

# The Irish Theosophist.

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## “THE BHAGAVAD GITA” IN PRACTICAL LIFE.

(Continued from p. 84.)

THE Holy Lord then continues to exhort Arjuna to remain steadfast in the belief that the re-incarnating Ego is the only real man, incorruptible and inexhaustible. The splendid imagery and profound reasoning flow on in stately measure, yet are simple as the simple truth itself. The duty of man is to this indwelling Spirit; he is a favoured warrior called to war at this period of his destiny. Should he fail in this, his universal duty, mankind will know him as one who deserted his post and his trust in the human army; the hosts of spiritual being, “generals of the army,” will know that the base fear of material results drove him back. He will be one who came down the stream of human life to a certain point of evolution, and then, refusing the duty to which the law and life had brought him, neglectful and oblivious of that spiritual help which has been his, which has brought him thus far, ungrateful, undutiful, afraid to lose his little self, too timorous to trust life itself, he will have retired, an affrighted animal-man, into the background of human progress. He is Man. He is Spirit. The Lord is himself; he is That; *let him trust!*

The paramount necessity of trust is thus set forth at the very outset. Can man not trust to life in its full flowing, its love, its law? Can he not resign the phantasms of the mind for the wider experience of actual living? The ample opportunity, the timely changes, the onward course of the eternal stream; can he not trust these? The inner Lord; can he not trust that prompting? The indestructible, the indivisible, the universal, the immovable; can he not for these resign his little fragment of mind? That pigmy mind which hawks about its merits; which niggles for results and rewards; debates, barter, wrangles—and for what? For its own place and precedence in Nature. Will he, for

that inconsiderable place, resign his share in the Universal Mind? Will he prefer the drop to the stream?

Does he perchance say that he knows naught of these things? That no assurance of their reality is his, and such assurance he must have before he parts with that firm hold which he now has upon the visible, the actual and real? Then let him endeavour to touch or define this so-called actual and real, and it melts from his grasp; it dissolves before the gaze of the mind. To its minutest sub-division, matter is proved shifting and unstable. Far within his own consciousness is the only stable reality. Bid him go in search of that before the sliding sands on which he builds shall have swallowed him and his despair.

Do we say that there are none whom we can trust? No friend? No teacher? No guide? Accept the fact. Bereft of these all, are we yet bereft? See life in ruins at our feet, and shall the heart's high courage crumble too? Not so! The heart of man deceived, betrayed, outraged, abandoned, self-immolated even, is still a god-like thing and has a god's own power to fall back upon itself, building a newer and a better world. These cheats are well away! These idols, once so loved, what have they not swallowed up; what finer essences of our hearts have not been expressed before them in wasted blood and tears? But the true love we gave—that has gone forth to the margins of the world, to bless somewhat, somewhere. In the world of souls we can never lose our own. And that which was not ours; that fickle cheat we garlanded and praised; that child of time, that image of the dust; is it not well away, oh, grieving heart? Is it not well away; and what is not well with thee? Thou hast thyself, whose might thou dost not grasp. Yet is it dimly felt, seeing, as thou dost, those vernal returns of the heart's hope; seeing its buoyant reaction, its upward trend, its lift and lilt and love. There, deep within, inaudible as a sound, but as a power most audible to the mind, is that consciousness which is its own and only proof. Trust that and go forth into the universe living and working, careless of gathering, careless of garnering, as ready to go as to come, as ready to loose as to bind, as ready to resign as to take, and over all the star of thy strong heart. Know that great Nature does not love a whiner and a trembler, but to him who is careless of getting and holding, *there* do her endless bounties thickly fall.

Do we know what trust is? I think not. Some fashion of believing we take it to be, and a thing which we may have or may not have. We do not know this power. It is an energy to be engendered by the will, and is then a force so compelling that it lifts its possessor beyond mere

mountains and day stars to a place of knowledge and peace. In our poor terms we say we have, or have not, trust. It comes not so. No powers come to the timid, the reluctant, and the doubtful. Powers are things of light and fire. They must be sought, pursued, taken by assault, and held. Do we think Nature, who loves to have her thralls, will suffer us to hold undisturbed a power so great and so occult as trust? Having that, we are in time her master ; all her hosts conspire to steal our trust away. But listening to the low call of intuition, let us grasp this power called trust, and, wrestling greatly, let us keep it for our own. Oh, trust ; *trust* ; TRUST ; thou art mover of the world.

Side by side with this necessary quality is that other, which immovably regards both pleasure and pain. Call it calm, balance, even-mindedness, what we will ; it is an interior adjustment to all circumstance, and permits the maintenance of harmony within.

It is possible to misunderstand the teaching at this point. Unless the mortal dross be utterly purged away and states unimagined by us be attained, it does not seem possible to regard pleasure and pain, as they present themselves to our consciousness, as being the same. Hence it seems that we are to meet either or both with equal heart. We are not, it would seem, expected to feel them alike ; we are expected to meet them without moving from our course. It is evident, to take even one step away from mere gross selfishness, that the pain of a fellow-being cannot be the same to us as his happiness—however brief—may be ; and especially if we are to “ feel for all that lives.” So that it must be, in the first place, the personal aspect of pain and pleasure, our own pain and pleasure, toward which we are to exercise equal-mindedness. In the second place, while to our present consciousness a great difference between them presents itself, it is at the same time possible to disregard them as influences, as results, not seeking or avoiding either, using both and abandoning both, becoming, each in his own degree, like that host “ which foresaw, yet chose.”

In a later chapter of the book we find Krishna saying :

“ The pleasures which arise from the feelings are the wombs of future pains.” This is so self-evident that the loss or departure of a pleasure causes pain, that probably everyone will grant the fact. If we love a pleasure for itself, as sensation, or as final result, the truism is apparent. But if we take it as so much experience ; if we test it as a gift of life, as somewhat to be wisely used and having an inner meaning, then, indeed, it becomes evident that the departure of the pleasure causes no pain. We shall have foreseen this ; we shall have found that thorn, and, being forewarned, we shall have plucked it out. What is

left is pure experience—a thornless rose if we offer it upon the altar of the Lord of Life.

It is a fact in human nature that we are loath to analyse either pain or pleasure, yet we do not shrink from them equally. We go but a short way in the test of pain, and, behold! we have conjured up the monster and it bears us away. The imagination is paralysed, the energies undermined by the mere contemplation of pain. Need this be so? Why not give it another name, another aspect? Call it experience; hath it then no fruit? If we have harvested anything at all from it, is it not also a fitting gift for the altar? Candidly, I do not believe that one *thinking* human being can be found who would willingly relinquish at his life's end all that he has learned from his sorrows, or those sorrows themselves, if he had the power to live his life over again without them. There are sorrows dearer than pleasure, it is true, springing from the loss of deeper joys, and to obliterate the one would bring oblivion to the other. But there is more than this to the question. The imagination recoils from the image of a life wherein pleasure was the only chord, the unique light. Instinctively we perceive that here is something grotesque; something lower than the pure animal, to whom some forms of pain are known. If we look deeper, shall we not find in this recoil of the soul a clear pointing to the fact that we are sharers of the universal life, while to know pleasure only must perforce cut us off from the whole of that life and its advance? Think of a life bereft of toil, effort, the spur of necessity, the travail of thought, the share in the dear common human life. What manner of grotesque monster is this? It is unthinkable.

Since pain, then, is necessary, we must re-adjust our ideas of it. Is it not, perhaps, true that what we call pain is really only *effort*, is the condition of life and growth in any direction; a condition which is only made discordant and painful by that selfishness which resists, which would refuse to share the world-experience, and would cling to a known and pleasurable state? Well for us it is that we are not taken at our word and left to starve amid a monotony of pleasure, like the king's son covered with beaten gold who died—as we should—from obstructed circulation. Gladly embrace the noble truth that life takes but to give, gives but to take, and each substitution is more ample than the last. If I lose a friend, I come nearer to the true ideal of friendship; but when I abandon that personal ideal and pine only to befriend all beings, I fall back upon myself and go by leaps and bounds towards that Self which brooks no half lover, but will have a man's whole soul in order to give that back to the universe in wise and wide work. Life never robs us. In that exchange man is always the gainer. But it demands the heart of trust.

It is incredible that we—each one of us—should with one accord demand as by right divine to be the exempts of pain. Some deeper meaning must exist. Is it that the joyful soul within sings of that right divine of gods on godlike planes of being, and the false self appropriates the tune? This is true, but is there no more to it? Can it be that this self really clings to pain and the idea of pain with its attendant train of self-pity, self-relaxation, self-distrust, self-perception—luxurious wantons, all? How if there be this morbid strain of liking to feel one's self exceptional, ill-used; to be preoccupied with one's self; in fine, to feel and feel and feel? How if we cling to the well-known note, the accustomed image of martyr and saint, and how if we love to gaze upon ourselves and must find ourselves worthy of attention as Knights of the Order of Pain? “No man ever stated his griefs as lightly as he might.” Were we to be without this panorama of personal pain, could our attention be long withheld from the living spectacle of universal anguish? By my faith in nature humanized by compassion I believe we could not long be diverted from the suffering of the world, and that the false self, striving to block up the many avenues to the universal consciousness, throws out these sustained lures of personal pain. Put the image by! It is not by isolation, but by gladly sharing the common destiny that thou shalt become a moulder of fate herself.

A friend has reminded me that we take our pain too timidly. Let us freely admit that. Where lies the dormant hero-impulse to do, to dare, and to bear? The spectre of pain appears, and man turns away his gaze as from some ghastly spectre. Or he sinks plaintive and unnerved upon the grim form, embracing it as a something all his own. In either case he accepts this strange visitant as *pain*. Was it thus self-announced? How if it be not that, but a herald of some royal advent? Call the bright roll of patience, courage, trust, serenity, resignation, hope, and all the lovely progeny of heroic pain! Who would not father these? Yet thy patience slept the sleep of the unborn until pain called it forth and tried its strength. Thy courage was a thing of dreams until the instant a danger called it, full armed, from thy brain. The accost of pain demands a hero. Take thou his armed hand; smile boldly in his eyes, give him brave cheer within thy tented heart, for thou shalt find in him thy wisest Counsellor, thy world-wide Comrade, the great Revealer, whose final name is peace.

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY.

(*To be continued.*)

## WHAT THE OTHER MAN SAYS.

OF all intellectual pleasures, what pleasure more enjoyable, more replete with pure, unadulterated self-gratification than finding our own thoughts and pet theories expressed by some total and absolute stranger? "Exactly what I always thought, and such beautiful language, too. How clever of him to have expressed it all so neatly." This is what we say feeling a nice, warm feeling inside at giving the man his due, in such a generous and disinterested way. I suppose I need not add, that all the while the virtuous feeling of disinterestedness only gains from a solid ground conviction that, clever as the stranger may be, we are still cleverer, for we knew it all along, have thought of it all years ago, and need nobody's help to think wise and just thoughts.

It was exactly this kind of unmaterialised bouquets I was throwing at myself (a few other lovers of Gaelic tradition and believers in the great future of Ireland included), and so spending a few agreeable moments this morning, and all on account of another man, Edouard Schuré by name, having spoken of Celtic genius exactly in the same way as I would have spoken myself. The passage, which gave me this welcome opportunity for self-congratulation is to be found in his book, "Les Grandes Légendes de France," and is a sort of preface to the chapter entitled, "Les Légendes de la Bretagne et le Génie Celtique."

Here is part of the passage in English words: . . . . "If I had to characterise at a general glance the *living Trinity* (all the italics are Edouard Schuré's) which constitutes the moral being called *the French nation*, I would say that the *Frank genius* has constituted its skeleton and its *solid body*; the *Latin genius*, which has so strongly imprinted on us its stamp and its form, through the Roman conquest, the Church and the University plays in it the part of *intellect*. As to the *Celtic genius*, it is, at the same time, the *blood* which circulates in its veins, the *deep soul* which quickens its body, and the *second consciousness*, secret inspirer of its intellect. It is from the temperament, from the Celtic soul of France that come her incalculable movements, her most terrible jerks and her most sublime inspirations.

"But as the primitive Celtic race had two essential branches, whose twigs are to be found here and there, the Gaels and the Kymries, so the Celtic genius shows itself to us under two facets. The one jovial and jeering, which Cæsar saw and defined in these words: 'The Gael are fickle and lovers of new things.' This may be called the Gaelic genius, light, penetrating, and swift as the air, slightly indecent and sneering, easily turning to superficiality. The other facet is the Cymric genius,

solemn to heaviness, serious to sadness, tenacious to obstinacy, but profound and passionate, keeping at the bottom of its heart treasures of faithfulness and enthusiasm, often excessive and violent, but endowed with high capabilities of poetry, with a real gift of intuition and prophecy. This side of Celtic nature is dominant in Ireland (hear, hear), in Wales, and in our Armorique. It seems as if the elect of the race had taken refuge in these wild countries to seek safety behind their forests, their mountains, and rocky shores, and to guard the holy ark of memories against the destructive hands of conquerors."

Whether the forests and rocks had proved impregnable or the "holy ark of memories" still too full of vigorous life, but Edouard Schuré states farther on that "Saxon and Norman England never could assimilate Celtic Ireland." He also says that the province of Brittany always was the very seat of Celtic genius in France, genius of indomitable resistance and of exploration, which has produced at various epochs warriors of world-wide renown like Du Guesclin, La Tour d'Auvergne, and Moreau. It is from the same country that France has received many a time the impulses of her philosophic, religious and literary life. Chateaubriand, Ramennais, and the great Descartes, who, by an overwhelming effort of one short life, has for ever destroyed the dead scholasticism of mediæval thought—all were Celts, born guides and inspirers of Frank and Roman France.

The following passage of Edouard Schuré's prose is especially beautiful :

"Having beheld the resurrection of Celtic poetry, France has in a way recognised her soul of old arising from a forgotten past full of dreams and of the infinite. France was astonished at first before this strange apparition, its eyes looking from over the seas, its voice both rude and tender, sometimes swollen with wrath, at other times thrilling with sweet melancholy, like Oisin's lyre, like the ancient Atlantic silence it came, 'Who are you?' 'There was a time when I was in thee; I was the best part of thy very self; but thou hast driven me away,' answers the pale-faced prophetess. 'Indeed,' says the other, 'I do not remember it any more, but through thee strings unknown to me vibrate in my heart, and thou makest me see once more a forgotten world. Come, speak, sing again! so that thou mightest teach me some hidden secret of my own destiny.' And so France, remembering that once she was Gael, has learned to listen to the voice of Brittany and the ancient Celtic world."

With our tottering self-reliance and poor sense of things as they really are, it is most important for us all to learn that when the "other

man" speaks he says exactly what we thought all along, but never had the pluck to proclaim or the moral uprightness to make our own unswerving ideal. What the other man says is often an encouragement, a pat on the back, which came just in time to show us that within our hearts there also dwells something which always makes us think the right thoughts, and sometimes men do the right thing.

In the particular case we are discussing, France is the other man who speaks to us through Edouard Schuré. France has learned, as he informs us, to listen to the voice of the great Celtic past. But has Ireland?

Is Ireland going to recognise the voice of her own soul speaking within her? Is she ready to understand that, behind the treacherous rocks of her prolonged material ill-luck and wilderness of her political disorders, there still dwell the "elect of the race," watching over the intactness of the people's great memories, and that these memories are of valour, of purity, of great men with great hearts and great deeds? And will there be a time when these great memories will step out of their present obscurity and become once more glowing ideals, fit to lead men to death and to life?

Or, may be, men, Irish-born and Irish-bred, are more inclined to read works about their own country by English authors, who tell them as Mr. Froude does, for instance, that Irish legendary lore is "ridiculous bombast," and may be, having collected this valuable information, they also are inclined to believe it in a sort of a half-hearted way.

I wonder.

VERA JOHNSTON.

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#### DUALITY.

*"From me spring forth good and evil."*

Who gave thee such a ruby-flaming heart,  
 And such a pure, cold spirit? Side by side  
 I know these must eternally abide  
 In intimate war, and each to each impart  
 Life from their pain, with every joy a dart  
 To wound with grief or death the self-allied.  
 Red life within the spirit crucified,  
 The eyes eternal pity thee, thou art  
 Fated with deathless powers at war to be,  
 Not less the martyr of the world than he  
 Whose thorn-crowned brow usurps the due of tears  
 We would pay to thee, ever ruddy life,  
 Whose passionate peace is still to be at strife  
 O'erthrown but in the unconflicting spheres.



## BY-PATHS IN OCCULT PROGRESS.

ONE of the objects which we, as members of the Theosophical Society, set before ourselves, is to strive after a realisation of man's higher destiny in our own selves. We believe in the existence of higher powers, and a sublimer state of consciousness than that which we experience now. We believe that the attainment of this exalted condition depends upon the abandonment of personal interests, which are a snare and a delusion, and the aspiring towards a universal consciousness which we shall share with all creation, and in which we shall feel by sympathy the throb of every human heart, and have no secret joys or sorrows unshared by others. Sick of the narrow limits of our personality; weary of private ambitions, loves, and speculations; distracted by the never-ceasing panorama of our own moods, now of gratulation, now of remorse; now of cold cynicism, now of morbid sentimentality, we long to escape from that importunate demon of self-consciousness which is ever at our side instilling into our cup of joy the poison of pleasure, and marring our healthy spontaneity of feeling with its whisperings of vanity and egotism. "Let me feel myself in these people, let me share their joys and sorrows that so I may help them!" is the cry of the soul; but the personality—exacting spouse created by ourself in the past—steps between and snatches our love for itself.

To paralyse this personality, to make it an obedient slave, and to learn to take away our attention from it and listen to the voice of the Oversoul—this is the science of Râja Yoga, or true practical occultism.

Shall we then cultivate occult powers? Is it right to try to develop them? Or should we leave them alone, and confine our attention to the ethics and the philosophy? Such questions are often asked, but have we not here a touchstone by which they are easily solved? Would such and such a power increase or diminish the strength of our personality? Would its attainment hinder or help us in our chosen aim?

There are many occult powers and faculties which are mere adornments of the personality, and it is quite possible to imagine a being superbly gifted with clairvoyance, magnetic power, intellectuality, control over his inner bodies, and what not—and yet an intensely *personal* individual. He might fill the world with his charities and attract crowds by his personal gifts, but still be the victim of self-consciousness, egotism and vanity. Well, some may deem this a desirable goal to attain, and even imagine that such a being would be happy; but for those who do not care to merely swell their personality, the cultivation of such powers will be of no use whatever. There are

some of us who, so far from having powers to gain, have positively powers to lose, ere we can make any progress on the true path. Having in a past life strayed on the path of personal aggrandisement, we unexpectedly arouse a latent tendency to do the same in this life. A fatal facility to study along the lines of various occult arts tempts us to leave the straight path of spiritual development and to wander on the by-path of useless knowledge. Some have bodies over-sensitive to psychic impressions, whereby the evil forces of a great city are able to invade them and lead them astray. Others find they can leave their physical body and travel in an inner body, and thus they encounter new fields of temptation and subtler attacks which they cannot resist. Such powers are obviously hindrances, not helps, unless indeed our *motives* are other than we care to confess.

The fact is that the brain-mind is not fit to judge what powers we ought to develop. The powers are supposed to be for the use of the higher self in its work, but the brain-mind only caters for the lower self. It is never safe, therefore, to make the acquisition of powers an object; we should aspire after selflessness, and leave the powers to grow naturally as an outcome of our success in realising that aspiration.

As it is our personality is so strong that it invariably twists and distorts every bit of knowledge and power that comes within its reach. All our good motives get tintured with vanity and greed, because we cannot yet altogether eliminate the personal element from them. Our responsibilities for the right use of our ordinary faculties are great indeed; which one of us dare take the far greater responsibility of rightly using wider powers? An occult force is not a mere quiescent machine ready to be used and capable of being turned off at will. It is a good deal more, and *must* be controlled to prevent it from controlling its master. Let us beware how we waken it.

Is it possible to stumble into the wrong path by accident and through heedlessness? Yes, I believe it is, and that some of us are inclined to fall in danger of doing so occasionally. The danger usually arises from a mistaken notion as to the object of certain ceremonies or practical aids that may be recommended. Suppose, for instance, we are told to visualise some symbol or what not, as an aid to concentration on the Higher Self. This hint is intended—not as an object in itself—but as an aid towards a higher object. If we find it does aid us, well and good; but if we forget the main object and allow our mind to be taken up altogether with the practice, we miss the point. It is of no use to visualise a double triangle until it grows objective and follows you about everywhere like a dog. This is simply the unintelligent cultivation of an occult art,

and may lead you astray by opening up to your eye the dangers of the astral world. Use the symbol to start a good current if you like, but then forget it. Again, we may be over-anxious to protect ourselves from the antagonistic forces that surround us, and may indulge in some such practice as the building of an imaginary wall or shell round us. The main spring of this conduct is *fear*; we are afraid, we feel weak, and we want to shut ourselves up in a comfortable house where we can be safe. But *courage* is the best protection; courage builds a far stronger wall round its possessor than could be built in the other way. It can even stop bullets in a battle. The wall built by courage is a real wall, and it is built in the right way—by dwelling on the *idea* and letting the material effect follow of itself. The psychic wall which some people try to build round themselves is built in the wrong way; they dwell on the material side of the question.

Let us beware of thinking about our inner bodies, our auras, and so on, as material things. They *are* material things, but we should live in the world of ideas, and leave the rest to natural law.

Black magic always begins at the wrong end. It begins at the bottom. It attempts to achieve spiritual results by the adjustment of material conditions. Thus it resembles the Tower of Babel, which was built upon the ground and reared towards heaven. But the creative power evolves from spirit downwards to matter. One of the symbols of the Tarot is the lightning-struck tower, which typifies a material system smitten by the wrath of heaven. Pranayama, or the restraint of breath, is a good instance of this. The idea is to tranquillise the mind by regulating the vital currents. But the right way is to regulate the mind, and then the vital currents will regulate themselves. There is a little vital god in your body who understands how to govern it much better than you do. Leave the regulation of the breath to him, and attend to your mind. It may be possible to regulate the mind by regulating the breath first, but it is exceedingly difficult and dangerous.

Believe me, the practice of brotherhood is the quickest and surest way to all objects of attainment. It is not a mere ethical precept tacked on to occultism to give it a pious smack, or to prevent its misuse. It is the true path. For by practising it we cultivate the higher self, the central pivot of our nature, and all the rest depends thereon. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you."

CAPRICORN.

## OUR SECRET TIES.

OUR deepest life is when we are alone. We think most truly, love best, when isolated from the outer world in that mystic abyss we call soul. Nothing external can equal the fulness of these moments. We may sit in the blue twilight with a friend, or bend together by the hearth, half whispering, or in a silence populous with loving thoughts mutually understood; then we may feel happy and at peace, but it is only because we are lulled by a semblance to deeper intimacies. When we think of a friend, and the loved one draws nigh, we sometimes feel half-pained, for we touched something in our solitude which the living presence shut out; we seem more apart, and would fain cry out—"Only in my deep heart I love you, sweetest heart; call me not forth from this; I am no more a spirit if I leave my throne." But these moods, though lit up by intuitions of the true, are too partial, they belong too much to the twilight of the heart, they have too dreamy a temper to serve us well in life. We should wish rather for our thoughts a directness such as belongs to the messengers of the gods, swift, beautiful, flashing presences bent on purposes well understood.

What we need is that this interior tenderness shall be elevated into seership, that what in most is only yearning or blind love shall see clearly its way and hope and aim. To this end we have to observe more intently the nature of the interior life. We find, indeed, that it is not a solitude at all, but dense with multitudinous being: instead of being alone we are in the thronged highways of existence. For our guidance when entering here many words of warning have been uttered, laws have been outlined, and beings full of wonder, terror, and beauty described. Yet there is a spirit in us deeper than our intellectual being which I think of as the Hero in man, who feels the nobility of its place in the midst of all this, and who would fain equal the greatness of perception with deeds as great. The weariness and sense of futility which often falls upon the mystic after much thought is due, I think, to this, that he has not recognized that he must be worker as well as seer, that here he has duties demanding a more sustained endurance just as the inner life is so much vaster and more intense than the life he has left behind.

Now, the duties which can be taken up by the soul are exactly those which it feels most inadequate to perform when acting as an embodied being. What shall be done to quiet the heart-cry of the world: how answer the dumb appeal for help we so often divine below eyes that laugh? It is sadder than sorrow to think that pity with no hands to

heal, that love without a voice to speak, should helplessly heap their pain upon pain while earth shall endure. But there is a truth about sorrow which I think may make it seem not so hopeless. There are fewer barriers than we think : there is, in fact, an inner alliance between the soul who would fain give and the soul who is in need. Nature has well provided that not one golden ray of all our thoughts is sped ineffective through the dark ; not one drop of the magical elixirs love distils is wasted. Let us consider how this may be. There is a habit we nearly all have indulged in : we often weave little stories in our minds expending love and pity upon the imaginary beings we have created. But I have been led to think that many of these are not imaginary, that somewhere in the world beings are thinking, loving, suffering just in that way, and we merely reform and live over again in our life the story of another life. Sometimes these faraway intimates assume so vivid a shape, they come so near with their appeal for sympathy that the pictures are unforgettable, and the more I ponder over them the more it seems to me that they often convey the actual need of some soul whose cry for comfort has gone out into the vast, perhaps to meet with an answer, perhaps to hear only silence. I will supply an instance. I see a child, a curious, delicate little thing, seated on the doorstep of a house. It is an alley in some great city ; there is a gloom of evening and vapour over the sky ; I see the child is bending over the path ; he is picking cinders and arranging them, and, growing closer, as I ponder, I become aware that he is laying down in gritty lines the walls of a house, the mansion of his dream. Here spread along the pavement are large rooms, these for his friends, and a tiny room in the centre, that is his own. So his thought plays. Just then I catch a glimpse of the corduroy trousers of a passing workman, and a heavy boot crushes through the cinders. I feel the pain in the child's heart as he shrinks back, his little love-lit house of dreams all rudely shattered. Ah, poor child, building the City Beautiful out of a few cinders, yet nigher, truer in intent than many a stately, gold-rich palace reared by princes, thou wert not forgotten by that mighty spirit who lives through the falling of empires, whose home has been in many a ruined heart. Surely it was to bring comfort to hearts like thine that that most noble of all meditations was ordained by the Buddha. *"He lets his mind pervade one quarter of the world with thoughts of Love, and so the second, and so the third, and so the fourth. And thus the whole wide world, above, below, around, and everywhere, does he continue to pervade with heart of Love far-reaching, grown great, and beyond measure."*

That love, though the very fairy breath of life, should by itself and

so imparted have a sustaining power some may question, not those who have felt the sunlight fall from distant friends who think of them ; but, to make clearer how it seems to me to act, I say that love, Eros, is a being. It is more than a power of the soul, though it is that also ; it has a universal life of its own, and just as the dark heaving waters do not know what jewel lights they reflect with blinding radiance, so the soul, partially absorbing and feeling the ray of Eros within it, does not know that often a part of its nature nearer to the sun of love shines with a brilliant light to other eyes than its own. Many people move unconscious of their own charm, unknowing of the beauty and power they seem to others to impart. It is some past attainment of the soul, a jewel won in some old battle which it may have forgotten, but none the less this gleams on its tiara and the star-flame inspires others to hope and victory.

If it is true here that many exert a spiritual influence they are unconscious of, it is still truer of the spheres within. Once the soul has attained to any possession like love, or persistent will, or faith, or a power of thought, it comes into psychic contact with others who are struggling for these very powers. The attainment of any of these means that the soul is able to absorb and radiate some of the diviner elements of being. The soul may or may not be aware of the position it is placed in and its new duties, but yet that Living Light, having found a way into the being of any one person, does not rest there, but sends its rays and extends its influence on and on to illumine the darkness of another nature. So it comes that there are ties which bind us to people other than those whom we meet in our everyday life. I think they are more real ties, more important to understand, for if we let our lamp go out some far away who had reached out in the dark and felt a steady will, a persistent hope, a compassionate love, may reach out once again in an hour of need, and finding no support may give way and fold the hands in despair. Often indeed we allow gloom to overcome us and so hinder the bright rays in their passage ; but would we do it so often if we thought that perhaps a sadness which besets us, we do not know why, was caused by some heart drawing nigh to ours for comfort, that our lethargy might make it feel still more its helplessness, while our courage, our faith, might cause "our light to shine in some other heart which as yet has no light of its own." Æ.

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#### EXTRACTS FROM A CHILD'S LETTER.

Mr. Editor, Uncle — wants me to tell you what kind of a book I'd like the best to have you send us children, and so I'll just tell you the best I can.

First of all you see I like picture-books. I don't like books that

haven't any pictures, do you? I like those pictures of Æ.'s, they look so shiney and like sunshine, don't you think so? And Uncle — has told me lots of things about what the sun does, and all about the fire. Fire is very nice, isn't it? Uncle — and I have good times when nobody else is around about the fire. You see we have an open fire in our house, and Uncle — puts out the light and then we amuse ourselves. We make houses and cities and faeries in the fire, and, oh, such wonderful things we see there! So tell us some fire stories and sun stories, I like them so much.

I'd like to know those children Æ. talks about. I wish they'd write me a letter—do you think they would? I wish you'd ask them. They could write to me, or you could write for them or get Æ. to write to me. Wouldn't that be fun—and then some day we'd meet each other and explain all about how nice it was.

Uncle — tells me awfully nice stories about things he calls history. We always pretend we are going to Egypt when he is going to tell me a story of history about Egypt, then you see we understand all about it when we get there, and see just what was going on then, and this is so nice because you know it's about real people. Uncle — says we used to live in Egypt a very long time ago, and that's the reason we can pretend to be there so easily when we tell stories about those places. Uncle — and I sit in a big chair and go in our minds all over the world this way. I'd like this, too, in that book.

I would like to have a great many things explained, and I think you will tell us all about everything if you just write a book and take us children to all the places like Uncle — and I go in our minds. We learn about the stars, and all about the faeries and caverns in the earth, and about all on top of the earth when we think this way, and that's the kind of a story book we'd like, Uncle — and I; and we have such fun doing this that we'd like seeing the way other people do it, and go in our minds to places that they go to, and see what they see.

I like to draw pictures. Could you send us some pictures that we could draw and send to you, you could show us how to do them right, Uncle — and I have such fun drawing pictures in the sand. We make wonderful houses and animals and birds in the sand. I don't know how to draw pictures very well, you know, but Uncle — does them for me, and we call them ours.

Don't let anybody send us a book that hasn't any pictures, and that tells us to be good all the time, and talks about things we children don't want, and about how to bring us up. Give my love to everybody from Uncle — and from me. Some day I'd like to play with you.

Your loving little friend.

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## A NEW TRANSLATION OF THE GOSPELS.

WE have to thank the editors for letting us see the proof-sheets of their translation of the Gospel according to St. Mark. The proof-sheets were accompanied by a request for a perfectly sincere opinion as to the method and value of the work ; and as in matters of this moment mere complimentary phrases are impertinent, we shall give our opinion quite frankly and sincerely.

It seems to us that this new translation of the Gospels will not accomplish its object, because it is carried out in a half-hearted way and half measures are fatal. What is needed is to rescue the records of Christian origins from the net of theology ; to let them take their place quite simply in the world of real life. If they have any peculiar and distinctive quality, any divine breath not in other books, it will easily enough make itself known, for inspiration is harder to hide than sunlight. What we want is to meet these old writings face to face, to see them in broad daylight, to know them as they really are, the higher their quality the better they will stand the ordeal. To realise this they must be freed from the whole theological atmosphere which has grown up round them in the centuries ; we wish to see them as their authors saw them, not as the divines of the Middle Ages viewed them in the midst of theological strife and turmoil. More particularly we must quite consciously put away from them the controversial spirit which is crystallised in the great English versions—for these versions are the outcome of an age of religious warfare and persecution. We must really go back to the originals, and bring them to light in the form and language of our day, just as we should do with a new dialogue of Plato, were we to discover one hitherto unknown. We must get the real, not the theological, equivalents of all important words and thoughts, in such a way that they shall speak to our sense of real life, and it is also essential that we should make a fresh start in matters of form. There are half-a-dozen arrangements of the New Testament books, all quite "orthodox" in their way ; but in reality the result of mere habit, and not of thought and sound judgment at all. So that we need not confine ourselves to any special order for the different books. We might adopt a chronological order, beginning with Paul's *Epistle to the Galatians*, or *to the Thessalonians* ; much would here depend on individual theory, it is true, but the result, as an object lesson, could not fail to be instructive. The problem of the order in which the books were actually written, finds its analogy in the question of the sequence of Shakespeare's plays, and every editor has to face that question



manfully, at the risk of his edition becoming quite insignificant from a historical point of view. And in reality the order of the New Testament books, as they appear in the authorised version of 1611, has no more a sacro-sanct character than the order of Shakespeare's plays in the folio of 1623. Both editions contain apocryphal works, and works wrongly attributed to their alleged authors, and it is the business of competent editors to set these things right.

It should hardly be necessary to say that the division into chapters and verses is a mere trick of theological controversialists, eager to belabour each other the more easily with "texts," that is with sentences torn out of their proper context and used regardless of age, authorship and everything else a thoughtful soul, seeking truth, would pay careful heed to.

So that any new translation we think should comply with these ideals: fresh and vivid language, which should speak to our sense of real life; a thoughtful arrangement of the various documents, according to date and authorship, or supposed authorship in the case of the anonymous books; and, lastly, a compliance with the best ideal of external form, such as is usual in any work of literary excellence at the present day. Thus we might gain a new impression of these obscure and difficult records, and this might in time grow to be a true impression.

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#### THE OUTLOOK.

My comrades, let us look at the world a moment. Little Greece has been disturbing the equilibrium of the "Great Powers." The sympathies of the people in most, if not all, of the "great" nations are opposed to the action taken by their respective governments. A shout might set free an avalanche at any moment. An arbitration treaty between the United States and England has been under way for some time, but the fact that the latter country has been proposing to spend a quarter of a million sterling fortifying St. Lucia, a small island in close proximity to America, does not tend to remove the suspicion which seems to exist in the United States as to England's *bona fides* in the matter. Was it not said of old that a sign of the consummation of the age would be the cry "Peace, Peace," when there was no peace? In South Africa the gamblers still exploit. They "care more for land than niggers," as Olive Schreiner puts it. The ravages of plague and famine continue unabated in India. Thousands are dying for want of food, while "shillings" are being collected on every hand to celebrate the long reign of India's Empress. Of wheat there is enough, and to spare, but it is in the hands of the speculators. Religionists of the different sects in England are warring bitterly over some proposed changes in the educational system. A new President enters office in the United States, and calls

together a Cabinet of millionaires. But it is for lack of wisdom the people perish there, as elsewhere, and for that they need not look to a body of millionaires. In Ireland the excitement over financial grievances has considerably subsided. The people seem to be awaiting the blast of a trumpet which will sound a note more directed to their *real* needs. When the hour is ripe the hero shall appear full armed. In a quiet mood one can catch the strain of the battle song reverberating through the hills and sleepy hollows.

In religion the old beliefs are being gradually replaced by the new. We are told by a paper of considerable influence on both sides of the Atlantic that "to be orthodox is not to hold to any old-time theories of inspiration, miracles, or incarnation, or other cognate doctrines—it is to believe that 'for us men and for our salvation' the prophets of old time spake, the witness in wondrous works was given, and the Christ came down from heaven." In Scotland, of all places, a new National Church Union has been formed for the spread of Broad Church Theology—a sign not without significance surely. The photographing of "spooks"; the hunting-up of haunted houses; palmistry, astrology, and general mediumistic practices, with the innumerable number of exposures following in their train, seem to form the chief matters of interest in spiritualistic circles. No startling revelation has come from the "spirits," and we continue to look to them in vain for a philosophy of commonsense. One does not need to consult the planchette or dabble with any such spiritualistic stage trappings to know what is essential—that only "wisdom and compassion can regenerate the world."

To the Theosophist looking out upon life all these things are so many sign-posts, which he scans as a traveller does the milestones along his path. He does not become absorbed in the turmoil, but notes carefully the meaning and purpose underlying it all. A hopeful, cheerful, gratifying event at the present epoch is the laying of the foundation stone of the first building in connection with the school for the revival of the lost mysteries of antiquity, in which "the science of life and true brotherhood" will be taught. "It is a glorious work," writes Mrs. Tingley, "and those who take part in it are, indeed, fortunate. Their responsibility is great, and the calls made upon them often heavy. But they should know that they are working with the tide of the world's life working with them. They can afford to keep in their hearts an immense courage, an utter fearlessness, an unshakable determination. For victory is ready waiting for them. They, for their part, have only to do their simple duty."

Sometimes I am accused by my friends of making too many suggestions. Perhaps there is some truth in the accusation, but I am content if even one or two bear good fruit. By this I do not mean to suggest in the words of the well-known parable that some "seed" may have "fallen on stony ground." Rather do I attribute the fruitlessness to the nature of the suggestions themselves. It is not sufficient to write exquisitely about beautiful things, neither is it sufficient to talk philosophy or metaphysics with wonderful lucidity and

wisdom. One little act of social service may accomplish much more. True, the ideal servitor of humanity must possess a great combination of gifts to satisfy the various entities composing it. We need not, however, sacrifice one gift to the predominance of another, or run anything to extremes. The dreamer of beautiful dreams may be the supreme practicalist if he will. This magazine exists to serve, and not in one direction only. I want to see it a radiating centre of life. All can help; all cannot write articles, but almost everyone hits on a good idea or suggestion, as the phrase goes, from time to time. Why not send it along to be shared in the widest manner possible by fellow-comrades? Do we realise what strength lies in our unity? Do we act with spontaneity when the heart impels, or do we restrain, thinking that *our* little help, whatever form it may take, is unnecessary?

I have received a suggestion from two members of T.S., both distinctly different. One is connected with children, and is as follows:—

There are many women amongst us whose duties lie in that narrow sphere called home, who, much as they long to work for Theosophy, may not give themselves up to public work. Such women ache daily with the effort to understand and interpret the purpose of life. Can they not serve the "little ones?" Possibly there are already children in their homes—children waiting to be loved and served. It may be that though kept by duty to a quiet, lonely life some women amongst the Theosophists have personal monies, on a payment of which they could support a homeless child. Most women are, however, without monetary independence, and therefore cannot mother a little one, willing though they be. Could our lodges help such workers for Theosophy to serve the children?

There are hundreds of outcast or orphaned little ones around us; a very small sum per week would keep one of these. Where a member of any lodge wished to receive a homeless child, it would surely be possible and brotherlike to find the small sum needed to give one more child such surroundings that it might have a chance of learning to rule the animal by the human, to blend the human with the Divine.

The other suggestion speaks for itself.

My proposition is, that we should have a Theosophic hymn, psalm, or chant, which may be like a prean of blissful praise—a song of triumph, which will be known to all of us *in all nations*, and serve like a rallying call; with power to stir the utmost depths of our being, and rouse us as with one accord to the most fervent and ardent emotions of love, faith, trust, and courage in fighting our battles. A song which must always create a wave of enthusiasm wherever heard. It should be well known by this time that we mortals *can* put that power, like a living soul, into a song, witness the "Marsellaise," which rouses the French to the highest pitch of enthusiasm and valour; inspiring even the little street *gamins*, as at their evening play they march up and down loudly singing the grand Hymn of their Nation.

My correspondent suggests "The Silent Seer," which appeared in our pages some time ago, as a most suitable poem for the purpose, and proceeds to give many valuable suggestions as to the nature of the music required to do it justice, but want of space prevents my giving them. I will be glad to hear from anyone on the matter. Such a Theosophic Hymn would, to quote again from my correspondent, "form an additional link of brotherly union between us, and increase that *rapprochement* which tends to solidarity."

And now I will make a suggestion on my own account. Correspondence between members of the T. S. in different parts of the world, and with one another generally, has been found very helpful. Why not extend this means of helpfulness to others? In every district, in every country in the world, are to be found seekers after truth, who often lose their way because some friendly help has been wanting at a certain moment. If any T. S. members

care to communicate with me, I will give them the outlines of a simple scheme which could be worked without expense, and I think prove a means of doing good. At least, I think it would be worth trying. "May every Theosophist and every lover of the race press forward into the future, determined to play his part nobly in this work for the millions yet unborn."

D. N. D.

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"CHILDREN'S DAY."

THE Lotus Circle Committee of New York have consulted with Mrs. K. A. Tingley, the Outer Head of the E.S.T., relative to the celebration of Wm. Q. Judge's birthday anniversary as a "Children's Day." Mrs. Tingley is very much in sympathy with the project, and has suggested a programme for the occasion, which has been adopted by the L.C.C. This will be printed and sent to every branch of the Theosophical Societies.

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DRESS REFORM.

Mrs. Keightley, having given one of her gowns for a pattern to two F.T.S., who understand dressmaking, any member who so desires can have a gown made or paper pattern sent (to measurements) and all other particulars by applying to

Miss Tilley, 5 Atlantic Terrace, West, Weston-super-Mare; or to  
Mrs. Clayton, 17 Royal Park, Clifton, Bristol.

Profits will be devoted to the "S.R.L.M.A.," or to one of the other pressing needs of the T. S.

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THE T. S. IN EUROPE (IRELAND).

13 Eustace Street, Dublin.

THE work of transferring the printing plant and belongings of the Dublin Lodge to the new premises is now over, and members are beginning to feel more at home in their new quarters, which are very central and convenient. The Secret Doctrine group now meets on Tuesday evenings, at 8 o'clock, instead of on Fridays, as heretofore, and Wednesday evenings are being devoted to informal discussions, at which members and interested inquirers air their opinions for the mutual edification of one another, these gatherings have proved very interesting so far, and are capable of being made quite an attractive feature in the life of the Lodge. The public meeting at the Central Hall, Westmoreland Street, on 25th ult., brought a fairly large and very attentive audience together to hear Theosophy and Socialism discussed.

It has been decided to hold Public Meetings *Weekly*, till the end of the Session in the Central Hall, the subjects for the ensuing month will be:— March 25th, "The Divinity of Man" (D. N. Dunlop); April 1st, "Re-birth" (P. E. Jordan); April 8th, "The Need for Theosophy" (F. J. Dick); April 15th, "Toleration" (A. W. Dwyer).

R. E. COATES, Hon. Sec.