

Working for peace

For as long as The Theosophical Society has been in existence, there have been peace activities. The terrible war now raging in the Ukraine compels us to do our utmost to restore peace.

For reflection and inspiration, we offer here a short excerpt from The Gods Await (p.39 -43) by Katherine Tingley. We strongly recommend reading the entire chapter on peace. The book can be downloaded from our website.

To maintain peace is a proof and manifestation of strength. I would not dare criticize the patriotism of any honest man, or reflect in any way on those who do what they think is their duty; but a man's foes are they of his own household; and so it is with a nation. Our enemies are not outside, but within: in our own national mind and customs, our national aggressions and fallings short. We distrust our neighbors because we distrust ourselves. I do not mean in this or that nation alone, but all over the world. We might all of us talk less about being proud of our countries, and work more for their spiritual advancement and regeneration.

It is universal ideals that the world is aching for today. We need to understand as never before that our responsibilities are not for ourselves alone, not for our own countries alone; but for the whole human family. Territory and trade may be much; national honor may be much; but the general salvation of human society here in this world - that is ALL. The most vital need of every people on earth is permanent peace; and to get permanent peace we must create and sustain an international spirit or World-Patriotism,- which will come as the result of recognition that what affects one nation, affects all; that as far as one ascends towards the peaks of knowledge and well-being, , so far all others will follow; as deep as one may fall away from its ideals and into national selfishness, to that depth, or lower, in the nature of things the others will be dragged down too: that each nation must partake of the good and bad karma of all. In a country that based its life wholly on principle and the spirit of human brotherhood, patriotism would be altogether a noble thing; and its aim would not be to set hearts beating at the sound of a drum, but to induct all minds into broader conceptions of the meaning of life. Were each nation to cultivate patriotism and national loyalty of that type, the world would soon be united in a universal beneficent system.

National interests ought to be dear to us: so dear that we should be eager to give our lives - in the living, not in the dying - to preserve the reality, the inner life and spiritual beauty of our countries; to protect the future generations and leave them a heritage of noble life, an incorruptible dignity of culture such as money cannot purchase nor brute force attain or defend. The highest law of our being demands that we should build our nations on the rock of that enduring wisdom which belongs to the Divine Soul of Man, and rear up our children accordingly, that they and their posterity after them may not know the sorrows we have known, but build of the rich results of our strivings the foundation of the great Republic of the Soul - that Inner Republic of which all souls are citizens: that it may be established "on earth as it is in heaven." But to stand merely and narrowly for one's own country is a suicidal substitute for patriotism; it is, eventually, a poisoning of the supposed object of its devotion; because it implies working against the general life and spiritual health of the world, on which the life and spiritual health of each nation depend. We cannot separate ourselves from humanity. The curse of our nations is separateness. We are not agreed upon any scheme of life or thought or action. We are separated one from another by the imaginary interests of daily life; and competition carried too far is ringing the death-knell of our civilization. Money has become such a power as to make men lose sight of their souls and conscience, and forget that they are a part of Universal Life. Our half-interest in ourselves: devotion to the outward selves and ignoring of the

inward and real: closes against us the door to those deeper realms of thought where truth abides, and hides away from us the manifestation of the true and beautiful divinity latent within each. The greed of the world is the death of the world. The man whose mind is occupied with trying to get control of others, that he may stand before the public as powerful and prosperous - that man is, from his soul's standpoint, in his death-throes. We forget that a future awaits us, - verily the gods await us, - and that there are more lives to be lived than this one; we ignore the spiritual will in man, and that godlike part of our own nature which now more than ever should be brought into action; for this is the beginning of a cycle, a pivotal time in human history.