

WE MUST GO ON FROM HERE

By Clara Codd

Not long ago I came across an exquisite little poem, "Song at Twilight." It had only three verses. I will quote the first:

We must go on from here.
Time has no turning—
Carry what we have learnt
Since there is no unlearning
The bridge behind is down.



At all moments of life the first line is forever true. We must go on from just where we are. It may be that we have been idle along the way, taken many a dubious turning. We can do nothing other than start again from just where we are.

I know people who postpone starting a great enterprise such as treading the Path, saying that they will wait until they are older or wiser. But as soon as the first intimations come into our souls that there is a way home, *that* is the moment to begin the way. Not good enough, we say, not pure enough, not clever enough.

But we cannot begin treading the Path except just as we are. We cannot begin any great enterprise except just as we are.

There is a lovely stanza from ancient India:

Pure or impure,
whatever I may be,
by meditating on the Pure
I shall become pure.

We can only begin as we are; we must go on from where we are.

Some will think they are too old because life has almost gone for them. What a mistaken idea! In the life of the Spirit there is no age, nor space nor time as we understand them. There is a great truth in the old story of the thief on the cross who at the last moment of death entered paradise with his Lord. His last thought gave a new direction to his soul as it left the body.

The last year of a person's life—even the last few months—can give a new direction, begin a new road that continues beyond the confines of death and leads into the next

incarnation. The thoughts of all older people should turn heavenwards. Unfortunately, their thoughts often turn backwards, retracing the events of the past life that has passed so quickly. Memories dwell so potently with the old. That is well and good if they are memories embodying love, pity, joy, friendship, or beauty. But we need to look forward, too. The glories of heaven are coming. At the moment of death the Soul descends to view the past life and understand it. We must take a golden Ariadne's thread with us through the gateway of death, the thread of a golden hope, resolution, even if it is only just a beginning.



And so, too, with all the problems of life. Inadequately as we may feel ourselves to be equipped, Time will not wait for us to find wisdom, help, or decision.

Whatever we are, wherever we stand, we *must* go on from here. Then may we go on bravely, accepting results which will cure our lack of wisdom and capacity, holding always a tremendous faith and trust, a trust

in the life which is God in action, a faith in loveliness which is ultimately and forever the conqueror. The golden thread—our own *Sutratma*—again and again will lead us back to our divine Self, and one day that golden thread will lead us out of the darkness of this cave into the shining eternal light.

Originally published in *Trust Yourself to Life*, Theosophical Publishing House, 1968.
Edited by the Department of Education, Theosophical Society in America, 2006.