

THE WORD

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MOMENTS WITH FRIENDS.

Are we or are we not in union with atma-buddhi?

We are not. The question is general and vague, and takes for granted that we know all the factors on which it is based. The factors are atma and buddhi with which "we" are or are not "in union." The question is evidently asked from the theosophical standpoint. Atma is said to be the universal conscious spirit pervading all things. Buddhi is said to be the spiritual soul, the vehicle of atma, and that through which atma acts. "We" are said to be individual self-conscious minds. "Union" is a state in which one or more are joined to or blended with each other. Atma the universally conscious spirit and buddhi its vehicle, are in union always; because they act coordinately at all times and buddhi is conscious of atma and the two are united. They may thus be said to be a united One which is universally conscious. For the singular of we to be in union with atma-buddhi, the I must be conscious as I and must know who it is as I; it must be aware of its own individuality and identity and must also be conscious of buddhi and atma, and must be conscious that as an individual it is joined to, united with, the universal buddhi and atma. When an individual I is conscious of its identity and is conscious that it is at one with the universally conscious atma and buddhi then that individual can rightly say that it is "in union with atma and buddhi." There would then be no speculation by that individual as to what atma and buddhi and we are, and what union is, because that individual would know and the knowledge would end speculation. In the present condition of man, "we" do not know who we are. If we do not know who "we" are, we do not know who or what buddhi and atma are; and if we do not know who we are and are not universally conscious, we are not as self conscious beings in union with the universally conscious principles of atma and buddhi. Union is a close, and on that plane conscious contact with the thing united. A self conscious being cannot truly say that he is united to or in union with anything of which he is not fully conscious, even though that other thing may be present with him. Atma and buddhi are present with man at all times but man even as a self conscious

being is not aware or conscious of atma and buddhi as universal and spiritual principles. Because he is not universally conscious and because he is not even conscious of his own individual identity, therefore, he, man, as a thinking being is not in union with atma-buddhi.

Is it not true that all that we can become is already in us and that all we have to do is to become conscious of it?

Generally speaking, that is quite true, and, all that we at first have to do is to become conscious of all there is in us. This is enough for the present. Then, perhaps, we shall have to become conscious of everything there is outside of us and then see the difference between that and all there is in us.

The question as a statement is as soothing and easy as a gentle breeze in summer—and as indefinite. If one will content himself with such a question and the answer “yes” or an answer as indefinite as the question, there will be as little benefit derived as would come to an agriculturist who contents himself with the thought that he has stored somewhere in his barn all the seeds of all the things that grow. One who knows or believes that he has in his make up all that it is possible to become or to know about, and who does not become something of what he knows, is worse off and more to be pitied than the one who does not dabble with abstract propositions but who tries only to better his present physical conditions. In Eastern countries it is common to hear devotees repeating in their respective languages: “I am God!” “I am God!” “I am God!” with easy and most confident assurance. But are they? Usually these would-be gods are beggars on the streets and they know little more than enough to make the assertion; or they may be very learned and able to enter into long arguments in support of their claim. But few of those who make the claim give evidence in their life and work that they understand and have a right to it. We have imported these affirmations together with different kinds of these devotees and are still receiving new shipments into the United States. But if they are gods, who wants to be a god?

It is good for man to believe that all things are possible for him; but it is hypocrisy in him to try to make himself believe that he has already attained to that state which may be remotely possible. The chemist in his laboratory, the painter at his easel, the sculptor at his marble, or the farmer in his fields, are more god-like than those who walk about and blandly and loquaciously affirm that they are god,

because the divine is within them. It is said: "I am the microcosm of the macrocosm." True and good. But it is better to act than to say it.

To know or to believe a thing is the first step to the attainment of it. But to believe a thing is not having or being the thing believed. When we believe that all that we can become is within us, we have only become conscious of our belief. That is not being conscious of the things in us. We shall become conscious of the things about which we believe by trying to understand them and by working toward them. Guided by our motive and according to our work we shall become conscious of the things within us and come to the attainment of our ideals. By his work the chemist brings into being that which he is working for according to formulae. The painter makes visible the ideal in his mind. The sculptor causes the image in his mind to stand out from the marble. The farmer causes to grow those things which were potential only in seeds. That man has all things within him is a divine thought. This thought is the potential seed of divinity. This divine thought is abused, ridiculed and debased when it is banded about lightly. When it is blown lightly about by unthinking mouths it, like a seed blown over frozen ground, will not take root. One who knows the value of and desires to cultivate a seed will not expose it, but will place it in suitable soil and will nurture and care for that which grows out of the seed. One who constantly says that he is divine, that he is the microcosm of the macrocosm, that he is Mithra, Brahm, or another formal Deity, is exposing and blowing away the seed which he has and is not likely to be one in whom the seed of divinity will take root and grow. He who feels that he is a veritable Noah's Ark and feels the divine within, holds sacred and nurtures the thought. By cultivating and improving his thoughts and by acting in accordance with his belief, he furnishes the conditions in and through which intelligence and divinity grow up naturally. Then he will become gradually conscious that all things are within him and that he is gradually becoming conscious of all things.

A FRIEND [H. W. Percival]



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