

On the Watch-Tower

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Who is the Winner?

In a recent match, the two sisters Venus Williams and Serena Williams were pitted against each other. Serena, the younger one, won this time, her third Wimbledon singles title. Of course, she was in great spirits after this victory. But from what the papers report, the two sisters are quite as friendly with each other as they have always been. They have fought against each other on tennis courts several times with great professional competence, but we are told that they are just as friendly with each other, whatever the result. They have been doing this for a long time, playing with the intensity the games require, but remaining affectionate sisters at home.

It is normal if one comes to consider it from the games point of view. These games are played for achieving quality, and both Serena and Venus have taken part in these several times, with one sister or the other winning. All games are meant to be only part of sport, to gain control over the body and show the audience what can be achieved by anyone. But they have slowly become, instead of games, like a place of battle and the real spirit of 'fighting' each other in friendship has been lost, so the game becomes, instead of a lovely way of showing skills and

ability, a battleground. Nowadays, almost all well-known contests like the Olympic Games have lost their grace and fun because there is so much in the media of the victory of some over others.

That the game should prove the quality of action is important, and not winning anything from opponents. A fine quality in doing any kind of work is a great blessing. We should all become proficient in that sense; whether we learn music, play a game or learn to cook or calculate, the result of doing a piece of work is important. It does not matter whether one wins or loses temporarily in the game of life. Everyone is going to win and become a beautiful piece that fits in with everything else, and make people wonder. But to learn to fit in we have to become good at 'play', and this is what we begin to see through the winning or losing. In a game, both winners and losers can have a good time and try to do better when the opportunity arises.

So, the game of life can be — should be rather — enjoyable, whatever we do; it might be losing or winning, but we know that both are the same. The importance of both is the game when it is played well. Then one is prepared for higher things. Are we ready?

Unlimited Seeing

Brotherhood is not an Object of the Society as imagined by many people, but 'Universal Brotherhood' is, as mentioned in the first Object of the Society. Universal Brotherhood implies that it must be practised in respect of all persons, rich or poor, important or not important, doing any kind of work or none at all. It is meant to include all human beings.

Unfortunately 'Brotherhood' suggests a sexual difference to some people, but this was not meant when the word was used. 'Brotherhood' was a term that included women also and therefore the Society's Object concerned all humanity. In English, there is no word which can stand for brotherhood or sisterhood combined, but the common factor in the two words is what is meant.

The term 'universal brotherhood' means, to all those who know and have 'eyes to see', a vast, in fact an unlimited, vista. The spiritual level embraces all the other levels including the lowest and the highest and to see what brotherhood is from the spiritual point of view, our eyes must be more and more open as we proceed. We would then see not merely the outer surface of everything, but the inner content and meaning. So brotherhood, or whatever else we may call it, perhaps 'the sense of unity', will be absolutely natural.

We will feel at one with all beings, which formerly was not possible. Some creatures appear to us as not so nice, or as beautiful and lovable as do the ones we like; but likes and dislikes

disappear in the glowing reality of oneness. It is said that the illumined ones see all of life, filled with Divine qualities, lie before them and appear differently from what it does to most people. The impression that some are better than others disappears. So, for the illumined consciousness everything has equal value and is equally lovable.

There is great beauty in the evolutionary process, but we see that beauty only in some places, if at all. A person may have an old face with wrinkles and other signs of age, but it exhibits great beauty all the same. There are some paintings which give this impression. The fact is that in the light of real beauty, old age and youthfulness, the more evolved and the less evolved, are equally beautiful. In fact, beauty exists whether there is a form to show it or not.

The Divine is all around, and surrounds the person who has a sufficiently developed consciousness, and hence in that consciousness there is truth, knowledge, eternity, deep joy, and so forth. These are not separate aspects of reality, they are like the facets of a diamond, which people may see as separate from each other, but they are all from the one source.

To be aware of this, the Divine in so-called ordinary things, one should put aside thought, except when it is needed concerning ordinary things. If there is thought of this kind, everything is brought down to its own level; and when no such thought fills the mind it is free to see things as they are. Unfortunately, when

we realize that there is something more than usual that can make itself known, in searching for it we intend to discover what we already know. The desire to see great art or anything similar is the satisfaction of getting some ideas from the minds of other persons.

There is a story told about a Teacher. He gave a talk one day, it is said, when a bird sitting on the window sang a song. The teacher became silent. When the bird finished he said the sermon was over. There is a song in everything. The whole universe is full of beautiful music, if we can hear. Something of that song shows that the Divine beauty, which needs no object, is present. But these moments are rare. The silence of the mind, the stillness to hear are rare and therefore our relationships are incomplete.

Can we spend a few minutes without such image-making? Can meditation begin when the mind already has a picture in the background, or, does it commence with an empty mind? The emptying of the mind requires much practice. Even if there is an interval of quiet for a short time, some observation is possible. But the observer thinks that he knows only if he is present. He does not want to subside or die and this is the problem. What can we do to go beyond the level of mental knowledge to perfection or awareness? Perhaps, we can teach ourselves not to analyse or do anything else, and just be. This may be what the future holds for everybody — an awareness which makes people see.

The Question of Breeding

They have now found a means to reduce the time required for plants to acquire qualities which would have formerly taken years. For instance, we are told in an article printed in *Newsweek* that the technique to create a new strain of corn has been reduced from ten to four years. Conventional breeding is now able to do things with the plant world which were not even tried earlier. The new techniques are beginning to replace bio-transformative techniques and the use of old techniques of breeding and cross-breeding will boost productivity, reduce the damage done by bad weather, disease, and so on.

Europe and a great deal of Asia and parts of Africa have strongly resisted genetically modified food. The result is that now competent people are choosing the crops and breeding and crossbreeding by normal means to have enough for the growing world population. Apparently most of the Asian, African and European countries have been averse to using the modern genetic techniques to create new varieties. Genetic manipulations done by a few people in companies, mostly of well-to-do countries, are suspect. Many users have grave doubts about the result of the new varieties created by these specialists, who can do whatever they please if bio-technique is used.

There are many manipulations in the present day about which the average person does not know anything. The manipulators are much cleverer than the public to which they sell products. So, to

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learn that protests have been so successful is rather gratifying. Technology makes it possible for technologists to get away with many things and at a price which they dictate. It is said that the GM products cost a great deal more than the

above-mentioned kind of improvements.

We cannot but hope that the educated members of the public will get more and more used to taking things in hand which will be altogether more reliable than if left to a few technocrats. ✧

The Founders of the Theosophical Society, Col. H. S. Olcott and Madame H. P. Blavatsky, chose Adyar in 1882 to be the international headquarters of the Society after searching in various parts of India for a suitable place. The beauty of the river, ocean and trees, and the tranquillity which reign at Adyar, make it an ideal centre for spiritual living, besides providing facilities for the administrative work.

Since 1882, countless persons have benefited from the life and activities at Adyar. They have come for walks, lectures, study, discussion, inward-turning. People of all nations participate in the courses and conventions which take place every year. Scholars and students journey hither to spend moments with the precious treasures of the Adyar Library. Books and other literature are sent out to the world from here to be used and translated. There has been a constant international exchange through Adyar and a constant atmosphere at Adyar for learning the 'daily conquest of the self' and the meaning of man's life.

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