

students, indeed like all of us, this pupil wants to be told simply and clearly the answer, to be given unambiguous directions. But the Teacher answers, as all true teachers must, that the pupils must search for themselves, find the Path themselves. All the Teacher can do is to give directions for the preliminary preparation. Those directions are to “be of clean heart” and to “learn to discern the real from the false ... the ever-fleeting from the everlasting ... Head-learning from Soul-Wisdom.” Those two directions are echoed by other guides to the Path.

Thus in “The Golden Stairs,” the first and third steps are very similar to “be of clean heart”: “Behold the truth before you: a clean life, an open mind, a pure heart, an eager intellect, an unveiled spiritual perception, a brotherliness for one’s co-disciple, a readiness to give and receive advice and instruction, a loyal sense of duty to the Teacher, a willing obedience to the behests of Truth, once we have placed our confidence in, and believe that Teacher to be in possession of it; a courageous endurance of personal injustice, a brave declaration of principles, a valiant defense of those who are unjustly attacked, and a constant eye to the ideal of human progression and perfection which the secret science (*Gupta Vidyā*) depicts — these are the golden stairs up the steps of which the learner may climb to the Temple of Divine Wisdom.”

And in *At the Feet of the Master*, the first qualification for entering the Path is discrimination (in Sanskrit, *viveka*), which is the ability to “discern the real from the false” and in general to distinguish between alternatives. The second qualification is desirelessness or dispassion. The Sanskrit term for this qualification, *vairāgya*, means to be “without passion or attachment,” that is, “of clean heart.” In effect, then, the Teacher is telling the pupil to practice the first two qualifications for entering the Path. This is all any teacher can do — not teach the pupil knowledge, but only show the pupil how to learn.

C. MEDITATION.

1. T. S. Eliot wrote: “In my end is my beginning.” Meditate upon that sentence as a koan.

2. Robert Frost wrote a poem about a road that divided into two and about taking “the road less traveled by,” which made all the difference in his