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## PSYCHIC DEVELOPMENT

“To investigate unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in humanity.”

— Third Object of the Theosophical Society

An exploration of the Theosophical Society’s third Object includes the study of psychic research done by investigators in this field. Very few individuals have the natural abilities or trained psychic faculties necessary to do the kind of direct clairvoyant investigation conducted by former members of the Society such as Dora Kunz, Phoebe Bendit, Geoffrey Hodson, and Charles Leadbeater. In fact, it is inadvisable for people to develop those faculties without having first met certain moral and ethical qualifications such as those listed in the spiritual guidebook *At the Feet of the Master*. The reader of that little book is given this cautionary advice: “Have no desire for psychic powers . . . to force them too soon often brings in its train much trouble.”

A serious exploration of the third Object, however, need not involve the use of clairvoyance. Writing on the third Object in the October, 1970 issue of *The American Theosophist*, Joy Mills suggested, “We are not just talking about investigating or acquiring a certain knowledge or understanding of universal processes, but of coming, through a developing intuition, to a direct perception of those universals in terms of their reflections in [our] own inherent capacities, our own immortal and deific powers.” While there are numerous warnings given to the spiritual neophyte against the premature development of psychic powers, this does not seem to be the case with the development of spiritual intuition.

Still, there are those who succumb to the glamour associated with psychic powers despite repeated warnings. Perhaps, one stark example (and there are many) may serve to illustrate my point. A couple of years ago I received a desperate letter from a prisoner who had dabbled with psychic development. He had fallen into a month-long depression following the death of a close friend. “I began to build my own world in my mind, characters and all. At the end of the 40 or so days, I started to hear the voice of one of the characters I created in my head. It started off faint, then became more audible.” He then began to hear other voices. “When they first arrived they were at a peaceful level but as time has progressed they have become malicious, angry, and lustful. The situation is getting a bit intense.”

If we attempt to force psychic development before we are ready, we may be opening doors that are better left closed—at least for the time being. Invisible forces surround us: some are benevolent, some are benign, and others may be malignant. It is well to remember that once we have opened the doorway to the unseen worlds, it may be difficult or impossible to close that door again.

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