

## THE SPIRIT OF OPULENCE ('I' tense)

IT is quite a mistake to suppose that I must restrict and stint myself in order to develop greater power or usefulness. This is to form the conception of the Divine Power as so limited that the best use I can make of it is by a policy of self-starvation, whether material or mental. Of course, if I believe that some form of self-starvation is necessary to producing good work, then so long as I entertain this belief the fact actually is so for me. "Whatsoever is not of faith"--that is, not in accordance with my honest belief--"is sin"; and by acting contrary to what I really believe I bring in a suggestion of opposition to the Divine Spirit, which must necessarily paralyse my efforts, and surround myself with a murky atmosphere of distrust and want of joy.

But all this exists in, and is produced by, my belief; and when I come to examine the grounds of this belief I shall find that it rests upon an entire misapprehension of the nature of my own power. If I clearly realise that the creative power in myself is unlimited, then there is no reason for limiting the extent to which I may enjoy what I can create by means of it. Where I am drawing from the infinite I need never be afraid of taking more than my share. That is not where the danger lies. The danger is in not sufficiently realising my own richness, and in looking upon the externalised products of my creative power as being the true riches instead of the creative power of spirit itself.

If I avoid this error, there is no need to limit myself in taking what I will from the infinite storehouse: "All things are mine." And the way to avoid this error is by realising that the true wealth is in identifying ourselves with the spirit of opulence. I must be opulent in my thought. Do not "think money," as such, for it is only one means of opulence; but think opulence, that is, largely, generously, liberally, and I will find that the means of realising this thought will flow to me from all quarters, whether as money or as a hundred other things not to be reckoned in cash.

I must not make myself dependent on any particular form of wealth, or insist on its coming to me through some particular channel--that is at once to impose a limitation, and to shut out other forms of wealth and to close other channels; but I must enter into the spirit of it. Now the spirit is Life, and throughout the universe Life ultimately consists in circulation, whether within the physical body of the individual or on the scale of the entire solar system; and circulation means a continual flowing around, and the spirit of opulence is no exception to this universal law of all life.

When once this principle becomes clear to me I shall see that my attention should be directed rather to the giving than the receiving. I must look upon myself, not as misers' chests to be kept locked for my own benefit, but as centres of distribution; and the better I fulfil my function as such centres the greater will be the corresponding inflow. If I choke the outlet the current must slacken, and a full and free flow can be obtained only by

keeping it open. The spirit of opulence--the opulent mode of thought, that is--consists in cultivating the feeling that I possess all sorts of riches which I can bestow upon others, and which I can bestow liberally because by this very action I open the way for still greater supplies to flow in. But if I say, "I am short of money, I hardly know how to pay for necessaries. What have I to give?"

The answer is that I must always start from the point where I am; and if my wealth at the present moment is not abundant on the material plane, I need not trouble to start on that plane. There are other sorts of wealth, still more valuable, on the spiritual and intellectual planes, which I can give; and I can start from this point and practise the spirit of opulence, even though my balance at the bank may be nil. And then the universal law of attraction will begin to assert itself. I will not only begin to experience an inflow on the spiritual and intellectual planes, but it will extend itself to the material plane also.

If I have realised the spirit of opulence I cannot help drawing to myself material good, as well as that higher wealth which is not to be measured by a money standard; and because I truly understand the spirit of opulence I will neither affect to despise this form of good, nor will I attribute to it a value that does not belong to it; but I will co-ordinate it with my other more interior forms of wealth so as to make it the material instrument in smoothing the way for their more perfect expression. Used thus, with understanding of the relation which it bears to spiritual and intellectual wealth, material wealth becomes one with them, and is no more to be shunned and feared than it is to be sought for its own sake.

It is not money, but the love of money, that is the root of evil; and the spirit of opulence is precisely the attitude of mind which is furthest removed from the love of money for its own sake. It does not believe in money. What it does believe in is the generous feeling which is the intuitive recognition of the great law of circulation, which does not in any undertaking make its first question, How much am I going to get by it? but, How much am I going to do by it? And making this the first question, the getting will flow in with a generous profusion, and with a spontaneousness and rightness of direction that are absent when my first thought is of receiving only.

I am not called upon to give what I have not yet got and to run into debt; but I am to give liberally of what I have, with the knowledge that by so doing I am setting the law of circulation to work, and as this law brings me greater and greater inflows of every kind of good, so my out-giving will increase, not by depriving myself of any expansion of my own life that I may desire, but by finding that every expansion makes me the more powerful instruments for expanding the life of others. "Live and let live" is the motto of the true opulence.

Original writings of Thomas Troward – written for you in “I” tense. See yourself in the writing.