

A LEAGUE OF HUMANITY

Now that the most frightful and destructive war known to the annals of history is over, the questions that arise in every thinker's mind are: What has been learned from the war? Has there been any lesson learned? Do we think for a single moment that the end of the war has brought an end to our troubles? Do we not see the clouds gathering in the skies of humanity?

Revelations of every kind are spread before us as panaceas. On the part of some there is evidence of a desire to bring people to "a moral sense"—a sense which they think resides in the Christian religion. So, they are trying to effect an amalgamation of the churches, imagining that to be the remedy for preventing wars and causing men to act more humanely towards each other. But the moral sense existed in times before the Christian religion was ever thought of, in other religions; in fact, the basis of all religions is morality. How comes it, if Christianity is to be the remedy, that after its being the basis of thought and action for nearly two thousand years, such a struggle has gone on among Christian nations? Does Christianity give any promise whatever of what ought to be? Would there be any benefit whatever in returning to Christianity, the whole history of which has been one of intolerance and persecution? If the Christian church had the power today, would it be any less dogmatic or intolerant than it was in the days of the Spanish Inquisition?

There is no hope in the direction of the church, because, in the first place, the people will have none of it. It has not satisfied their minds; it has not answered their questions. Instead of the knowledge they asked for, it has: given them only hope or fear. The church has lost its hold upon the people—for the great majority are not adherents of any Christian church—be cause of its poverty of idea, because of its dogmas and creeds. People have tried out the ideas and found them wanting. Nothing else will do but that which appeals to their sense of judgment and to their spiritual perception.

Others have placed their faith in a league of nations. Yet, they begin to see that though the ideal is beautiful, it does not prove out in practice. The members of the league have each desired to take all they could, and give as little as they could. The same spirit exists between nations now, after the settlement of peace, as existed during the conflict; the same nations are just as grasping and just as selfish as they were before the war. In this country, too, our public men still voice the particular interests of this particular nation as against all others. A league of nations could only fulfill its purpose by a common aim and by a like ideal. Such do not obtain. The nations are not alike. None of them have high ideals—not even our own nation, which should have the greatest ideal of humanity and of nature. In stead, our ideal is one common idea—of trading, of gaining dollars or possessions, of getting advantage and prestige over other nations. Such an ideal will never give us peace, will never bring happiness, content, nor right progress, and there will always be struggle until we change that ideal. A league of nations among similar selfish nations can only bring what self-interest always brings—disasters of some kind. The seeds of war are in it.

Where shall we find the true foundation for a changed civilization that all men and women can see and stand on? It is not philosophies nor religions nor political panaceas that are needed; but Knowledge, and a wider scope of vision than the vicissitudes of one

short physical life. The knowledge that is greater than all the forms of religion ever invented is the knowledge of the very nature of man himself, for himself and in him self. For we are not here as things apart; we are here because of one great sustaining Cause—infinite and omnipresent, not separate from us, nor from any other being. It is the same in all beings above the human and in all beings below the human—the very root of our natures, the very man himself. It is the Source of all powers and of all actions, whether good or evil. Then, everything that is done by beings affects all beings, and all that is has been caused by beings, each one affected according to its share in the cause. What the past has been, we are experiencing now—our lives now being but repetitions of lives that preceded them. What the future will be, we are making now—the lives to come depending entirely on the choice and direction of our thoughts and actions now.

The war of this or any time is the result of the warring spirit, of the selfishness of mankind. It is the result of the failure to understand the great purpose of life, the nature of our minds, the full power of attainment within each being, the one Law of absolute justice inherent in all beings, the One Deity behind and in all, the one Goal for every Pilgrim, however the path varies. As soon as men are brought to the perception that every one reaps exactly what he sows, no one will do harm to any other being; there will then be no war. There will be no such misery as now exists; for to realize our own responsibility to all others and to act in accordance, is to have become unselfish, and to have done away with the prime cause of sin, sorrow and suffering.

Back of the failure to understand our own true natures lie false ideas, false conceptions of life, false ideals—the heritage of our Christian civilization. We have believed that we were born in this condition or environment by the “will” of some God. We have imagined a personal God, a personal devil, and a personal Savior. We have imagined an impossible heaven and an equally impossible hell. We have imagined a “creation,” instead of evolution. We have believed that we are poor, weak, miserable sinners, and have acted out the part. We have laid all our troubles and evils and pain upon some other imaginary Being. Thus, we have remained irresponsible creatures, mere rationalized animals; not immortal souls. We have dodged our responsibility. But we must guide ourselves according to the realities of our own nature. We must take care of each other, not of ourselves according to the personal basis on which this and every other nation in the world is proceeding today.

We are going to have a league of humanity only when the ancient truths of the Wisdom Religion are once more perceived—when there is one purpose and one teaching. Its truths are self-evident, not to be accepted because written in some book, nor because they are the dicta of some particular church. They are the only truths worth considering because in the use of them they prove themselves true. And truth, as we ought to know, always explains. When we have the explanation, we have the truth. Each has to make his own verification of the truth, but the fact remains that there is truth, and it has always existed. It has come to us from Beings higher than we, because once They turned Their faces in the right direction and pursued the course pointed out to Them as leading to spiritual, divine perfection. They know all that has been known. They know us, although we may not know Them. They know our needs, although we may be densely ignorant of them. They come again and again to present the truths of life to man, hoping that some echo may be aroused in his soul so that he, too, shall arrive at a realization of Self, of Spirit—which is Knowledge.

Those who can see the course of humanity see nothing but much trouble yet for the world in general. Nothing but severe, dire disaster will make men stop and think. The war has not ceased! The war is going on between us all the time. Consider our selfish pursuits, our condemnations, our judgments, our criticisms, our foolish laws, which seek to make men “good” by legislation with no attempt to arouse the real nature of man, but only to repress what is considered “bad.” Prohibitions of all kinds serve only to exasperate the evil nature in men. We need not to prohibit. We need to educate, and first of all, we need to educate ourselves. Let us take the beam out of our own eyes before we try to remove the mote from the eyes of others. Let us retreat into the shrine of our own being. Let us be that Self, and act for and as that Self. Let us follow the lines of the law of our own being—compassion, love, helpfulness for all—and then we shall be able to understand ourselves and the natures of all others. Then we shall be able to help men in a way they are sometimes not aware of; we shall be able to help leaven the whole lump.

It is because there are those in the world desirous of helping humanity to proceed further, that we are not worse off. Often the ideas given out by men in high places are not the result of their own cogitations, although thought to be such. Many an idea is received by those who have the ear of the public, who speak and will be heard, from Those with a far deeper knowledge of the issues at stake, yet whose voices would not be heard at all. So, though there may seem to be little action on the part of Theosophical disciples, there is much action on inner planes of being, and that action never but for the benefit of humanity. If only once any considerable number of persons could take the true position and act from the true nature, right ideas would soon spread all over the earth. Once the ideas are implanted in our minds, we can help the world by speaking of them, and by exemplifying them. We can do that much, however selfishly the world moves on.

A true league of humanity could be formed—without social distinctions, class distinctions, national distinctions. In their stead would come a common perception and a common realization of the universe and a common course for humanity. We must know that we are all of other peoples. We came through all the civilizations that have been. We have passed through the Eastern, the near East, and the European peoples and now we are here, at the farthest confines of the West, under the law of Karma. Civilization must roll back over the course it came, and as it goes back in spirit, speech, act, and example towards the East from which it came, the misconceptions that have arisen around religious and other ideas will be cleared away by the power of our knowledge and example.

We are here as the best representatives of the people of the world—the most intelligent, the freest in mind and opinion, the freest in action. All that means something under Law, and it means that every being coming in contact with the Ancient Wisdom has an opportunity devolved upon him. We have not met for the first time, nor have we met for the last. Once more we are together, and listening to what we do absolutely know inside. There is that in us which sees and knows when the word is spoken which gives first indication of the life within a life, of a life greater than this we have conceived life to be. Then we begin to tread that small old path that stretches far away—the Path that our great Predecessors, the Masters, have trod before us.