

# THE HERALD OF THE GOLDEN AGE

"Thy Will be Done on Earth."

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## Tiger or Angel?



There are some who doubt whether the day will ever break.

There are some who believe that the night is eternal.

There are some who argue that cruelty always has been and that, therefore, cruelty always will be.

There are some who look out on the dismal waste of waters and croak that there is no land. They would bid every Columbus turn back in disappointment from his voyage of discovery, and would point to the old ruins of Spain as the limit of progressive development.

To them it suffices that it has been, it was good enough for their fathers and, therefore, it is good enough for them.

That is what they say when you ask for any progress of *self-sacrifice*, but they tell a very different story when it is a question of progress of *luxuries*.

They are not willing to read by a farthing rushlight, or to sit in a straw-strewn chamber, or to strike a light by flint and steel, or to treat bread and tea and sugar as expensive luxuries, only to be indulged in sparingly and at long intervals.

The fine old crusted phrase of conservative custom has a smack of reality about it until it is tested, but it is found wanting in the balance when it is proved.

If interpreted it means only, "I want to endure no more hardships than my father endured; what was good enough for my father is good enough for me, if it is something I like; I want to possess all the good things my father had and as many more as I can get."

And this is the spirit which proposes to stop the progress of the great wave of humanitarian teaching which is rising in England! A wave which is going to sweep away those dregs of selfish barbarism which hang like cobwebs upon life's fairest palaces! A wave which is going to let men know that flesh-eating is a sin because it is essentially connected with pain,

with agony, and with deterioration of character! A wave of humanitarian teaching which tells of mercy to the weak, of justice to the oppressed, and of gentle care to everything that can sorrow or suffer.

When your opponent's arguments are based upon selfishness you know that his cause is weak, when his cause can only be based upon selfishness you know that it is doomed.

The cause of the pessimist is a lost one. What is it to us to-day, if it were true, that cruelty has always existed? What is it to us to-day, if it were true, that the strong always have preyed upon the weak? What value is it, I ask, to go on wailing and croaking that creation has ever been groaning and travailing in pain up to this time, unless you remember that there is a day of deliverance, and unless you declare the advent of a jubilee.

What is it all, if we all of us end but in being our own corpse—  
coffins at last,  
Swallowed in Vastness, lost in Silence, drowned in the deeps of  
a meaningless Past!\*

Supposing we admit for the sake of argument that the lower rungs of life's ladder are smirched with gore, that bleeding mouths proclaim the history of the past, and that gaunt skeletons of agonized death leave a track across the desert pages of bygone æons.

Supposing we admit that in the fight for life the talons have been fleshed in quivering flanks and the cruel beaks have drunk deep of living blood.

Supposing we admit that brother has ever lifted up his hand against brother, and that rape and murder, cannibalism and warfare, fire and sword, are the marks which men of all ages have inscribed upon the granite walls of time.

Supposing that all this, which is alleged, is an accurate record of life upon this planet, and of the way in which the developing cell has left its trail behind, does it follow that this shall be our guide for all time?

Is the past to dominate for ever the future? Is the lower to eternally drag down the higher?

Is there to be no millennial land to come, and no hope of a redemption ahead?

Happily for us all, such maligners of the cosmic architect will themselves receive better things than they yet dream of, and will gather pearls in a land of promise whose gates have not yet been unfolded to their view.

\*From Tennyson's Poem "Vastness."

From the carcase of the dead lion of yesterday there shall to-morrow be gathered honey sweeter than that of Hybla.

If evolution teaches me anything, it tells me of the possibility of the poet's promise that stronger shall ever grow out of weaker and better come from worse.

Because in every waste place the thistle and the thorn have sprung up with savage spike and poison sting, shall this prevent the fulfilment of the prophetic vision that in the good time to come the desert place shall blossom like the garden, and the wilderness be fragrant with the perfume of many flowers?

When a man gets up and says "I refuse to give up eating meat because tigers are cruel," I can but recall the pious wish of the late Laureate that the tiger in man may die down and the angel in him live.

And herein is the solution of the whole matter, herein is the chain which unites those who live in the brutal past and those who long for the gentle future.

There are two parts in man, in part he is linked to the tiger, in part he is allied to the angel.

When we call upon him to look up to heaven and in humility to imitate the Divine attributes of the All Father—the mercy, the gentleness, the tender loving kindness, the pity, and the compassionate care for all life that can yearn or suffer—the tiger within seizes him and bids him remember that he is allied to the savage, and the brutal, and the cruel.

Of the earth, earthy; of the animal, bestial; implacable, pitiless, blood-thirsty; close kin to the parasite which flourishes by basest breach of the laws of hospitality; near born to the vulture which barely discriminates between the living and the dead; comrade but little removed from the teeth that bite, and the jaws that snap, the talons that tear, and the maw that slakes its thirst in blood.

This is the song the tiger sings of carnage and cruelty, of ruth and raven, of darkness and devilry.

And man believes and thinks that he too is all tiger, and he gets up at public meetings and tries to veto all humanitarian progress because he says that the world is built on tiger lines, that cruelty always *has* been and therefore cruelty always *will* be, and that man may as well settle down once for all to snarl an eternal snarl over cracking bones and rent entrails and gouty blood.

The tiger within has a ghoulish song to sing, a song of hopelessness, a song of despair, but man believes him and is satisfied that the tiger within him is the emblem of the necessary and the eternal. But it is false.

**The tiger is not eternal,  
The angel in man shall live.**

The world is not built on tiger lines, but progresses *in spite* of the tiger force in the universe.

Out of the evil shall spring the good,  
Out of cruel, the gentle,  
Out of tiger, the angel.

And so shall it come to pass that when the tiger within snarls for his dead flesh, the angel voice shall be heard speaking of better things to come—of self-sacrifice, of infinite self-sacrifice, of a love which knows no cruelty, and of a tenderness which knows no brutality.

When the tiger within snarls of the right of might, and of the ceaseless warfare by the strong over the weak, and of the bloody pages of the brutal past, the angel within shall touch the harp of celestial beauty, and shall bid man call out his best and his holiest, and shall sing of the paradise of the future, where there shall be no more sorrow, and no more

pain, and where the lion and the lamb shall lie down together, and where the tiger shall be for ever destroyed, and where the reign of peace shall have come.

This is our faith, and as such we know that the future is with us, the beautiful future is ours, let who will claim the past.

In time we shall have left the tiger behind, and shall have climbed into the sunlit hall of peace. Then indeed shall we be able to join in truth in those exquisite lines:

"I have climbed to the snows of Age,  
And I gaze at a field in the Past,  
Where I sank with the body at times, in the  
Sloughs of a low desire;  
But I hear no yelp of beast, and the Man is quiet  
At last,  
As he stands on the heights of his life,  
With a glimpse of a height that is higher."

Josiah Oldfield.

## Magic, Past and Present.

What is magic? A wishing-cap  
To waft me at once into Fortune's lap;  
A wonderful lamp, to raise in a night  
A palace of jewels all sparkling bright;  
A curious ring with a mystic stone  
That links the wearer with powers unknown,  
A theme for romance and airy rhymes,  
This is the Magic of ancient times.

What is Magic? A conjuror's show,  
With a gaping audience, row upon row,  
A box of queer ingenious things,  
Mirrors and magnets, wires and springs;  
The mesmerised girl and the basket feat,  
And the Indian marvels all complete.  
And, to shame deception and crown the fun,  
We finish by showing you "how it's done!"

What is Magic? Mysterious power,  
To do a year's work in half an hour,  
To rule strange realms with a silent sway,  
Till the unseen legions hear and obey—  
To force with a word, to move with a thought;  
This is the Magic that some have wrought,  
And the spell of the past is the same power still,  
The Magic Wand of the steadfast Will.

Edith Thompson.

## THE CONQUEST OF SILENCE.

There is a silence of mind which is both strength and peace; a modesty of mind which retreats in upon itself to work out its highest aims with quietness; a delicacy of mind which shrinks from the hardening grossness of display. Men possessing this spirit seek retirement to pursue their thoughts. Difficulties come before them, and they know that the triumphant way of meeting them is not by publicly exhibiting them, but by arraying against them, in the embattled enclosure of their own heart, all their patience and trust and hope. There are uprisings of desire which they must go away from the peering world to subdue. Their heart knows its own bitterness, and oftentimes wisely keeps it to itself. They taste joys with which a stranger does not intermeddle; for there are joys delicate as the blush of the rose, which the glare of society might soon destroy—joys so bright, blessed, and beautiful that a man cannot blazon them abroad, and thus debase them, but can only let his heart overflow with thankfulness to the Giver of every good and perfect gift who sends them.

Rev. S. Fletcher Williams.