are ready to continue this correspondence if the view given of occult study as above suits you. Through the ordeal described, each of us, whatever his country, or race, has passed. Meanwhile, hoping in the best—yours faithfully as ever

KOOT' HOOMI LAL SINGH.