

THE MYSTERY OF PAIN.

" Some have made them Gods of love,
 Sun Gods; Givers of the rain;
 Deities of hill and grove.
 I have made a God of Pain."

THE mystery of pain is by no means a lost one; we need not search for it among antiquities, or erect schools for its revival. Ah! no, the God of Pain is omnipresent, and at times, it would seem, omnipotent also; but this is not so, for pain is the rough pathway which leads to bliss—the thorny tree on which the white flowers of peace bud forth and blossom. We must learn to regard pain as a means, not an end, before we can recognize this Deity in disguise. The soul returns to earth-life thro' the gateway of pain; thus at the very threshold of life the divine mystery is enacted—joy springing from anguish; Peace, pain's sweet resultant.

See the helpless babe nestle close to the mother's heart. Watch the tender light illumine the mother's eyes. Think of the patient care, the self-denying love, on which that fragile life depends, and then commune with thine own soul on the silent ministry—the mystery of pain. Manifold are the desires of man; countless his aims and ambitions. Self-centred, he strives to seize and hold the good things of life—wealth, fame, power, pleasure. Silently the God of pain draws nigh, to withhold the longed-for possession; to remove the dearly-loved object. Thus one by one the illusions which men call joys are withdrawn. Then the man stands empty-handed, awaiting his destiny. It is in such a moment as this that the eternal mysteries of life and death are unfolded and the true meaning of existence made manifest. Have you watched some dearly-loved one grow weaker day by day, until hope is slain by its intensity? or, harder still, have you seen the one you love racked with pain, longing for release, which seems so cruelly denied? The wistful pleading of those suffering eyes haunt you by night and day; yet 'tis in this valley of humiliation you are taught the poverty of wealth, fame and power when compared with the faith which accounts the suffering of the present as not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall follow.

When the bitter Karma of nations finds its vent in war; when men arm themselves to kill and plunder their fellowmen, then pain, relentless pain, reigns supreme.

Thousands die ere their time, whilst tens of thousands weep in anguish for their return. No wonder we ask: Is war