

REINCARNATION

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THE LARGER VIEW

To-day we hear much of the larger view, of the need for cultured people to have and to hold lofty thoughts and the life ways of the free.

The irregularities of life's roadway are too great for us to comprehend without the use of that view-point which the truth of reincarnation gives. When we know that man lives through æons and not for one life period only, we can better understand the fleeting nature of our joys and more correctly weigh the seemingly preponderant sorrows that oppress us.

Would you transcend sorrow? Rise up in consciousness. Conceive our God as one of many Gods all obedient to one mighty Law that also obeys Them! Conceive the lessons of the soul that must be learned by ages of experience! The savage must learn self-control, wisdom, skill of action; he must learn civilization.

The civilized man has before him the learning of ideals beyond the grossest seeming.

The idealist must seek and find amidst his ideals our God in His down-pouring of Grace and Harmony.

With the knowledge of God's Law of spiritual evolution comes the possibility and fact of our perfecting in the recurring incarnations.

W. V.-H.

GOETHE ON REINCARNATION

It is not generally known that the great German poet, Goethe, believed in reincarnation. Many of his best commentators ignore this fact or treat it as a poetic fancy, probably because in his published works Goethe did not lay special stress on it. It is in his private correspondence that we must look for confirmation of his belief, and there we find a number of passages which leave no doubt as to his firm conviction that the spirit of man is immortal and seeks embodiment from eternity to eternity in ever higher and more perfect forms. As Dr. F. O. Schrader says in his valuable pamphlet, "The Religion of Goethe": "This belief must have been a precious possession; it was his holy secret of which he spoke plainly only to his intimate friends; on which he avoided publicity as one avoids informing the public of one's love affairs." The private correspondence of Goethe being less known than his public writings, it may be worth while to give a few abstracts which will prove that one of the greatest thinkers of modern times believed and found consolation in the teaching of reincarnation.

Most of the following quotations are translated from Dr. Wilhelm Bode's collection of personal, intimate discourses by Goethe, published in a little book, *Meine Religion, Mein politischer Glaube* (My Religion, My political Belief). It is a delightful compilation, giving us an insight into Goethe's religious and political opinions which we could not, to the same extent, gain from his works proper,

Speaking of death and the immortality of the spirit, he says:

“When one reaches a certain age one can not help thinking sometimes about death. This thought leaves me quite calm, for I have the firm conviction that the human spirit is indestructible; it continues its activity from eternity to eternity; it resembles the sun which to our physical eyes appears to set, although in reality it never sets, but shines for ever. Truly, all nature is change, but behind the change there is the eternal. The faculty to ennoble the sensuous and to ensoul matter through its union with an idea, is the best guarantee of our supersensuous origin. However much the earth may attract us by her manifold phenomena, we raise our eyes searchingly and longingly to the heavens above us, because we have a profound conviction that we are citizens of that spiritual empire, the belief in which we cannot decline or give up. Do you imagine death has terror for me? No thoughtful man allows the belief in immortality to be taken from him. The conviction of our continued existence arises to my mind from the idea of activity. If I exert myself restlessly to the end, nature is bound to provide me another form of existence when this present one can no longer suffice for my spirit.”

Immortality, to Goethe, did not mean eternal bliss and rest, an endless, unchangeable condition, but continued activity by means of reincarnation. He held that there exist various ranks of beings or Monads, the lower ones being, as it were, the servants of the higher ones. Every entity forms part of the body of a higher entity, and comprises

in its own body lower entities attracted to it by natural affinity. Evolution through ever higher forms depends on execution, on the right use of the opportunities afforded in a particular form, on law, or 'karma', as we should say. On this Goethe expresses himself very definitely:

"The idea of the continuance of personal existence is in no way contradictory to the manifold observations made by me regarding the constitution of ourselves and of all beings in nature; on the contrary they add fresh proof to it. How much or how little of our personality deserves to be immortal is another question, one which we must leave to God. For the present I will only say this: I assume that there are various classes and ranks of the ultimate constituents of all beings, of the beginnings, as it were, of all appearances in nature, which I would like to call souls, because they ensoul the whole, or better still, Monads—let us take this expression of Leibnitz. Experience teaches us that some of these Monads are so small, so insignificant, that they are at best fit for a subordinate function and existence; others, on the contrary, are very strong and powerful. The latter attract everything that comes within their sphere of influence to incorporate it in a human body, a plant, an animal, or higher still, a star. They continue this process until the small or large world which they have conceived, appears in physical embodiment. I conclude from this that there are Monads or souls of worlds, as there are monads or souls of ants, and that in their origin both are, if not completely identical, at least closely related in essence. Each sun, each planet, exists for a

higher purpose, a higher idea, which causes their evolution with the same regularity and according to the same laws that guide the evolution of a rose-plant through the stages of its leaves, its stem and crown. The larvæ of intermediate stages of manifestation must not confuse us. It is always the same metamorphosis or power of transmutation which transforms the leaf into a flower, a rose, the egg into a caterpillar, the caterpillar into a butterfly."

"The lower Monads obey a higher Monad, because they must obey, not because they take special pleasure in doing so. This is a natural process. Let us contemplate this hand: It contains parts which are at every moment at the service of the principal Monad. By means of them I can play a piece of music; I can make my fingers run over the keyboard of a piano in any way I please. Thus they cause great enjoyment, but they themselves are deaf; only the principal Monad hears. I may therefore assume that my hand and my fingers take no interest in the playing. How much greater would their enjoyment be, if they could swarm over meadows in the form of busy bees, sit on a tree and enjoy its blossoms! At the moment of death, which is very aptly called dissolution, the principal Monad dismisses its subordinates from their faithful service. I look on birth and death as natural processes of the principal Monad, which in its essence we cannot know. All Monads are so indestructible that at the moment of dissolution they do not suspend or lose their activity, but continue it immediately afterwards. They leave old conditions only to enter into new ones. In

this change everything depends on the strength of the Monad. There is an enormous difference between the Monad of an educated man and that of an animal, a bird or a fish. This leads us again to the idea that we are bound to postulate ranks of souls, if we wish to explain to some extent the phenomena of nature. At death each Monad goes to its appropriate place, in water, air, earth, fire, or the stars. The mysterious attraction which leads them thither guides them also to their future destination."

"We are not all immortal in the same way. In order to manifest in the future as a great Monad, one has to become one. Let us think of our late Grand Duke. It is incredible how much he has influenced his circle, how many great works have been due to his stimulus. Certainly, wherever his spirit may have found its place in the universe, he will know how to stir his people. Or take our noble friend Wieland! The destruction of such great soul-forces can under no circumstances be thought of; nature never wastes her capital. By nature Wieland's soul was a treasure, a jewel; and his long life has not diminished, but increased, his sublime talents. If we permit ourselves to speculate, I really do not see why the Monad to which we owe Wieland's appearance on our planet, should not in its new state enter one of the highest embodiments in this universe. The diligence, the zeal, the spiritual insight with which it grasped the manifest conditions of life entitles it to the highest. I should be little surprised if in thousands of years I should meet Wieland as a world-Monad, as a star of the first magnitude, and

should witness how with his beautiful radiance he endows with renewed life everything within his influence. I hope that the most highly developed Monads will participate as co-workers in the joys of the gods."

"The first communion between nature and God takes place through man. I have no doubt that on other planets this communion will be deeper and more understanding. But do not let us try to prove what cannot be proved! Where knowledge suffices we do not need faith, but where knowledge has failed or is incomplete, we should not dispute the value of faith. As long as we hold firm to the principle that knowledge and faith do not exist in order to annul, but to complement each other, we cannot go wrong."

So far we have considered Goethe's belief in future existences, but he was no less explicit with regard to past incarnations; indeed, he could not speak more clearly than he does in the following passages:

"Just as I assume that there is a future life, so I believe in past existence. I have surely been here a thousand times, and I hope to return a thousand times. It is true we rarely and only dimly remember such past existence; only on occasion a vivid intuition illuminates a part of it. It seems to me that I have been here during the reign of the emperor Hadrian; that is why everything Roman attracts me and is familiar to me. Our friend Boisserée has surely lived in the fifteenth century and had his home near the lower Rhine. A very close friendship which united me for a long time to a worthy lady I have only been able to explain through the theory of reincarna-

tion. I often said to myself: Surely we have once been husband and wife, and I prayed to the gods to let me love once only in my next birth, and that this friend who was my wife in long past ages should be my dear companion. These may have been dreams, such as loving souls are fond of inventing, but my belief that this existence between birth and death is not everything, remains firm and immutable."

Many other passages could be cited in proof of Goethe's belief in reincarnation; we will only quote one more from a poem in which he compares the soul of man to water:

"The soul of man resembles water; from the sky it descends, to the sky it returns, and comes down again to earth, never resting."

In view of such unmistakable language it is surprising that Goethe's ideas on reincarnation have made so little impression. They are none the less valuable for having been ignored so long; his testimony carries weight and we rejoice that his name may be added to the list of so many great thinkers and poets who believed in and guided their lives by the teachings of karma and reincarnation.

A. Schwarz.

THE SEASONS

To those who realize the long drift of history, the so-called primeval man is the omega rather than the alpha of progress. Earlier civilizations have swept him, in their flood-tide, into the quiet backwaters of the rushing river of man's onward course. He has gone back to learn at Nature's knee—to read Aesop's fables in words of one syllable, with the pictures painted by dawn and sunset, by storm and noonday glare. To him the morrow presents few problems, because it fills so small a portion of his thoughts, and his philosophy resolves itself into a vague memory of the seasons.

Experience has taught him that the snows and rigors of winter would give place to the soft spring, when fishing and hunting would be easier; and that later on it would be well to know where the water-pools might be found in the coming drought; and that afterwards would follow the cooler autumn, when the woods shed their red leaf, and nuts and fruits are gathered against the remembered reign of the frost.

But as men advance in evolution they advance in accuracy of thought. The smiles and frowns of Nature in her changing seasons no longer suffice to measure time, and science is bidden to tabulate the years and their minor divisions to the millionth of a second. Even our present system of calculating time is not perfect. We are still 26 seconds out in our solar year; which error will amount to one day in 3323 years. It has been proposed to extend the Gregorian rule by making the year 4000, and all its multiples, not

leap-years but common years. Beyond that distant date the calculations of the seasons will be closer to the astronomical facts but still inaccurate.

Yet why should we train our minds to divide only the year and its seasons? The expressions of time are so uncertain that the seasons are reversed in northern and southern latitudes. All time and all life have their seasons. What happens in one space of time happens also in larger spaces. There is not an item in the vast catalogue of evolution but has its recurring and dividing periods; its repeated links of growth and progress.

This rule we see exemplified in every form of life; from the lowliest plants to the the highest mammals. The may-fly, which is hatched one day from the egg, and dies the day thereafter—the very hours must seem as seasons to such a brief existence; while the tropical aloe, which only blooms every third year must have a curiously extended notion of the seasons. And as regards ourselves, the poets, with their keen intuition of the truth, instinctively divide our physical lives into a quarternary of seasons, and oft-times use such phrases as:

The winter of our discontent;
The spring-time of life;
The making oneself a summer from another's
green;
The sear and yellow leaf.

Taking a still broader concept of what the word Life really means, may we not go somewhat further and divide the cycle of man's evolution into similar periods? For this physical life of

ours is, in reality, merely a season—a season that partakes more of the character of winter than the brilliancy of spring-time, or the fulness of summer, or the fruition of autumn. These later and equally recurrent periods will inevitably follow, but they are not with us now, save as the future exists always in the present. We are like the brown fallows and the leafless trees; energetically intent upon ultimate development. But our powers are held in the grip and limitations of winter; fettered by the frost of mundane cares; swept by sighing winds and weeping rain; whilst our hearts and minds, almost unwittingly, are busy with growth and framing aspirations of the morrow.

This winter will pass into the emotional spring-time of the astral plane; and to this season will succeed the wider scope of the so-called summer-land and the lower mental world. Then again will come the fruition and the harvesting of the higher mental world, from which attained season the ego is led back to reincarnation to the winter time of earth's experiences.

So passes the soul of man through the various worlds of life—through the seasons of his growth. The twin laws of evolution are progress and continuity—not a continuity of stagnation, which would stay the upward climbing ego, but a continuity of successive developments, of incarnation succeeding incarnation, until, guided by the just teachings of karma, the ultimate harvest of the soul is perfect.

J. B. Lindon.

EARLY REMEMBERINGS

A little dark-eyed child of four sat upon the floor, playing with her family of dolls. She was the only child, and hence the most wonderful of beings to an adoring mother, who listened with delight to her childish prattle as she discoursed to her children.

"Mary Elizabeth," she said, holding up one doll to be within easy conversational distance. "Do you know that I was here before? Yes; Mary Elizabeth, I was. And *when* I was here before, I was my g'amma's g'amma. And when I come again," she continued impressively, "I'm doin' to be my auntie's mamma."

Thus do the little ones speak of truths unknown to many an elder. If parents will observe carefully the sayings of their children, it will be found no unusual thing for them to bring back to earth a very definite memory of a previous life. Too often unenlightened parents punish their child for lying, not knowing that he is speaking of real happenings of long ago. Naturally he learns to keep silent, and soon the memories are dimmed by the interposition of the more vivid events of the present.

Effie M. Smith.

"The deeds of men never escape the gods."

Ovid.

A DREAM

Although having no apparent connection with either karma or reincarnation, the following incident may be of interest.

It occurred to an officer in the Navy who is in charge of public money (the amount being sometimes fairly considerable), and is given in his own words, in the first person, as follows:

One morning, quite recently, I woke up with a strong, vivid remembrance of a dream, the essential point of which was the theft of some trust or public money.

It is very seldom that I have any remembrance of dreams; very occasionally I do, and in most of these rare cases some definite reason for remembrance has been noticed. I could see no object in the remembrance of this one; the details were, of course, involved, as usual, but the main point of the dream was so forcibly impressed on my brain that it bothered me considerably.

While dressing, the money chest in one corner of the cabin caught my eye, and particularly some marks on the paint round the door. It struck me that those marks new and I wondered what had caused them; no connection between them and the dream crossed my mind then.

Some two or three hours later, when unlocking the chest, I noticed again the marks on the paint; this time the dream also flashed into my mind, and I knew at once the reason why it had been impressed on my brain. I carefully examined the marks and there was no shadow of doubt that an attempt had been made to force the door open.

It is fairly evident that some friend, or possibly myself, saw the attempt in the astral world and, in order to warn me, impressed it on my brain. Whoever it was certainly did it most effectively and, if it was not myself, he or she has my warmest gratitude.

The gentleman who had a mind to see the inside of the chest had to depart unsatisfied; whether or no he got a shock from the astral world which disturbed his labours, I am unable to say, but it is not at all improbable, and if the shock had the same force behind it which impressed the dream on my brain, it must have been something of a jolt; it is very likely he left in a hurry and that I am indebted to the same kind friend for disturbing him.

The above incident is doubtless of no great interest or importance to anyone but myself but it goes to show the *practical* value of a working knowledge of, and familiarity with, psychic matters and, as such it may be of use; for psychic incidents *are* as real and as solid matters of fact as the incidents of earthly life, and, moreover, they can be very efficient aids to the helping of others, opportunities for doing which we are told to be always on the watch for.

Gilbert Graham.

REINCARNATION

We are not here on earth for the first time, but have been here often before, and having made all of the faculties we possess, by life after life changing into faculty after death all the experiences that we have had, and bringing that faculty back again for a new experience on earth. We call this method of growth Reincarnation. The name does not matter. Think what it means. It means that as you plant a seed, and that seed grows into a shrub, and the shrub into a tree, and the tree puts out leaves, gathers nourishment, puts the nourishment into sap, and the sap retreats down to the stem and the root, and the leaves perish; as the enriched sap rises again and puts out new leaves, again they gather food, again it is transmuted, changed, and carried down by the sap, and the tree grows though the leaves that feed it perish; so it is with our human lives. We are living, eternal Spirits; we are sown as seeds in the soil of human experience; we gather it through our body; the body takes in the experience and hands it on to the Spirit; the body dies as the leaves die, but the Spirit lives and grows out of the nourishment that he body gathers; and then he takes another body, as the tree takes out new leaves, the same Spirit, the same individual, although the outer body is new. And each new body is more developed, in order to fit the more highly developed faculties of the eternal Spirit who thus grows. That is why people are different, why capacities are different, why people are unequal.

Mrs. Annie Besant in "The Young Citizen."

IN THE GARDEN HOUSE

Evening Seventh

Inquirer: A few days ago, while talking about reincarnation to a friend, he asked me what proof I had to give as to its being a fact. He said he was quite willing to be convinced, but wanted scientific proofs. I fear I did not satisfy him.

Student: You could hardly be expected to do so. Reincarnation deals largely with conditions in worlds which are super-physical, and outside of man's ordinary powers of perception. The process of reincarnation can not be proved to the senses as a physical fact; for it is only partly physical, and that part is common knowledge. On the other hand there are many evidences for the truth of reincarnation, such as would count in a law court. What "proofs" did you offer him?

Inq.: I told him that reincarnation was taught explicitly in most of the great religions known to history; that the majority of the human race believed it in some form; that it is the only system that gives a satisfactory explanation of human existence. He said that everybody believes that his own philosophy was the only true and satisfactory one, and that for his part he could not see where any one theory could claim belief.

St.: The great mistake made by such people is that they have an inadequate set of standards by which they measure truths before they accept them. They do not realise that truth is infinite and utterly transcends the world of the five senses. So they fall into the error of trying to measure Truth with the same standards as have been

found most useful in the physical world. It is just as if you attempted to measure grain with a yard-stick instead of a bushel measure.

The methods of science require that the theories advanced by scientists to account for the phenomena of nature shall be based on mechanical principles, and that the subjects of investigation shall be such as confine themselves to things which may be observed by means of one or more of the five senses of man. Whatever does not conform to these restrictions is regarded as metaphysics, something "beyond physics."

Inq.: How would you try to convince a scientific man of the truth of reincarnation?

St.: I would not try to convince him. I would merely state the reasons which seem to me to be conclusive, and let him form his own opinion. These are my chief reasons:

Even the scientific man recognises authority. All of his experience goes to perfect his power of judgment of the trustworthiness of the work of other people. He can not repeat all the scientific work of others, but he must accept as truth many statements and laws which have been established by the authorities in science. Now, in the field of the philosophy of human life and existence there have been and are likewise great teachers whom the student learns to regard as authorities. And the most trustworthy authorities say that reincarnation is true.

The scientific man knows the value of a theory which is able to account for all the facts observed which belong to the subject in question. In fact his ultimate test for the truth of a theory is that it shall be consistent and agree with all the facts.

Now, reincarnation *does* explain the facts of human life at every point in a way that is quite impossible for any other known theory.

Finally, the student of the philosophy of life learns to recognise truth directly, intuitively. If you seek the Truth with earnestness and without prejudice, ready to sacrifice everything for Truth, then you will gradually learn to know the Truth. You will never know all of Truth, for it is infinite, but you will know more and more of it, such as will answer the questions which you want to understand.

These three general reasons are the important ones. Furthermore analogy supports reincarnation. Nature abounds in instances where life is renewed in other forms, while the old forms perish.

There are many specific evidences which go to prove the truth of reincarnation. Let us just mention a few of these:

There are trustworthy people who declare that they remember incidents of their past incarnations, or even the whole of many incarnations.

The infant prodigies in such subjects as music and mathematics can only be explained by the truths of reincarnation.

Genius can not be understood unless we admit that knowledge and faculties were innate, that is born with the man. And yet we know that knowledge and faculties must be developed by actual experience.

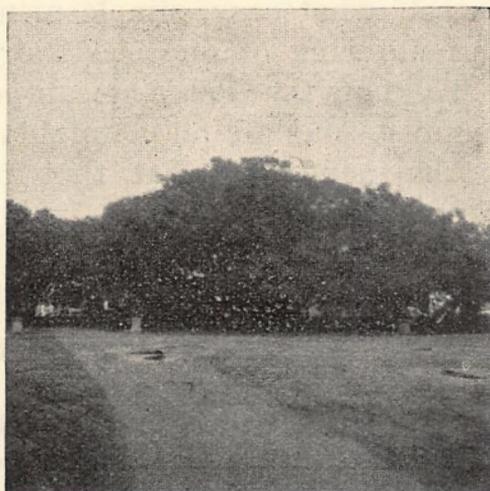
It is wholly unreasonable to suppose that a man is born into this world without bringing with him a fully formed character, mental faculties and characteristics. Heredity and environment

do not so much make the man what he becomes, as the man himself unfolds his previous self,— a self toward the making of which all past ages have contributed. Sometimes the environment is stronger than the man, but many times the man rises superior to his environment.

Inq.: Do you believe that reincarnation will be generally accepted in Europe and America?

St.: Yes, I do. It may take several hundred years, but it seems to be surely coming into recognition. Individualism has been carried to such an extreme, and the importance of the present life on Earth has become so exaggerated, that it is necessary to counterbalance these ideas by the spreading of the truths of absolute justice and reincarnation. Individualism has its great purpose in human evolution, but it is only a half-truth and must be rounded out by the teaching which shows the individual as a continuing being, with many earth-lives.

C. S.



A Great Banyan Tree in South India.

THE GREAT TEMPTATION

In all walks of life we see men carried away from the truth by yielding to the temptation to see life and its laws, not as they are, but as they would have them be. People are constantly saying they do not believe this or that because they do not like to believe it. They let their own longings for an ideal world of their own designing take the place of the world in which they are living.

So we hear people say they do not like to think of living on Earth again and will not believe in such a notion. But the facts—what are they? And can they be altered by our beliefs and preferences?

The laws of Nature are unchangeable and we return to Earth-life whether we believe or not.

Is it not wiser not to hide our heads from the truth but rather to see it and learn it in the least difficult ways?

Ask yourself what easy, simple principles will explain the suffering of one sick baby and you are lost! To know the God Who can permit such things we must understand a mighty law that includes a harmony so great that the human agony of our era will be lost in the infinity of its chords.

W. V-H.



THE ONE-LIFE FALLACY

As long as men believe that there is for each of them only a single life to be lived on earth they will be unable to see any evidence for a scheme of justice in life on earth as it exists,—such justice, at any rate, as men would like to attribute to the deity. There is only too much of misery, crime and injustice in the world all about us to confute such an idea; and the theologians of all religions have always been obliged to try to comfort men and silence their outcries by telling them that in the life of the hereafter all present injustice and inequalities will be made good. Too often this idea has been taught to the people without due regard to the unreasonableness of rewarding the sufferings of man for a brief life-time with an endless life in heaven.

In our western theologies especially it is true that there has been, and still is, too much of crudity and absurdity. Men have been taught that the life of the spirit is entirely immaterial, and yet it is still believed by many that there will be a resurrection of the material, physical body! Men are promised spiritual rewards in an eternal heaven life no matter how undeveloped and unspiritual they may be, if only they will believe in the creed of the particular theologian who is trying to “convert” them.

In our current modes of thought entirely too much stress is laid on the importance of the single life on earth which is supposed to be the only material embodiment of man’s soul. The result has been that truth has been violated to

such an extent that men can not live up to this supposed all-importance of their present incarnation. They do not even try to live up to it. A professor of psychology once said to his class of students, "If the church people really believed what they are taught they would not be able to have a moment's peace of mind, but would all become insane!"

Think of it! A limited number of years on earth are to decide the fate of the soul for an endless time. What father would punish his child eternally for any crime that the poor, ignorant creature could have committed? Yet this is practically what the theologians have to teach, once they have asserted that men live only once on earth.

No, not a moment's quiet could the man have who really believed that an eternal future was to be determined by what he did in his present life-time, and we do not see any of the church people who profess to believe such doctrines act in accordance with such teachings. In fact they live exactly as though they had all the time they wanted or needed to prepare themselves for a judgment day.

The idea of the one life only has forced the theologians to the most illogical and absurd teachings. As men are admittedly too impure, sinful and unspiritual to enter a heaven of perfect purity and spirituality, they have been asked to believe in a vicarious atonement. It has been taught that God Himself through His only begotten Son has taken upon Himself the guilt of all those who would believe this. Yet those who find themselves unable to accept this

dogma of the theologian, no matter how pure their lives and how much good they wrought, must be eternally lost!

Yes, men really live as though they had all the time they needed to prepare themselves for a spiritual life in other worlds. And they really have all the time they need. They will be born on earth over and over again, until they have learned to live in worlds of finer matter, until they have mastered the problems that earth-lives offer to them.

And, really, when one believes in reincarnation and also that our present lives do actually mold and shape and determine our future lives, then it really becomes true that our present life becomes for us a thing of the very greatest importance. Although it is only one among many, its influence does last throughout all time. Out of many small things shall be built a single great thing. Each life on earth is a chapter in the history of an immortal being whose growth and splendor have no limit.

The peoples of the western continents have long been left to try to find their way without the teaching of reincarnation and with but a very much weakened form of the truth of divine justice, or karma. There was doubtless good reason for letting the people of Europe and the Americas emphasise the importance of the present incarnation. Perhaps these nations have not in their previous incarnations earned the right to know much of these truths. But to-day the turning-point has come, and the light of karma and reincarnation will shine brighter and brighter as the years go by.

C. S.

REINCARNATION FOR PRISONERS

Prisoners, criminals, often become criminals after their release, because they are wholly or half hopeless.

Reincarnation is an anchor of hope for them. Fast to it they can ride out the storm of passion! Many prisoners rejoice greatly when they hear of reincarnation.

To them the possibility of "a new chance" means more than we freer ones can conceive. They may feel the world's rejection and long for fresh, unsullied pages on which they may write!

Legion members will do well to minister to prisoners. They will most gladly and generously respond.

W. V-H.

KARMA AND PEACE

All the agencies of civilization are agencies for the preparation of the way to peace. Intelligent men who seek the facts strive to hasten the progress of all the good works of civilization.

Nothing will do more for the cause of peace than the knowledge of karma. This, the very essence of the principle of adjustment, will finally balance all differences.

When people know this law they will find less reason to go to war and more reason to endure and to trust to the power of Nature to balance.

W. V-H.

NEEDLESS SUFFERING

It is human nature to dwell rather too much on our sufferings, pains and aches. We love to speak to others about our troubles with our bodies and consider ourselves ill-treated if we do not obtain some expressions of sympathy from our friends. We take sometimes even a morbid pride in our sufferings and derive an unwholesome pleasure in their contemplation.

This attitude, if persisted in, will make endless trouble for us at the time when we try to live the higher life. When the consciousness of the smaller self is to expand into that of the greater self it finds opposing its efforts all the unexhausted thought-energies of past lives which were selfish and personal, directed to the bodies. Spiritual progress can only be made when these obstacles and limitations are broken down and destroyed, once for all.

Nature wisely teaches her little foster-children to live more and more in harmony and in accord with the law of evolution. When men concentrate their higher energies on their lower difficulties, it is a reversing of the natural forces of spiritual evolution, which are constantly tending from the lower worlds to the higher. And therefore Nature, in her great mercy, makes it increasingly more difficult for men to be selfish or self-centered. Brooding on personal troubles throws life and energy into them and makes the pain that much harder to bear. This is the lesson that Nature is constantly trying to teach to men,—but many will not learn.

We smile at the boy who in the ball game forgets the lame knee or sore foot which made it quite impossible for him to do his little chores, but we who are grown-ups are children still, making similar mistakes and indulging our lower nature in similar follies. The great lessons of life are learned with slowness,—until an awakening takes place and man takes his evolution in his own hands with mighty will and constant, one-pointed effort.

C. S.

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To the ancient Egyptian death was a phase of time and not a catastrophe. As the Sun sank beyond the Lybian Desert only to rise again and flood the land with his helpful rays, so man died to live, not lived to die. And since it was necessary that the people of that ancient land should be given some physical picture of the life to be, the teachings of Thoth found sufficient expression of the physical, emotional and mental worlds by indicating that the river of Egypt reproduced these realms in the after-world. "To the mind of the Egyptian the whole bed of the immense river was but the sacred image of the unseen land watered by the Celestial Nile, of which the *Book of the Dead* speaks; the "Nuter Khart," or holy land of the dead, with its triple division into Rusta, the territory of Initiation, Ahlu, the territory of Illumination, and Amenti, the place of union with the unseen father."

J. B. L.

KARMA

Two shall be born, the whole wide world apart
And speak in different tongues and have no
thought

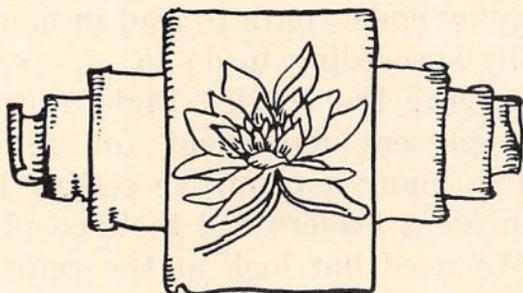
Each of the other's being. And have no heed;
And these, o'er unknown seas to unknown lands
Shall cross, escaping wrecks, defying death,
And, all unconsciously, shape every act
And bend each wandering step to this one end
That, one day, out of darkness, they shall meet
And read life's meaning in each other's eyes.

And two shall walk some narrow way of life
So nearly side by side that should one turn
Ever so little space to right or left

They needs must stand acknowledged, face
to face;

And yet, with wistful eyes that never meet,
And groping hands that never clasp, and lips
Calling in vain to ears that never hear,
They seek each other all their weary lives
And die—unsatisfied—and that is Fate.

Anonymous.



*THE HIDDEN WORK OF NATURE**Excerpts from "The Theosophist"*

"Let but reincarnation be considered a part of nature's plan, and at once the tragedy of nature transforms itself into an aspiring and stately pageant. For then the future is ourselves; it is we that shall make the glorious utopias of dreams; we that painfully toil to-day to fashion bricks for nature's beautiful edifice in far-off days, we, and not others, shall see that edifice in its splendour, and be its very possessors. . . Like bread cast upon the waters, our work shall greet us ages hence, and we shall then be glad that we have toiled so well now."

"If we look at reformers in the light of reincarnation, we shall see that their present ability to lead is simply the result of work done in past lives. Since biologists are agreed that acquired characters are not transmissible, we must look for that rare inborn capacity to lead, not in the heredity of the organism, but in a spiritual heredity that is in the life and consciousness of the individual. This is exactly what reincarnation says; the individual acquired his ability to lead to-day by endeavours to lead in many a past life, and by succeeding to do so.

"Furthermore the Hidden Light reveals to us that each present movement for reform was rehearsed in many a primitive setting long ago, with the present leaders and their co-adjutors as actors. We need but look at the reform movements for the amelioration of the lot of the working classes in Europe to see how the leaders to-day in the various countries were tribunes of

the plebs in Rome, or demagogoi in Athens, or leaders of the masses in Carthage. Nay, furthermore, it is not difficult to note how some of the politicians and statesmen of Greece and Rome and elsewhere, that worked to abolish abuses and to free the oppressed, have changed sex in their present incarnations, and are with us to-day as leaders of the various suffragist and feminist movements of the world. Where else, but in past lives, did these women learn the tactical strategy and mastery of leadership that they evince in their campaigns for reform?"

"For this is nature's Hidden Work, to weave a vesture out of the karmas of men that shall reflect the pattern given her from on high; and the weaving halts, unperfected, till through the actions of all men there shall shine one great Action. When the perfect vesture is woven for Him who desires it, and the karmas of all men act in unison, then, and not before, will come "that day" when Nature can say to men, as now to her God, "I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." Unto that hour she toils at her Hidden Work, and it is the Hidden Light that reveals to men her process of evolution as she shapes from out the dust immortal Sons of God."

C. Jinarajadasa.

"Mercy to him that shows it, is the rule."
Cowper's "The Task," Book 6; Line 595.

A BROADER CHRISTIANITY .

Even the most devoted and able Christians recognize the present-day inadequacy of the Christian doctrine. Only the Masters of The Divine Wisdom can speak with exactness upon the needs of the mighty religion.

But we may well conceive what would be the change in Christianity and its helpfulness if it had added to it the facts of æonian soul-evolving with the dippings of the ego into gross earth-contacts in the recurring incarnations and the poetic withdrawal to the heaven-life when the heavy flesh-body falls away!

People would then be taught of Karma and its resolving by the balancings of mercy. They would be infinitely happier and more tolerant if they knew of Dharma, which is the wonderful mystery-fact that the duty of Man is not the same for all men; but that that which each man should do is that which he in his highest moments feels that he ought to do. To strongly condemn a younger brother because he does not act as you would act in certain circumstances is to strike him a harmful blow.

We hope that as time passes Christianity will re-assume these lost, ancient principles of her Truth!

W. V.-H. in "Esoteric Christianity."

MUSINGS

How very wonderful is the power of illusion in lower nature! Nothing is more certain than death, few things more mysterious; yet men are so easily attracted to the ceaseless search for personal pleasure that they succeed for long ages in eluding the final necessity of facing the sphinx-like question, "Man, what art thou?" And yet this terror of death, which so few will face with dauntless courage, is itself only a phantom of illusion, hiding with the thinnest veil the truth that death is life, and life is without ending.

Does it ever occur to men to wonder whether their life may have a meaning that transcends the present limitations and grows beyond all limitings of thought? Do they sometimes want to know whether their experience may be of value throughout all future ages? Can they entertain the thought that they are necessary parts of a greater being, of a greater consciousness, that their little selves are needed for the making perfect of the larger Self?

Is it true indeed that men love darkness rather than the blinding light of Truth? It seems as though they loved to be deceived by Mother Nature, that they cling with great tenacity to the very things which they must soonest leave behind them in their forward moving in the stream of consciousness!

How easily the radiant Sun dispels the morning mists! Come, Sun, and with thy all-compelling rays pierce through the veils of filmy vapor that dim the sight of men and hold them willing slaves to Darkness and Illusion!

C. S.

BOOK REVIEWS

Letters from a Living Dead Man, by Elsa Barker, 8vo, 291 pages. Publishers: Mitchell Kennerley, New York. Price: \$1.25. Order through *Karma and Reincarnation Legion*, 7243 Coles Ave., Chicago, Ill.

This remarkable book consists of a series of messages written automatically by the well-known writer, Elsa Barker, and purporting to come from a lawyer, recently deceased. Although we can not vouch for the accuracy of the statements made, we would say that the book bears the marks of sincerity, and the conditions of the life after death which are so vividly described seem to be quite in agreement with what one would expect from the general knowledge of karma and reincarnation. Reincarnation is mentioned in numerous letters, and their astral author is fully convinced of the truth of many re-births on earth.

We believe that Groups of the *Legion* will find this book a great help in interesting the general public in our own presentment of karma and reincarnation.

New Standard Dictionary of the English Language. Funk & Wagnalls Co., New York.

This remarkable work deserves especially the attention of those interested in karma and reincarnation, for the reason that the compilers of the dictionary have attempted to seek some such assistance in their work as would give them a sympathetic relationship with those who hold views not accepted by the common mass of humanity. The terms used in REINCARNATION will probably be found more fairly represented in this dictionary than in any other with which we are familiar.

The Prayer. An Indian Story, by Sir Edwin Arnold.

This exquisite little book, which can be obtained on application to Mr. J. B. Lindon, 1233 East 50th Street, Chicago, Illinois, U. S. A., at 25 cents, is a reprint of a poem by Sir Edwin Arnold. Its special worth lies in the fact that it reproduces the hand-writing of the poet as he wrote the composition with, probably, a quill pen. Its sturdy chirography is well worth seeing.