

spairing hands have swept past us in the night. The under tow of the Past was too strong for them. They have loosed their hold upon their comrades, and the long, living line has closed up again, has pressed forward, not without a tear for those who fell. But the great line is standing, is advancing, and the cause of its well being and its power is that "pull all together" which equalizes the strain. Because we are in brotherly unity—for this reason is it well with us. Our accord is our safety.

And yet it is a time of trial, interior and unremitting. Now should it not be so when the welfare of a Race is at stake? For the dying throes of the elder cycle have power to impair the vibrations of the new one and it is precisely for this reason that our unwavering hearts, our steadfast minds and rooted ideals create an atmosphere of strength about us filling the decadent hours of the old cycle with a calm and a harmony in which, as in the lap of a mother, the young cycle may gather its forces together: their dispersion will not be witnessed, their flight will be strong in this calm atmosphere which we provide.

Still is the strain felt by us. We whisper it not to one another. Each endures, and is silent, working on; or here and there a song of cheer arises as men sing at the hardest labour, to make that labour lighter by their lightsomeness of heart. That is the brave spirit. That is the true spirit. Yet, because the trial is everywhere so unremitting, in one or another way—sometimes in all ways—it is good to remind one another that we knew this provision of Nature, that we entered the trial year unafraid.

For did we not know too that more destinies than our own hung upon it? That heroes not yet incarnate hung above it, waiting, hoping, longing to descend? Did we not know that armed and turbulent nations paused, unawares, upon the brink of war, awaiting an issue foreseen by us, but to them unknown? And the little children the world over, tender-eyed and wistful, did not their future await decision while they played unconsciously

through all the trial? Yes; we knew it all. Knew it to be big with Destiny. Knew that we ourselves had, ages ago, with others, provided the trial, and could even now provide the triumph.

For all these possibilities we must supply the required conditions. Great events are in the air. Under existing conditions they cannot take shape and life here below. When we shall have transformed the present conditions, so that the necessary base shall be supplied, then shall these waiting potentialities become actual in the daily life of the world. There must exist—as a base on this material plane—an opportunity for the right development, the orderly unfolding of character under wise encouragement and with the stimulus of right contemporaneous thought, in order that the progress of the soul here in matter may be helped. This opportunity will be given through the children of every nation when in each nation right conditions of education are supplied. Theosophy alone can do this. That is to say, theosophists must do it, affording everywhere a base. As they pass through the trial year they not only give this base; they also find their own base; each one his own. Re-birth of heroes, peace of nations, help for the children, these shall follow on the Crusade work as that awakens the ancient fires of nations; and what are all these but a universal nearness to The Self?

For that triumph each soul of us, Comrades, has stood and stands ready to suffer the awful strain. To us it seems assured—that hour of victory. *To us.* But how about your country, mine, all the nations? Which stand? Do any stand? How fares it with the Race, too? Ah, we know not these things. And, not knowing, shall we not redouble the effort, both of work and for unity; shall we not clasp hands closer as we breast the foaming world stream? Our harmony of aim secures more than now we dream of. Our fraternal love, self-impelled, has reached forward until more centuries than we count are in its charmed hold.

But even were we not secure of this—and in hours of gloom who is secure?—then were it still wise to press forward