

The Irish Theosophist.

“THE BHAGAVAD GITA” IN PRACTICAL LIFE.

IN giving the thoughts of a western thinker upon this great spiritual poem of the past, no learned disquisition will be attempted. The writer is not versed in Sanskrit, has no historical equipment and has but begun to browse in the fields of philosophy. For readers requiring these things there are many other works upon the subject, of which the most helpful are probably the translation of the *Gītā* by J. Cockburn Thomson (said to have been preferred to other translations by H. P. B.), the translation edited by William Q. Judge, the invaluable Notes by Subba Row, and those admirable and clear-cut essays on Karma, by Charles Johnston, which have recently appeared in *The Metaphysical Magazine* under the title, “Karma in the Upanishads.” To all of these the writer, like many another student, owes a lasting debt.

But the aspect of the Book of Devotion with which it is here proposed to deal, is quite other. It is remote from learning and history; and yet it has to do with the object of all history, the human heart.

All over the world to-day is felt a great stress and strain. Everywhere a cry goes up for light, for hope, for freedom. Among the thousands starving for want of bread are hundreds in each land starving for spiritual food. This deep-seated want has brought to the Theosophical Society the larger part of its members, and among these a great, an increasing proportion, have found in this Book of Devotion that food long sought for mind and heart and soul. Among those who have such cause to bless the inspired work is the writer, and just because this hunger was felt and was here assuaged, the thought has come to offer to comrades of like mind, perhaps, those thoughts which the reading of the *Gītā* has evoked. The articles profess naught, and are only the fragmentary rays which one mind has caught of the divine reflection: are what one heart has heard, has leaned upon and offers to

all hearts inclined to pause a moment over these echoes of a distant, an eternal song.

What we most need to-day is a practical religion. A something we can carry about with us all day long, and carry very close to the heart. A something to rise with and to lie down with: a something to work and live and buy and sell and act and think and finally die by: a plain, practicable, enduring rule which has the assent of the mind and the fervour of the heart to its mandates; a something which has such a quality of the Eternal Light that it illumines all the dark corners at any time, place or season, reaching from hell to heaven, embracing yet transcending both. Such a religion must indeed become the binding power in a life and be followed, because to follow is a necessity of the nature. Such an intimate friend and helper should a man's religion be to him. It is the most priceless thing in the world—because it leads to an ideal which in time becomes the Self—and being so costly, it is to be had only for a price: that price is the whole man. Yes; the whole man must be set upon this point—that he will obtain this spiritual knowledge—and being so set, he obtains it in exchange for himself: but the two become one in the Self.

In the first chapter of the *Gîtâ* we have a portrayal of our own condition when first we set upon our task, self-imposed, of search for spiritual light. We have material existence (*Dhritarâshtra*) blind and ruled by contention and ambition in the person of its offspring, *Duryodhana*, who is the leader of the *Kurus*, the earlier and more material faculties of man, those first evolved, while *Arjuna* leads the *Pandavas*, the later (younger) and more spiritual princes, *Arjuna* himself being mystically begotten by the Fire-God, *Indra*, through a virgin mother, *Kuntî*. Taking *Arjuna* as the human monad, it appears not a little significant that this *Arjuna* of divine origin is still a younger relative of the material *Kurus*, is allied to them by a birth tie, and that his means of combatting these passions and earth qualities consist in his bow, *Gândîva* (that tense "bow" which is the *Aum*), a gift of the fiery *Indra*, and his chariot or vehicle of motion, which is conducted by *Krishna* as the charioteer, *Krishna* being an incarnation of *Vishnu* the Preserver. I have somewhere read that it was customary for such charioteers to sing to those whom they conducted to battle: *Krishna* is then plainly the *Logos* with the ever-resounding song, and that which really fights with *Arjuna*, as with each one of us, is "the army of the Voice."

So passing along the same arc of existence we find ourselves, like the man *Arjuna*, confronted with our material connections and desires,

with all related things of that line which, pressing upon us, demand the sacrifice of our nobler nature. For mark that Arjuna had not called down this war. The hosts of materiality threatened his existence in the land of his birthright; embodied ambition and contention demanded his exile and arose to compel it. Arjuna must then either fly from that land where the Law has placed him, that land where his heirship and his duty lie, or he must fight. Of tender heart, as becomes a youth and one desirous of spiritual enlightenment, Arjuna shrinks from opening the fight. Open it he must, for the hosts which threaten his expulsion still do not make bold attack upon the field. Is it not ever the same? At once, when man desires to become in very truth a man and lay aside the animal forever, has he not to combat, not only his own lower traits, but also those of all about him and all the forms of established material existence? Every condition makes against him. Were the appeal to his reason alone, or were threats alone employed, either or both combined he can endure. But listen to the arguments: relationship, caste, tribal and national duty, the "sin of oppression of friends," of enjoyment of a form of pleasure which those friends cannot share—have we not now and again heard some of these? Have we not now and again, like Arjuna, let fall the tense and God-given bow, and sat down in the chariot with tremor and fever in every vein? The flying of arrows had begun: the divine bow was strung and ready: the array of enemies was drawn in firm line and horrid uproar filled the air: the conditions of warfare on a material plane were all present. Arjuna was ready, his very bow was raised: why did he, so firmly bent upon looking his antagonists in the face, why did he fall back and give way? Was it not because he paused to argue the matter? It would seem so. He did not go steadily forward into the fight, but moved by the fact that his relatives (and his lower nature, of which these are the type in the poem) opposed his course, he allowed his compassion to weaken him, his firm resolve gave place to a temporizing policy and to argument with his inner self. Is it not thus that the first objection comes upon us all? Even his religion condemned him, and closing his objections with this painful thought, Arjuna longed for death—himself unresisting—at the hands of his beloved enemies, rather than endure the deeper mental pain. Have we not known this hour? "Would that they would themselves put an end to me rather than force on me this dreadful war." Has not such been our selfish cry? Rather than endure the pain we would that theirs were the sin—that they should slay us while we resisted not. Oh, human vanity, thou well nigh eternal tempter, how closely art thou coiled within the heart!

Taking the form of virtue, pleasing man with an image of himself as innocent of attack, as full of compassion and love, too kind, too true to fight those near and dear even for the preservation of his manhood's heirship—who has not tasted the sweet temptation of this hour and in virtuous self-appreciation found a solace and an excuse? Who has not, like Arjuna, let fall the bow, a victim to self-righteousness, self-esteem and disguised vanity? Who has not forgotten, in the whirl of conflicting emotions, that if we rise, we raise all others with us, that it is not our part to help others to prolong a life of materiality and selfishness—not even when those others are our nearest and our dearest? Who has not forgotten, in floods of selfish sorrow, that in all Nature there is but one thing worth doing: that thing—to find our own Self or to help others to find theirs, and it is the same? Yet it is well for us if, like Arjuna, even while we grieve, we still hold converse with Krishna, the divine charioteer.

O Arjuna, thou of human birth and divine conception; thou man, thou brother, thou very self of me; O thou, myself, when once resolve toward the holy war is thine, take no long survey of the field, give over the interior debate, cozen thyself with specious pleas no more, forbid that foolish grieving shall slacken the tense bow which is thy concentrated soul, but stand and looking to Krishna plunge into the battle: thy God is with thee.

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY.

(To be continued.)

THE PLACE FOR EACH.

EACH has a place of his own. No one can fill your place but you, and the sooner you learn this the better for you and all concerned with you.

Suppose I should try to do C——'s work (you know what it is) would he like it think? and, as I am not accustomed to such work should I be able to do it?

All these people in the T. S. are trying to become Masters, are they not? but I tell you they forget the way to the Masters is not by pushing someone else out of work they wish to do, nor by favour-seeking with an object in view, but by a method some of them forget, I fear.

In the world pushing for position is all right from the standpoint of the world, but in occultism it is different. In the Lodge those only are noticed who are known to work for the advance of others. Did you ever think of this? Sometimes perhaps.

In the old days when workers were scarce some were used who were ambitious, for we had to take what we could get: but times change and the great big change, even on the face of things now, lies in this—that favour goes for nothing, the real people are the only ones who count, and if you are not real inside you will never cut much figure in this work, that's certain.

Say, if you knew how I smile sometimes over things you'd smile too; but there's sadness mixed with my smile and if there were not a lot of real genuine stuff in the T. S. I'd have gone off long ago.

There are centres for work. Workers are there, of course: what hinders their work the most? Coming in the air, flying in through the windows at them, coming in when some people enter the door, are seen curious hideous shapes, almost labelled, some of them, as bottles of poison from the chemists, with skull and crossbones. Labelled "Ambition," "Wish I was in your place," "I could do it better myself." What are these? They are thoughts of some who are aiming to be Adepts some day, thoughts of those who dream of brotherhood and have forgotten or are trying a side-track on the path to the Lodge of Masters.

It's no good, I tell you. Each has his place, none can take it, and he can take none other than that in which he is, his own place.

Knock out of yourself these things I'm talking of and find your own work and place and the greatest problem of your life will be solved, and perhaps some may make a mental note of this, and others follow.

Leaders are not those who do all the work themselves: they are those who know how to help others to do the work, and have learned their own work and place, and care to do the best just there and nowhere else.

Therefore find your own place, and in finding your own you will help others find their own, and with the place for each filled by the only one for that place we can accomplish anything in the work of the world.

A.



THE VOICE OF THE WISE.

THEY sat with hearts untroubled,
 The clear sky sparkled above,
 And an ancient wisdom bubbled
 From the lips of a youthful love.

They read in a coloured history
 Of Egypt and of the Nile,
 And half it seemed a mystery,
 Familiar, half, the while.

Till living out of the story
 Grew old Egyptian men,
 And a shadow looked forth Rory
 And said, "We meet again!"

And over Aileen a maiden
 Looked back through the ages dim:
 She laughed, and her eyes were laden
 With an old-time love for him.

In a mist came temples thronging
 With sphinxes seen in a row,
And the rest of the day was a longing
 For their homes of long ago.

“We’d go there if they’d let us,”
 They said with wounded pride:
“They never think when they pet us
 We are old like that inside.”

There was some one round them straying
 The whole of the long day through,
Who seemed to say, “I am playing
 At hide-and-seek with you.”

And one thing after another
 Was whispered out of the air,
How God was a big kind brother
 Whose home was in everywhere.

His light like a smile comes glancing
 From the cool, cool winds as they pass;
From the flowers in heaven dancing
 And the stars that shine in the grass,

And the clouds in deep blue wreathing,
 And most from the mountains tall,
But God like a wind goes breathing
 A heart-light of gold in all.

It grows like a tree and pushes
 Its way through the inner gloom,
And flowers in quick little rushes
 Of love to a magic bloom.

And no one need sigh now or sorrow
 Whenever the heart-light flies,
For it comes again on some morrow
 And nobody ever dies.

The heart of the Wise was beating
 In the children’s hearts that day,
And many a thought came fleeting,
 And fancies solemn and gay.

They were grave in a way divining
 How childhood was taking wings,
 And the wonder world was shining
 With vast eternal things.

The solemn twilight fluttered
 Like the plumes of seraphim,
 And they felt what things were uttered
 In the sunset voice of Him.

They lingered long, for dearer
 Than home were the mountain places
 Where God from the stars dropt nearer
 Their pale, dreamy faces.

Their very hearts from beating
 They stilled in awed delight.
 For Spirit and children were meeting
 In the purple, ample night.

*Dusk its ash-grey blossoms sheds on violet skies
 Over twilight mountains where the heart-songs rise,
 Rise and fall and fade again from earth to air :
 Earth reneges the music sweeter. Oh, come there,
 Come, ma cushla, come, as in ancient times
 Rings aloud the underland with faery chimes.
 Down the unseen ways as strays each tinkling fleece
 Winding ever onward to a fold of peace,
 So my dreams go straying in a land more fair ;
 Half I tread the dew-wet grasses, half wander there.
 Fade your glimmering eyes in a world grown cold :
 Come, ma cushla, with me to the mountain's fold,
 Where the bright ones call us wazing to and fro :
 Come, my children, with me to the Ancient go.*

“THE WORLD KNOWETH US NOT.”

[Being extracts from letters of W. Q. J. to various students.]

“MY DEAR —,

“You did right to send me that letter. Of course I am sorry to hear from you in that way, but am glad that you wrote. Let me tell you something—will you believe it? You are not in nearly such a bad way as you think, and your letter which you sent me unreservedly shows it. Can you not, from the ordinary standpoint of worldly wisdom, see it so? For your letter shows this: a mind and lower nature in a whirl, not in the ordinary sense, but as though, figuratively speaking, it were whirling in a narrow circle, seemingly dead, kept alive by its own motion. And above it a human soul, not in any hurry but waiting for its hour to strike. And I tell you that I know that it will strike.

“If so far as your personal consciousness goes you have lost all desire for progress, for service, for the inner life—what has that to do with it? Do you not think that others have had to go through with all of that and worse; a positive aversion, maybe, to everything connected with Theosophy? Do you not know that it takes a nature with some strength in it to sink very low, and that the mere fact of having the power to sink low may mean that the same person in time may rise to a proportionately greater height? That is not the highest path to go, but it is one path which many have to tread. The highest is that which goes with little variation, but few are strong enough to keep up the never-ceasing strain. Time alone can give them that strength and many ages of service. But meanwhile there is that other to be travelled. Travel it bravely.

“You have got the —, which of the hells do you think you are in? Try to find out and look at the corresponding heaven. It is very near. And I do not say this to try and bolster you up artificially, for that would be of no use and would not last, even if I were to succeed in doing it. I write of facts and I think that somewhere in your nature you are quite well aware that I do so.

“Now what is to be done: should you resign from the E. S. T. or what? In my opinion you should deliberately give yourself a year’s trial. Write and tell me at the end of that year (and meantime as often as you feel called upon to do so, which will not be very often) how you then feel, and if you do not feel inclined to go on and stick to it I will help you all I can. But you must do it yourself, in spite of not wanting to do it. You can.

“Make up your mind that in some part of your nature somewhere there is that which desires to be of use to the world. Intellectually realize that that world is not too well off and probably wants a helping hand. Recognize mentally that you should try to work for it sooner or later. Admit to yourself that another part of your nature—and if possible see that it is the lower part—does not care in the least about the world or its future, but that such care and interest should be cultivated. This cultivation will of course take time; all cultivation does. Begin by degrees. Assert constantly to yourself that you intend to work and will do so. Keep that up all the time. Do not put any time limit to it, but take up the attitude that you are working towards that end. Begin by doing ten minutes’ work every day of any sort, study or the addressing of envelopes or anything, so long as it be done deliberately and with that object in view. If a day comes when this is too irksome, knock it off for that day. Give yourself three or four days’ rest and do it deliberately. Then go back to your ten minutes’ work. At the end of six or seven weeks you will know what to add to that practice; but go slow, do nothing in a hurry, be deliberate.

“Don’t try to feel more friendly to this or that person—more actively friendly, I should have said. Such things must spring up of their own accord and will do so in time. But do not be surprised that you feel *all* compassion die out of you in some ways. That too is an old story. It is all right because it does not last. Do not be too anxious to get results from the practice I have outlined above. Do not look for any; you have no concern with them if you do all that as a duty. And finally do not forget, my dear fellow, that the dead do come to life and that the coldest thing in the world may be made hot by gentle friction. So I wish you luck and wish I could do more for you. But I will do what I can.”

THE LESSON OF LONELINESS.

WE shall learn many good things that we have long forgotten, as we find our way back again to real life; among them one that we have much need of—the art of being rightly alone.

There is too much noise and hurry in our life; things done too quickly and with too great pains; for the most part, petty things, that might very well not be done at all. It is a game of personalities, not of our real selves. It has been well said that we think too much of each other; not that we praise and respect each other too highly—though we err in that way too—but that we are too much subject to the

faces and fancies of our friends, too sensible of their praise or blame. Good people may imagine an ideal society, in which perfect complacency would reign, by virtue of each one thinking supremely well of himself, and seeing his contentment mirrored in mild, kind faces round him. Such a paradise would be more hopeless than sin.

But without going to such a length, it is easy to be too fretfully anxious as to other people's good opinions; too apprehensive as to their liking this or another thing we may do; too heated and uneasy, like the youth whose fixed delusion is that his necktie is awry.

For all this fret and restlessness there is no cure like solitude. To go away into the night, where mountains and stars initiate us into some of their dignity and reticence, and, more than all, their self-forgetfulness. Even then, for a while we carry with us our bundle of apprehensions, and the fancied faces of our critics, with their blame and praise that have taken away all our simplicity; so completely have we lost the art of loneliness.

But, after a while, our little storm subsides, and quietness begins to come upon us, ready to take us into the confidence of the gods, if we only consent to remain restful-minded long enough. We learn a curious and yet stately lesson, which much of our life only served to hide; the lesson that our chief concern is not with personalities at all, whether our own admirable persons, or the good folk of daily life; that our chief concern is with the old impersonal spirit who only draws near us when we leave ourselves behind. In that great lonely One there is much that awes us for a while, yet much that is infinitely consoling, and, at the last, full of rejoicing and joy. This is the quiet power that, without haste or heat, yet quite easily, wove innumerable worlds; wove old Time and Space to put them in, breathing into the least of them the spirit of life; the power with heart of mirth that looks out to us beautiful, through the grass and flowers, the coloured clouds, and the blue that enwraps all things. And into our souls, when the little, noisy crowd of personal things has withdrawn a while, that same power comes, awful and full of great quietness, taking us up into itself, and making us older than time, greater than boundless worlds. Here at last is a life we could live to eternity, and feel no weariness.

This inspiration of real life is for itself alone, without ulterior ends; it by no means reveals itself to us that, when we return among our personalities, we should be able to say fine things about it, to draw others into the right way. The Eternal does not come to our hearts to make us sanctimonious preachers, but rather to win us away altogether from the fret and heat of unreality to the quiet benediction of real life.

After that initiation into silence, we shall find another meaning in ourselves and in our friends. Our friends will not be critics whose praise or blame are our clouds and sunshine; we shall learn to meet them with a better wisdom, for we shall see that same august spirit looking at us out of their eyes; we shall know that nothing in them, nothing in us, is real but that. All life will become to us the presence of that One, the all in all things.

That is the true loneliness, where nothing but the spirit is, and the spirit is all things; the spirit that we must know and enter into first in the inmost place of our own souls. It is the true and lasting cure for sorrow, to forget ourselves into that august companion, who has ordained all things wisely through endless years. It is as the cool breath of night after a long day of fever, the fever that we have called our life. And yet not night, but a new dawn rather, the first dawn of the real day.

Pain and sorrow are woven into the texture of our personal life in order that, growing weary of it the sooner, we may get ready for the truer life that is impersonal, where the incessant battles of I and thee are hushed into peace. This is the spirit that will redeem humanity, the spirit that comes to fill our hearts when our fancied selves have been put aside and forgotten; redeemed humanity will be this—all men, beholding the same spirit in each other's eyes, and beholding it with joy and gladness. Then, after redeemed humanity, will come restored divinity, spirit as itself alone.

The path is not that I or you or anyone should gain new powers and larger sight; but each of us putting aside the I and you, that the free spirit should live its own life and perform its perfect work, the spirit that we truly are, behind the masks of I and you. There is no entering on the path until the masks of I and you are put away.

Our small selves cannot bear the burden of the universe; if they sincerely try, they will quickly come to long for utter forgetfulness, surcease and darkness. But their way of liberation is close to them, a liberation into the boundless One, whose heart is gladness, whose ways are peace, whose light and mirthful works are unnumbered worlds, brimful of alert and exultant life.

CHARLES JOHNSTON.

“THE VIRTUES THAT DO MOST EASILY BESET US.”

It is a fact, I think, that we are often more hampered by virtues than by faults; I may even go further, and hazard a bolder statement that, on a certain pinnacle of the divine ascent, both will be seen to lie much on the same level. In truth, the ideal state would seem to consist not so much in acquiring or eliminating certain characteristics, as in laying up a soul-storage from which any characteristic can be drawn at will. The true saint has largely more to do than merely to build virtues and correct vices, for the reason that he who *is* is in a higher state of development than he who *has*.

Throughout the ages of religious thought, the time-worn controversy of doing *versus* being has raged its ceaseless fight. Whether we watch it from the point of view of Hatha or Raja Yogis; Pharisees or Christ; St. Paul or St. James; Legalists or Antinomians, matters little. The principle at issue is the same in all; whether the highest state of the soul is to be or to have, to do or to become. The *Gītā* alone, of all philosophies save, perhaps, that of Jesus, seems to solve the problem satisfactorily. From cover to cover, it is a song of reconciliation.

Now, since doing and being, action and inaction, are both necessary stages in the education of the soul, I have no desire to add my quota to the mountains of controversy that have been heaped up upon these innocent foundations. A few thoughts, however, in connection therewith have occurred to me as having an appropriate bearing upon the new cycle which has lately dawned upon us.

It is needless to expatiate upon the light which that dawning has liberated. We have all felt it within ourselves, stimulating to wider ideals and a greater fixity of purpose. The high tension at which we lived while the Crusaders were with us has left its mark, possibly for many lives. Who can be exactly as he was before that high inspiration reached him? But now comes a fact to be faced. No one yet has ever done long and continuous work at high tension. We go up to the mountains to pray, but we return to the valley and the lake-side to work. On the heights we receive and generate the stimulus which straightway sends us down to the lowlands to embody itself in—the best we know how. What is that best? Often no more than the casting into the deep for a draught. It may once happen that our nets break with an unexpected freight; but often we have to toil all night and catch nothing, in the darkness of that valley-lake below the heights where we fain would be.

So the removal of a high stimulus brings us inevitably back to the terrible commonplace, and we say sadly to ourselves: "It was only glamour, after all."

Was it? May not, rather, the dulness that always follows a time of refreshing be the result of the life-force retreating to an inner place, out of reach, for the time being, of our most greedy personalities? For we are greedy; like little children who, having surfeited themselves with good things, cry over the empty plate. Shame on us. Are we always right when we *feel* the most?

And here I am led to speak of those troublesome virtues of ours, which are often like shutters run up to hide the morning sun. Shutters are excellent things, certainly, but they are not light-giving. We never suppose they are. But our virtues absolutely deceive us on this point. *We run them up when we want the sunshine.* Let me explain the sort of virtues I mean, else I shall have some conscientious reader knocking his head against the idea that the highest state is that in which good qualities are chiefly conspicuous by their absence. I am here speaking of those qualities—excellent, indispensable in themselves—which may, nevertheless, become hindrances when over-used or employed in the wrong places. And first and foremost, I will speak of the hindrance of conscientiousness.

Did one ever see a person with this quality largely developed who was not prone to magnify trifles? The conscientious people are always the worriers: it is a fault of their most excellent type. Nothing they do ever satisfies them. They are perpetually stumbling against imaginary and self-created rocks.

A man with an over-developed conscience hears much of the force that has been liberated throughout the ranks of true Theosophists, and an accusing voice instantly tells him that he is not advanced enough to receive any such benefit. The cheerful inspiration which he felt for a fortnight he attributes to fancy, induced by hearing the experiences of others. "If new energy is really sent forth," he cries in despondency, "ought I not to feel it more powerfully?" And he straightway pulls down his shutter.

Now over-conscientiousness is the result of wrong aspiration; not aspiration directed towards a wrong object, but directed towards a right object wrongly. It is one of the greatest enemies to progress. A friend I know, who has suffered from it all his life, to the detriment of powers which might have become useful had they been allowed proper scope for growth, recognizes the arrival of the new cycle by the light it has shed upon this one point. For years he had been, as an artist once ex-

pressed it to him, "niggling with small brushes." He was afraid to cover his canvas boldly, lest the edges should look rough and displeasing, and his work should lack that delicate finish and detail which is the sign-manual of a conscientious worker.

Now, I am much afraid life is too short to admit of our troubling over much about the edges; if we do, we shall get a first study that has very little effect three yards away. And who of us hopes to be able to make more than a first study in this incarnation? But the man in question niggled away patiently for many fruitless years, ever tormenting his righteous soul with the fear that he was too personal, or too material, or too intellectual, or too full of the Theosophists' arch-enemy, "the world," until, in trying to avoid pitfalls, he sat down where he was and did nothing. There may be many like him, and for their sakes I offer his own advice: *Cease to be over-anxious about results.* You are only asked to do your best; you are not even asked to do it concernedly.

The new Light has come, and it has brought but one law, the law of harmony. Nothing but harmony is, as yet, required of us, and harmony is destroyed by undue effort. Struggle, worry, fret, instantly annul whatever, in cheerfulness and unconsciousness, we may be on the way of accomplishing. Life is a great task, to be performed with a great lightness.

People with consciences are, furthermore, in incessant trouble lest they may not, after all, have done their very best. Had they the opportunity over again, they would have acted differently. They are never at rest; the lurking enemy is always present, holding them back from their highest.

It is true enough that our "best" is an eternally unrealized quantity. "A man," as Emerson has it, "is a golden impossibility. The line he must walk is a hair's breadth." The "best" of every new moment is higher than the one preceding it, and we reach only what it once was. Nevertheless ours is the simple duty of trying for it, and the responsibility of success rests not on our shoulders at all. What if we might have tried harder! We shall have another chance, for Nature is infinitely patient, and the whole meaning of Karma is to give new starts to the laggards.

The new Light asks but one condition of any of us—that we live in harmony with Nature, with each other, and with ourselves. We have to get into an inner condition of being which *is* harmony, and this condition, as I have said, is prevented by nothing so powerfully as by *over-anxiety to reach it.* Its state is love and oneness with every-

thing that makes up a part of what we know as the manifested universe, irrespective of planes or principles. If we keep that state in view we may know, without the presence of any elevating "feeling" to tell us so, that the Light is shining, and that somehow, somewhere, we are aware of it.

CHARLOTTE E. WOODS.

(*To be concluded.*)

LIVING THEOSOPHY.

THROUGH the mists of our modern life we look into the future. Sometimes our view is obscured and dim; at other times we see more clearly. After a while we become wise and note what affects our vision from time to time. We find, perhaps, that on certain days we can do this or that well, and that on other days everything seems to go wrong. And then in our mean way we blame the days. But the truth lies deeper. We are the fashioners of our days, and the inner condition gives colour to all outer things. We can always rise, if we will, superior to days and circumstances. A healthy optimism is what we require to-day and every day. It gives new wings to our hopes until they are no longer angels broken on the wheel of events. We then see the future opening brightly for humanity; everything around takes on a richer hue and the golden age is not so far away after all. What is Theosophy? we are often asked. Is it not this attitude towards life; this acceptance of all that comes our way, good, bad or indifferent, and making the best use of everything? For credulous minds books have been written giving, perhaps, the best scientific definitions possible; there has been much weighty reasoning with the doubting intellect, but that mind which is at rest and peace in the Eternal is of infinitely more value. It is life; it is reality; it carries with it its own conviction. People see, feel and recognize that it outweighs all argument.

What the world requires to-day is *the living presence* of the divine in men and women. We want to cultivate the most rounded view of life, to rise beyond differences of every description that divide men, and we will then be able to act wisely at all times. A feverish anxiety sometimes creeps over us. The worries of business and the cares of domestic life seem to hinder us from entering into this wider outlook, and we, becoming impatient, seek to shirk the "trifling" duties we daily meet. But it is not the way. Reverse the process. Accept all the impediments, barriers, difficulties, and perform the little acts with all the nobility of the larger life about you, and they will become en-

dowed with a new dignity. You are at all moments in the best possible place for service, and you need never forget you are a god. In the background and in the foreground keep spread out before you the largest view of life possible, and moment by moment, in looking after the small things, you are making clear the path and "building for eternity." Watch such people, if you know any, who breathe in this larger life, and you will find a calm peace flows from them continually. They have learned that the tide ebbs and flows and watched the methods of Nature to some purpose. Weary days come to such. Branch work seems at a standstill, but they work on carelessly, accepting all, and watch for the turn of the tide, and then act mightily and with their full strength. When the tide is at its ebb they are working, when it flows they are working; recognizing the action and reaction in outer Nature they work on superior to it.

Remember that Theosophy enters into every aspect of life, and can be applied to all problems. It will raise the standard always to the highest point. Nothing mean or cowardly has any chance before the full-orbed outlook upon life that a true conception of Theosophy gives. A man entering into it fully is always in the true attitude; alone, with comrades, at Lodge meetings, at home, anywhere, the same happy buoyant life, looking for the best in all, evoking it, helping, cheering, comforting always. Thus lives the true Theosophist.

D. N. D.

WORK AMONG THE CHILDREN.

THAT there is a growing need for work among children has been demonstrated, especially of late. Children are being born who will require us to give them the foundations upon which they can build structures of vaster proportions than we have dreamed of. Theirs will be a higher knowledge, and they will have to fulfil the work that we have begun.

Each will have a different work because of varying natures: so the method should conform to the nature of the child.

Meet a child half way, and both child and teacher are taught.

Reverse the usual order of the child-life, and instead of heaping treasures upon it, let it first learn that it must give, and that what it gives is considered of value. With this incentive held out, the real child-life develops, and its whole nature opens to receive instruction.

Material gifts then have a broader significance, and the idea of "I must have" (the child-extinguisher) is done away with, and in its place is substituted the controlling thought of the higher life, "I must serve."

Our best workers should be teachers of children, for the child is nearest to the sage, the sage is nearest to the child, and it takes a sage to understand true simplicity.

A child wants to be taken for what it is, not for what we are.

Let the children be taught that they are co-workers with each other and with us, and that their work is needed, and half the problem is solved. The rest will follow of itself, and an army of children will be formed that will become the warriors of the future for the saving of humanity.

M.

HINTS ON THEOSOPHICAL CORRESPONDENCE.

IN theosophical correspondence write as a soul, a heart, and not a "person," which will probably elicit a similar reply. Little good can be done where there is affectation or hypocrisy, secretiveness or impure motive, on either side.

Let your correspondents understand that their *confidences will be respected*. That you never wish to utter dogmatically or to give advice, not having all the circumstances before you. Suggestions are allowable, advice in detail is seldom right.

However advanced you may be, do not afflict babes with difficult words and technical terms. Be frank in warning, ever appeal to the better nature, approve more than blame, encouraging the tender shoot, not crushing it with a snub. Ever act on the admonition, "Break not the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax." Tact and tenderness are in request; realize to yourself your correspondent's hopes, fears, environment, daily life.

Don't kick down the ladder by which you climbed, *don't* try to haul others up by a rope, let them too mount each step carefully, slowly; *you* are not to act as their arms or legs, remember; yours to encourage and try to "adjust." Some you aid may be really far beyond you, but 'tis said a mouse helped a lion.

If practicable let some hours elapse between writing a "theosophical" letter, unless you are one able to dismiss utterly the first one from your thoughts; otherwise one is apt to mix up, and to give meat where milk is needed (or *vice versa*). In short, make each your special study. Some folk are untrue even to themselves—they will mislead you. Some will idolize and then insult you—the most gushing fail soonest—you must be prepared to meet all this in a calm, brotherly, firm spirit.

Find out what subject interests most, and pursue it. Questions may be asked or received, extracts sent and so on. The great point is to lead your correspondents to self-reliance and a sense of self-responsibility: in short, to follow their own path, not yours.

A. S. MALCOLM.

INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES.

MANY suggestions have reached me from International Representatives appointed at Convention T. S. E. The following from Dr. Buck is worthy of consideration with a view to taking action thereon.

D. N. D.

"I suggest that the first work of the International Committee be to arrange for a genuine International Convention representative of all Sections of the T. S., and that it convene in America as nearly as possible coincident with the return of the Crusade, and the exact date and place of meeting be left open and subject to movements of Crusade and the laying of the corner-stone for the School for the Revival of the Lost Mysteries of Antiquity. Arrangements can be made in each Section of the T. S. by which at least one delegate shall be sent, and the Sections can be notified by cable of the date and place. I know this to have been a favourite project with W. Q. J., for we often talked of the foregoing facts and looked forward to a general and representative Convention. It can now be accomplished and would be a fitting round-up of the Crusade and the only proper conditions under which to lay the corner-stone. Its effects on all interests and all countries concerned would be beyond all measure and all price. The International Committee already appointed is just the one to carry the plan to fruition.

"No Section is so poor that it could not send one delegate by uniting to defray expenses, and each delegate should come prepared to give a very full account of his Section, its needs, the work done, etc. The Convention should last a week. It might be best to close the circuit of the Crusade and hold it at New York. I have not mentioned the plan to anyone, but the more I think and write (herein) the bigger and more feasible the scheme appears. It really popped into my head when I began to write this letter. Let us make it a *go*, and Theosophy will fill the whole earth as the waters fill the valleys of the sea.

"I have written enough for hints as to plan and scope. Go ahead with your prospectus. You have now about five months to complete arrangements in. Australian delegates can come to California with Crusaders. What a round-up it will make for the past two years' work."

ACTIVITIES.

SCOTLAND.

BRO. DICK'S visit to Glasgow and Edinburgh was productive of much good. A very satisfactory public meeting was held in Edinburgh, and at Glasgow the Branch was organized on a new basis for more public work. A central hall has been secured for weekly meetings, and a very good start has been made. We hope the work thus commenced will go on prospering in every direction.

ENGLAND.

BRO. CROOKE made a most successful tour through the north-east of England. Parlour talks were given and public meetings held everywhere possible. At South Shields the pulpit of Unity Church was placed at Bro. Crooke's disposal. He read "The Coming of the Christos," by Aretas, and lectured on *The Immortality of the Soul*. As a direct outcome of this tour three new Branches have been formed and new Centres opened up. We hope to see Bro. Crooke's work supported with the necessary funds.

A new Centre has also been formed in Wales. Since the visit of the Crusade eight new Branches have been formed and Centres without end. The correspondence at the Central Office is a sight to behold, and increases every day. So the good work goes on.

THE T. S. IN EUROPE (IRELAND).

3, UPPER ELY PLACE, DUBLIN.

On the 16th ult. a public meeting was held in the Central Hall, Westmoreland Street. There was a good attendance, and addresses were given by Bros. Dunlop, Johnston, Norman and Russell.

Topics of regular Wednesday evening meetings at headquarters: Oct. 21st, *The Wanderings of the Soul*; 28th, *The Art of Living*; Nov. 4th, *The Meaning of Ritual*; 11th, *True Philanthropy*.

FRED. J. DICK, *Convener*.

NOTICE.

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