
EASY DIFFICULTIES.*

DIARY LEAVES.

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It is especially difficult for people to change their mode of living. One cannot help remembering an old proverb that “old furniture ought not to be moved.” But this saying wisely states that something old should not be moved. That means that all difficulties are relative only as regards our consciousness. Verily, people often speak of difficulties, when they create them in their own imagination and have affirmed them with a prejudiced consciousness.

The city dweller, being overcome with the conventionalities of city comforts, considers that life in tents or in yurtas would be the most dreadful existence. And should he find himself with such prejudice in the conditions of desert life he will himself multiply all sorts of terrors. If he will enter various conditions with the firm belief that people live everywhere and that they themselves create the conditions of life, then all the phantoms will be dispersed. Not without reason, while children are yet uncontaminated with the conventionalities of life, do they yearn for travelling, for knowledge and easily adapt themselves to different conditions.

Who knows, that perchance the migration of nations, as a result of that great war, was nothing but a lesson—a trial, for the renovation and broadening of consciousness. I remember, how an enlightened and highly spiritual lady was terrified at the thought that she may have to spend all her life in the well-being of city life. Truly, if one but imagines that all inhabitants of the earth have reached a little well-being, then in that mediocre limitation is contained the great danger of petrification. And here the great Hand has again pointed out that people should migrate, again renovate themselves for new profound upbuilding.

For all these years, to everyone who has seen many people, it has become clear that two distinct types of people exist. Some have always come up on the surface amidst unbelievable difficulties; and not only did they come to the surface, but they also brought much help to their surroundings. Despite family and various complications, they always remained alert, cheerful and friendly. The other type, even with outside help, always went down. It could not reconcile itself with the changes of conditions and even of nomenclatures. They not only consider themselves unhappy but they carried that grey heavy unhappiness into the circle of their friends.

Every journey is for these people already like some punishment from Above. They not only were unable to understand the new local conditions but they became engulfed in baseless condemnations of everything which was beyond them. One of the greatest consolations for them consisted in mutual condemnation and mutual belittlement, as if through bemeaning some one else, they hoped to raise themselves. Instead of learning how to adapt themselves, understand, show pity

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and move on, they preferred to slowly sink to the bottom, as it is said in an old Ukrainian proverb: “Don’t spend your forces in vain, brother, sink right to the bottom.”

Such cases as we have seen during recent years, did not concern only one nation. They were of a purely international trait, from which those who are alive in spirit, could learn in life the advantages of an active optimism, and the horrors of an ignorant pessimism. Of course these two types of humanity, one leading, successful, spiritual and the other deadly, ignorant and deteriorating, have always existed. But the years of the extraordinary world crisis have only brought them out more clearly.

Experienced educators have always understood that children should not be separated from nature, because only in it they retain movability, alertness and decisiveness in action. A certain wise physician advised city people to keep closer to earth and the results of such wise advices in life were often evident. All sorts of sokol organizations, scouts, pioneers, hikers, guides and other sound communities which bring the city-dwellers out into nature, are the most healthy movements of recent years. Everything that called to the friendly bonfire around which everything must be done by the people themselves, all this strengthens the spirit. And not only had everything to be done by themselves, but everything had to be thought of in a new manner and perchance in a better way.

Inventiveness must be exercised. Who knows, whether such a giant of inventiveness as Edison could have appeared, if he would have grown up in the narrow well-being of a city! Everyone of us has seen many examples, when even more or less outstanding personalities were overcome by the surroundings of a vulgar well-being. I remember that a brilliant educator, on letting his wards into life, used to say to some of them: “I regret that your parents are wealthy. I hope you do not get into a golden cage.” And to others he said: “No metal weighs down your wings. Fly high and far!”

As if to justify these advices, all conventional values have been shattered. Even such strongholds as land securities were struck as if by an earthquake. A certain inhabitant at the time of an earthquake, rushing out of his house, complained: “And this they call immovable property!”

Many such maxims are offered by life itself. Some people are doomed to fear and are afraid of these maxims; and others sensibly accept matters as they are. Some are unwisely drawn by mirages and others understand very well the difference between a mirage and reality. But in order to find one’s way amidst mirages and illusion, one must first of all perceive these mirages. One cannot help remembering the Indian parable about the seven blind men who describe an elephant, everyone from his point of perception. Likewise you cannot describe in words the impression of a mirage to him who has never seen one. But in cities mirages do not appear. In order to see them, one must visit the desert and learn there on the spot to distinguish reality from illusion.

Convinced city people have great difficulty in distinguishing true impressions. I remember how a member of our expedition, who was in the desert for the first time, decided to explore an illusionary lake. All my persuasion that the lake did not exist, was of no avail. The deluded traveller called out two attendents and to the surprise of everyone said that he would reach that lake within an
hour and that he believed his eyes more than our contentions. After many hours the poor fellow returned exhausted and angrily refused to discuss further the question of the existence of the illusionary lake. Yet one must recall with what self-assertion he criticized the order to stop at a little well, instead of going an extra hour to the “splendid lake surrounded by trees.”

Mirages are always extremely educative. Only personal experience can teach someone the vanity of illusionary conceit and the experience of life is best of all secured amidst nature. But one cannot go out into nature only theoretically deciding upon the usefulness of such an experiment. There will be little wisdom in intellectual decisions, Nature must be understood. One must enter it as a co-worker and not condemning, but admiring it.

Everyone remembers the beautiful legend about the mines of Falun, so picturesquely narrated by Hoffmann. The ruler of the mine is very stern to the miner, who not from love to the work, but from other personal motives, comes to carry away the hidden treasure.

The voices of nature sound for those, who enter it with an open heart, benevolently. Anthaeus contacted the earth for the absorption of strength, in order to renovate the might of the spirit. Of course it was not from intoxication that he fell upon the ground, but he touched the earth consciously and then the earth conferred upon him a healthy renovation. Anthaeus was called a mighty giant. Is it not from these health-giving contacts with the earth, that he received this powerful name? And could those trials, which take possession in closed cellars, under vaults and narrow walls, appear as a heavy burden?

Probably Anthaeus would consider such conventional difficulties quite incomprehensible. Thus from the point of view of nature such easy difficulties become not a paradox, but a real definition: “Place a greater burden upon me when I enter the Beautiful Garden.” Is this not an exact definition of how and where difficulties are transmuted.

When the Magi gazed into the boundless sky, they saw the Guiding Stars. If they would not have looked into the depth of heaven, they would not have seen the Star. Blessed is he, who in his days has armed them with the knowledge of observing the laws of nature and has awakened their vigilance, thus making them watchful and turning them into wondrous messengers.

Why should we deplore any difficulties, when the Guiding Star is vigilant! He, Who said: “Blessed are difficulties, through them we grow!”—He knew also the Guiding Star.
and more. If you prefer to know the matter of the article, it was not from information that I tell you those things, but from the article itself, which was written by a man of great learning and knowledge, and which I have read and studied carefully. What I am trying to do is to give you a clear and precise understanding of the matter, and to persuade you to follow the advice of the article and to act accordingly. If you follow this advice, you will be able to achieve the results that are described in the article, and you will be able to improve your life and your circumstances. If you do not follow this advice, you will continue to suffer and to make the same mistakes that you have made in the past. The choice is yours, and I hope that you will make the right decision.