

REINCARNATION

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VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY

This truth of the Bible is fully comprehensible when we accept as valid the notion of the return upon the actor of forces unwisely used. Knowing as we do that each man of us lives through many embodiments, we can see how wrongs right themselves almost automatically. The man who is unkind or cruel learns in time that he should act with due consideration for the rights and happiness of all other co-existent beings.

But not wholly are wrongs righted automatically. A mighty power of Grace heaves, swells and is ever growing in natural Law. This Grace of God is administered by God's agents. They Who are Providence see the struggles of men with their own evil natures; They can mitigate the blows of the returning force, if men will learn their lessons.

Hence it is doubly true that God will repay. For He repays, indeed, with retribution. The

law of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth is valid; it is immutable. But above it is His mercy, His Grace. It is truly God's function to repay, for He knows when the lesson is learned and when the returning force needs to act no longer with associated pain.

To-day, in this period of war, the thought of vengeance is to be rejected with studied care. Leave it to Providence! The coming adjustments of karma, as the ages roll, will be less painful and God's Grace will be made more manifest year by year.

W. V-H.

"LETTING ALONE," IN TAOISM

Some one asked Lao-Tzu, the great Chinese philosopher, saying: "If the empire is not to be governed, how are men's hearts to be kept in order?"

"Be careful," replied Lao-Tzu, "not to interfere with the natural goodness of the heart of man. Man's heart may be forced down or stirred up. In each case the issue is fatal.

"By gentleness, the hardest heart may be softened. But try to cut and polish it,—'twill glow like fire or freeze like ice. In the twinkling of an eye it will pass beyond the limits of the Four Seas. In repose, profoundly still; in motion, far away in the sky. No bolt can bar, no bond can bind,—such is the human heart."

"Of old, the Yellow Emperor first caused charity and duty to one's neighbour to interfere with the natural goodness of the heart of man. In consequence of which, Yao and Shun . . . disturbed their internal economy in order to find room for charity and duty to one's neighbour. They exhausted their energies in framing laws and statutes. Still they did not succeed."

From Herbert A. Giles, "Chuang Tzu."

ARE CICERO AND GLADSTONE THE SAME?

The theory of reincarnation—of a series of evolving and progressing lives—includes the idea that man begins a new life with a new body, but as the same man plus the changes wrought in his make-up by the experience of his last preceding life. Let us take an example:

A man in his previous life has been irritable and liable to sudden gusts of rage. But, although he has not been able to overcome this drawback, yet he has suffered so much from its effects that before he died he was thoroughly convinced that anger and irritability are foolish and hurtful, and had made an honest attempt to overcome them. In the interval between his past and his next life a great deal that had been aspiration in the former would become a permanent part of his character; and we should expect to find that in his next life he would have his temper well under control. At the same time the tendency to anger would probably be there, for he is not yet perfect. If, however, in his previous life he had made no attempt to curb his ill temper, it might be that as far as that particular failing was concerned, he would be even worse in his succeeding incarnation, although in some other parts of his character he might show distinct improvement. The idea we should grasp, is this: That the man is the same man, but with modifications and advances resulting from the experiences and efforts of his previous life.

The number of those who are able to investigate reliably in the higher, superphysical worlds is quite small. The weight we attach to what these

few investigators tell us, must necessarily be in proportion to the confidence we have in the investigator's honesty and ability. Investigators tell us that the records of the past are open to the study of those who have acquired the power to read them; and it is claimed that a great body of interesting and valuable knowledge—not theory but knowledge—has been obtained in that way. Among other things we are told that investigation shows that Napoleon was a re-incarnation of Hannibal, the Carthaginian; Queen Victoria of King Alfred the Great; and the English Prime Minister Gladstone, of Cicero, the Roman orator. These three instances carry with them such an air of general probability that they might well be clever guesses and nothing more. They might be guesses which a closer study of the characteristic features of the persons themselves might show to be manifestly incorrect. Thus, if we found that a refined and fastidious and abstemious entity in a previous life, was said to be a coarse and notorious glutton in the next incarnation we should be inclined to say that this was almost proof positive that the two characters could not belong to the same man. It would be against evolution that the man should sink backward without cause from abstinence to gluttony. But if we found that the man who suffered much in a previous life from over-eating, is supposed to have become a moderate eater in his next life, then we should say the evidence was good and confirmatory, because it would be only what we might expect. The man had learned by experience that over-feeding was a bad thing, and in his next life he would avoid gluttony automatically,

as it were, and as a matter of course. This would simply mean that he had learned his lesson in this particular regard.

Being informed that Gladstone, eminent orator, author and statesman, of Great Britain, was said to have been the re-incarnation of Cicero, orator, author and eminent statesman of ancient Rome, I have put the matter to such test as was open to me, with interesting results.

Take, with me, Plutarch's *Lives* from the shelf, and let us find out roughly what manner of man was this ancient Roman. He was born about 106 years B. C. We find that when quite young he had a great reputation as an orator, and says Plutarch, "the glory of his rhetoric still remains." His "voice was loud and good but so harsh and unmanaged that in vehemence and heat of speaking he always raised it to so high a tone that there seemed to be reason to fear about his health." But later he overcame this harshness and his voice was "rendered sweet and full to the ear." After a temporary retirement he determined to return to public affairs, and we are told he "again prepared for use his orator's instrument of rhetoric, and summoned into action his political faculties, diligently exercising himself in declamations, and attending the most celebrated rhetoricians of his time." Further on, Plutarch speaks of him as "excessively pleased with his own praise," and he "continued to the very last to be passionately fond of glory." Space will not permit us to follow his career. Suffice it to say that he held positions of great power; that he was ambitious, that his oratory, though brilliant and effective, was diffuse; that as a

politician he showed on occasion no great severity of principle; that he was ambitious, and he was at times a popular idol. His character and career have flashes of splendor more or less sustained, but his magnificent abilities, his character and his career leave a good deal to be desired. His death had a certain pathetic dignity. Plutarch says, "And Cicero perceiving Herennius running in the walks commanded his servant to set down the litter; and, stroking his chin as he used to do, with his his left hand, he looked steadfastly upon his murderers, his person covered with dust, his beard and hair untrimmed, and his face worn with his troubles, so that the greatest part of those that stood by, covered their faces, while Herennius slew him. And thus was he murdered, stretching forth his neck out of the litter, being now in his sixty-fourth year. Herminius cut off his head, and by Anthony's command his hands also, by which his Philippics were written, for so Cicero styled those orations he wrote against Anthony, and so they are styled to this day."

One thing, however, remains to be said about Cicero. He had a great weakness of the stomach and could take nothing but a spare and thin diet. He rarely sat down to meat till sunset. He was "in the care of his body nice and delicate, appointing himself for example a set number of walks and rubbings; and after this manner managing the habit of his body, he brought it in time to be healthful and capable of supporting many great fatigues and trials."

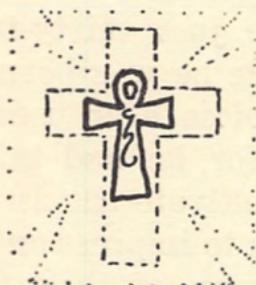
Coming to Mr. Gladstone we shall have to be brief, and we will first take the physical side. Mr. Gladstone was very methodical in managing

his body. He became famous as a feller of trees as a means of exercise. He was an excellent walker. Assuming that he was also Cicero, we find him still careful of his stomach. He was a great believer in thorough mastication of his food and is said to have chewed every piece of meat that he ate just thirty-two times. With regard to his voice he was born with one of the most beautiful voices ever used on a platform. He deserved it, for he had taken pains in his previous life to cultivate it. In other matters as well there is much to impress on us the conviction that the Englishman of the nineteenth century was just what we might expect from the laws of karma working through the old Roman of the last century B. C. His vocabulary was tremendous and the fluency and ease of his speech phenomenal, so much so that his great rival Disraeli, the dazzling Jew (Lord Beaconsfield), certainly had some justification for his famous description of Gladstone, as being a "sophistical rhetorician, intoxicated by the exuberance of his own verbosity." We have the same ambition, the same self-appreciation, the same wonderful versatility and all along the same lines of character as Cicero, but the whole character seems to be cleaner, purer and higher; and this time karma gave him, not a bloody death, but a stately old age, a peaceful end, and an honored sepulture.

Perhaps some students who are not quite clear on the workings of reincarnation may do worse than study these two lives in more detail than we have here been able to give them. Victoria and Alfred the Great, Napoleon and Hannibal will also repay careful analysis. It might be

added that the vehemence of Cicero's oratory was well reflected in Gladstone, who would thump his despatch box in the House of Commons.

John Hawkes.



REINCARNATION

The belief in an existence after this life is strong in most men, but science has practically made it impossible for the rational thinker to believe in an everlasting future spiritual existence, and has caused many men to turn to the idea of a reincarnated existence on earth as a future life.

The idea of reincarnation has met with little favor among the devout, for the reason mainly that it seems to impose no demand for good conduct upon man; for if the spirit, or what the Theosophists call the *ego*, is to be incarnated over and over again, all incentive to good seems to be removed, and, no matter what a man may be, no punishment awaits him in the hereafter.

Nothing, however, is further from the truth. Punishment is not left out of reincarnated existence, neither is reward; and the incentive to

be good, far from being removed, is much more imperative than in that form of belief which supplies a heavenly dwelling-place for departed spirits and a divine judgment, because to get reward in the next incarnation, one has to be really good in this, and develop one's mind and character. Repentance at the eleventh hour will not necessarily develop a man, and without development no reward may be expected.

The believer in reincarnation who has made a proper study of all phases of his belief knows that, in order to have a proper equipment for gaining a station of importance and a care-free life in his next incarnation, he will have to prepare himself in this incarnation by developing character and acquiring knowledge that will be necessary to enable him to assume such station, even if, in the present incarnation, Fate has denied him the opportunity of assuming the position which this knowledge might entitle him to hold.

He will know that, no matter in what lines his sphere of activity is cast, and even if in the present incarnation he can never hope to assume the place in the world that he might crave, he must never relax in his effort to prepare himself to assume it when in the course of ages the opportunity shall come his way.

He will know that only by being fit to assume power will he be able to take advantage of the opportunity to seize it, and the only way to become fit is to enlighten himself by the acquisition of true knowledge and then bide his time; and he will also know that he can afford to wait into the next incarnation and beyond.

He will know that while most men are studying to make themselves fit for positions in this life, there are but few indeed who think of acquiring fitness for the lives to come; and when the former die, the egos they release will depart without having absorbed the thought that knowledge gained in one incarnation can be carried over potentially into the next, while the egos of the latter, carrying that thought over, will have considerable advantage over the others in the next incarnation.

When men who have acquired much true knowledge, and have thereby gained an advantageous position over their fellowmen, will realize that all this knowledge will remain potentially in the ego released at their death, to be awakened to action when, in their next incarnation, they have arrived at the age of reason, they will carry over the realization of this fact also, and thus, in the course of many such reincarnations, made in the full realization that knowledge acquired remains potentially in the ego, they will in time also be able to carry over the knowledge of who and what they were in a previous incarnation, which knowledge is now denied to man, except possibly to a very few highly evolved egos.

It is self-evident to the rational believer in reincarnation that, come what may, his life is everlasting, and that, because he has thoroughly absorbed this thought, and is making himself fit, he is in line for high worldly positions throughout the ages, to which those who are held in mental slavery by false teachers can never aspire until they break away from their bondage.

Wm. W. Weitling, in "The Fra," by permission.

THE ORIGIN OF BEAUTY

I have a quite definite idea that I wish to convey to you and so I will commence by a definition of the word beauty. In any good dictionary you may find several definitions of the word and I have selected one which, to my mind, seems fitting. If you will remember that æsthetics is the science which deals with the beautiful, then I think the following will serve us as a definition of the word 'beauty': "Those qualities in the aggregate that give pleasure to the æsthetic sense."

Beauty, appealing as it does to the senses, must be of as many kinds as there are senses. Therefore we have the beauty of hearing, of touch, of sight, of taste and of smell. The order in which I have named the five senses is the order in which they came into existence. Each one of the senses has a corresponding ether in and through which it works. Science as yet seems to have discovered but one; the luminiferous ether which conveys to our eyes the vibrations which give us the sense of sight. While we say that science has discovered the light ether, we must remember that it has not been found as a substance but has been posited as a necessity in order to explain the phenomenon of light.

Beauty is not all of sight, for there is a beauty of sound and feeling and smell and taste, although the last three senses are not as developed as are hearing and seeing. Form and color appealing as they do to the eye, are the more common phases of beauty. The reason for this is that things

that consist of form and color, as a picture or a statue, are permanent and we can see them at any time we wish; whereas something beautiful to the sense of hearing, such as a piece of music or a song, can only be sensed while it is being performed and when the performer ceases we have only the more or less perfect memory left us, and to renew our pleasure the music must be again performed. Things of form and color when executed may last for many years but music when executed lasts no longer than the time taken to produce it and must be created afresh each time it is to be enjoyed. Naturally, then, the more permanent are the more common. I doubt, however, if anything of form or color can so profoundly move the heart as can music. An explanation of this is, that sound is the most subtle of all the vibrations that we sense. The Akashic ether which is the medium in which sound expresses itself, is the first of the five ethers to be developed from the Undifferentiated. Therefore it is closer to the heart of Nature and consequently closer to the higher part of man. Music is being more and more recognized as a medium through which an appeal can be made to the higher nature and steps are now being taken to develop music along this line.

Beauty appeals to all, though not to all of us in the same degree. There may be quite varying opinions regarding the beauty of a person, a picture or a landscape. We have to seek the reason for the varying opinions, not in the person, picture or landscape, but in the different observers. We have been told that if we could get inside another person and look at the world with

his eyes, that we would be greatly surprised at the changed aspect of things; that we would be greatly surprised at the different appearance presented to different people by objects that are familiar to all. Everything that comes to us is modified by our own aura and as the auras of different people vary greatly, it can be understood that the same objects will not affect different people in the same way. This applies to any of the senses. Here is what Mr. Leadbeater says in respect to this individual modification:

“Every man travels through space enclosed within a cage of his own building, surrounded by a mass of the forms created by his habitual thoughts. Through this medium he looks out upon the world, and naturally he sees everything tinged with its predominant colours, and all rates of vibration which reach him from without are more or less modified by its rate. Thus until the man learns complete control of thought and feeling, he sees nothing as it really is, since all his observations must be made through this medium, which distorts and colors everything like a badly-made glass.” (*Thought-Forms*, p. 26).

Plato, perhaps more than any other writer, has given us the philosophical idea of beauty. To understand Plato's beauty it will be necessary for us to go into his theory of “Ideas,” in order to understand what he meant by the word and the meaning he intended to convey to his readers.

We shall see as we go along that Plato's theory of Ideas conforms very closely to some of our Wisdom teachings. Let us first endeavor to get the correct meaning of the word “Idea” as used by Plato. Let us first quote a note from the

introduction to a translation of some of Plato's dialogues written by H. F. Carlill and which gives the meaning of the word as used in Plato's time.

"The Greek word 'Idea' (idea, eidos) means shape, form, type; and so kind, species. It has nothing of the modern meaning of a thing conceived in the mind alone. The original sense is vaguely present in the word 'ideal,' but in general it must be understood that an 'Idea' is not an idea."

Plato, then, uses the word to represent a fundamental and basic type, or to use a better word, an archetype. His "Idea," then, is an archetype or model on which all members of a species or type are based and all of which show the characteristics of the archetype more or less perfectly. Of course, the "Ideas" or archetypes must be connected together, for otherwise the universe would be a haphazard collection of innumerable disconnected species. Plato's system, then, was a system of forms which, to a perfect intelligence capable of comprehending it, would be seen to be inseparable parts of a vast and intimately connected whole. It is these forms that make up the intelligible structure of our world, each form being related in a direct line with its archetype. As each archetype can throw off, as it were, innumerable forms of itself, we may consider that the archetypal world holds an infinitely less number of "Ideas" than we see here of forms. Plato declares classification to be the form that knowledge must ultimately take, and correspondingly explains the structure of existence as a classified system of forms. To show the agreement between the theory of Plato and the Wisdom

teachings of like character, we quote a paragraph from *The Pedigree of Man*, page 54).

“Now the characteristic of the first Globe, Globe A, is that nothing there is form as we know it; so unlike is all to the forms we know that it is even called *arupa*, formless; and yet there is form though not form as known to mortal man. Archetypal forms they are called, that is, ideal forms made out of the stuff of abstract thinking, vague, changing, and indefinite, inconceivable and ungraspable by the concrete mind, only to be known in this way, that when such a form passes to a lower plane, it bursts into innumerable concrete forms, all of which bear a likeness to itself, in that they present its essential characteristics, have in them something after its image. Perhaps this will be more readily intelligible if I remind you of a curious device, resorted to in the early days of biological science, to show the type of an order. Professor Owen, dealing with the great complexity of the mammalian order, sought to find out and combine what was common to all. He found certain things existing in every mammal—backbone, four limbs, and so on. He connected together, from his study of many mammalian forms, all the things that were common to every one of them, and he put these together into a form that was like nothing in heaven or earth or in the waters of the sea, and he called it the archetypal mammal. That was the exercise of scientific fancy, in order to guide and aid scientific investigation. He ‘builded truer than he knew.’ Such archetypal forms exist in the mind of the Logos as the ideas of every kingdom—the archetypal minerals, the

archetypal vegetables, the archetypal animals, and the archetypal men. They existed as ideas—Platonic ideas they were sometimes called, because Plato laid so much stress upon them in his philosophy. These ideas are in the mind of the Logos, and the Architects, who are the Barhishad Pitris, reproduce these ideas from the mind of the Logos in the highest Globe of the Planetary Chain; this is Globe A. Hence it is spoken of as the Archetypal Globe, for it contains in every Round the archetypes that underlie the evolution of forms in that Round.”

We quote further, from *The Ancient Wisdom*, pages 111, 323, and 324:

“The mental plane is that which reflects the Universal Mind in Nature, the plane which in our system corresponds with that of the Great Mind in the Kosmos. In its higher regions exist all the archetypal ideas which are now in course of concrete evolution, and in its lower the working out of these into successive forms, to be duly reproduced in the astral and physical worlds. . . . Globe A is the archetypal world, on which are built the models of the forms that are to be elaborated during the round; from the mind of the Planetary Logos the highest Builders take the archetypal Ideas, and guide the Builders on the formless levels as they fashion the archetypal forms for the round. . . . On globe G the perfection of the round is reached, the Monad inhabiting and using as its vehicles the archetypal forms of globe A.”

Another short quotation, from *The Inner Life*, Vol. II, page 306:

"I have seen prototypes of what bodies are to be like in the seventh Race; they will be transcendently beautiful. The glorified form in the causal body is an approach to the archetype, and comes nearer to it as man develops. The human form appears to be the model for the highest evolution in this particular solar system."

From this you see that the "Ideas" of Plato correspond closely to modern Wisdom teachings. Beauty, then, seems to be the more or less close approach of an object to the fundamental type or archetype. The closer the approach to the archetype, the more beautiful is anything. We may reason from what has been read, the necessity for such an extremely complex universe as we know this of ours to be. Think of the many archetypes that throw out innumerable concrete forms when descending to lower planes. Think that these forms may combine and recombine until on this lower plane the complexity may be beyond the grasping of the ordinary mind. It truly seems like a chaos.

However, when a mind reaches the stage at which it deals with concepts instead of percepts, then there will appear order emerging from the seeming chaos and the beautiful system of the Logos will begin to show itself. For what are concepts but the larger thoughts that deal with classes and orders instead of with individuals? In understanding the classes and orders and in placing them in their proper positions in the scheme of the universe, man begins to understand the cause of evolution and its reason, and the goal toward which all things are moving and the

broad general laws that govern it all so wisely. Man then begins to acquire wisdom and to know as facts many things that he had before taken on authority.

To such a man, the beauty that appeals to the eye only, seems of small importance. He looks for a deeper beauty, such as beauty of character. He will respond to the efforts of a true artist who has succeeded in reproducing something of his ideal, and his response will be in proportion to the success of the artist in bringing down to this plane the ideal he saw on some higher plane.

The faculty used by the artist to sense something higher than he can see, is the imagination. He uses this faculty to reach upward and to create on a higher plane his ideal of the subject he has in mind. The more successful he is, the nearer he reaches to the archetype. In this connection we quote from Mr. Mead's *Apollonius of Tyana*, page 141:

"Imagination, says Apollonius, is one of the most potent faculties, for it enables us to reach nearer to realities. It is generally supposed that Greek sculpture was merely a glorification of physical beauty, in itself quite unspiritual. It was an idealisation of form and features, limbs and muscles, an empty glorification of the physical with nothing of course really corresponding to it in the nature of things. But Apollonius declared it brings us nearer to the real, as Pythagoras and Plato declared before him, and as all the wiser teach. He meant this literally, not vaguely or fantastically. He asserted that the types and ideas of things are the only realities. He meant that between the imperfection of the

earth and the highest divine type of all things, were grades of increasing perfection. He meant that within each man was a form of perfection, though of course not yet absolutely perfect. That the angel in man was of God-like beauty, the summation of all the finest features he had ever worn in his many lives on earth. The Gods, too, belonged to the world of types, of models, of perfections, the heaven-world. The Greek sculptors had succeeded in getting in contact with this world, and the faculty they used was imagination."

The condition necessary for the artist who would show forth his best and bring his dreams to earth for the benefit of humanity, are sketched by Mrs. Besant in her *London Lectures* of 1907, pages 167 and 168:

"Do you want to know how low Art may sink when materialism triumphs and vulgarises and degrades? Then see that exhibition of French pictures that was placed in Bond Street some years ago, which attracted those who loved indecency more than those who loved the beautiful, and then you will understand how Art perishes where the breath of the ideal does not inspire and keep alive. And Theosophy to the artist would bring back that ancient reverence which regards the artist of the Beautiful as one of the chief God-revealers to the race of which he is a portion; which sees in the great musical artist, or the sculptor, or the painter, a God-inspired man, bringing down the grace of heaven to illuminate the dull grey plains of earth. The artists should be the prophets of our time, the revealers of the Divine smothered under the material; and were they this, they would be regarded with love

and with reverence; for true art needs reverence for its growing, and the artist, of all men—subtle, responsive, sensitive to everything that touches him—needs an atmosphere of love and reverence that he may flower into his highest power, and show the world some glimpse of the Beauty which is God.”

Ideals, then, we should all have; ideals that to us seem admirable and desirable and toward which we should try to work. Hero-worship is something of this kind and when Emerson said, “Hitch your wagon to a star,” he meant that one should choose a high ideal.

Our ideals are always beautiful to us or they would not be our ideals. We cannot approach God in His fullness. He is too high for us to understand fully. Our nearest approach to God may be our ideals. Therefore, in a sense we make our God, and when Robert Ingersoll transposed an old proverb and said, “An honest God is the noblest work of man,” he sensed a very deep truth.

Humanity stands on the ladder of evolution at very different levels. All are moving upward, though at different rates of speed. The paths are many by which men climb, though all lead to the same goal. The path of Beauty is one of them. Use your imagination, then, and make for yourself the most beautiful ideal possible; in other words, *your* ideal. Then live your daily life so as to conform to your ideal as closely as possible. Never mind the difficulties or failures but steadily work on toward this which to you represents the Beautiful. So shall you reach perfection.

William Brinsmaid.

THE BOOK OF JOB: A DRAMA OF THE SOUL

What immeasurable reaches of the imagination one must have to picture the scenes through which, in the æons of time, the primitive man must have passed, to reach the time and environment in which we find the patriarch Job,—each period of life furnishing its tragedies and its comedies, and all contributing to form the grand character which some remote writer has given to us in the Book of Job!

In studying his life one must inevitably consider Job as a type of humanity. His trials are not unique in the life of man: thousands suffer entire loss of riches, of family and friends, and suffer indescribable tortures from painful and loathsome diseases. Acquaintances gather about them and look in vain for any adequate cause for their calamities. No accusing conscience censures them as lacking in devotion to God or service to man, and the mystery only deepens as time goes by and no relief appears, to bring hope to the nearly despairing soul.

But we may find a clue to the sorrows of Job and of all humanity in the ancient teaching of pre-existing lives on earth, and the law which teaches us the inexorable succession of cause and effect. In the life of Job, as of every member of the human family, every characteristic, every good fortune, every trouble has been earned at some time, somewhere.

The first scene given us in the Book of Job opens in the court of heaven. The sons of God, who are the Lords of Karma and give to each soul the reward of his good works, and Satan,

who represents the karma of evil actions, are gathered before God. Job is to pay his last debt to the Great Law. But Satan, who is to inflict the results of evil karma, is given only a temporary possession of Job, and his life must be spared. So we see him stripped, for a time, of all that makes the present life dear to him; yet he remains steadfast in his faith in God.

That little day of Job's troubles, borne with a patience that has served to strengthen many a soul passing through dark places, was given to him because it belonged to him. It came out of a dim past of previous lives on earth, and it demanded the payment of a just debt. And his reward came as a just recompense for his good works and faith in God, which remained unshaken even when he was forsaken by his nearest and dearest friends. The double portion given him, of all that he had lost, was a small reward when compared with the length of days in which to serve, not only his own generation, but all the succeeding ones, by his example of fortitude and patience, which turned the evil karma into good. It is a lesson which we may well take to heart in these days when troubles unforeseen come upon us. With a faith like that of Job we may find God (or Good) in all conditions.

C. O.



METEMPSYCHOSIS

*As when the haze of some wan moonlight makes
Familiar fields a land of mystery,
Where, chill and strange, a ghostly presence wakes,
In flower and bush and tree—*

*So, oft, some moon-light of the mind makes dumb
The stir of outer thought; wide open seems
The gates wherethrough strange sympathies have come,
The secret of our dreams.*

*All outward wisdom yields to that within,
Whereof nor creed nor canon holds the key;
We only feel that we have ever been,
And evermore shall be.*

*And thus I know, by memories unfurled
In rarer moods, and many a nameless sign,
That once in time, and sometime in the world,
I was a towering pine.*

*Rooted upon a cape that overhung
The entrance to a mountain gorge: whereon
The wintry shadow of a peak was flung,
Long after rise of sun.*

*And thus for centuries my rhythmic chant
Rolled down the gorge, or surged about the hill:
Gentle or stern or sad or jubilant,
At every season's will.*

*Yet still that life awaken, brings again
Its airy anthems, resonant and long,
Till Earth and Sky, transfigured, fill my brain
With rhythmic sweeps of song.*

*And if some wild, full-gathered harmony
Roll its unbroken music through my line,
There lives and murmurs, faintly though it be,
The spirit of the pine.*

—Bayard Taylor.

—From "The Metempsychosis of the Pine."

THE OPPORTUNITIES OF THE DAY

The present time is one of great changes in the world of men. Ideas which have been held for years are now found wanting in the fiery tests to which they must submit themselves; and institutions which have long been regarded as stable are proving themselves inadequate and at times even dangerous to our progressing evolution. It is evidently a great period of transition.

Humanity, like the individual, learns more from its mistakes than from its successes. Experience is a costly teacher but we could not evolve without her constant guidance. The lessons which our humanity learns with the greatest suffering, at the greatest cost of what it holds most dear, are the most valuable lessons; they will be the ones which will be learned most thoroughly, which will give humanity its greatest impetus in its forward evolution. Thus is it that sufferings are blessings in disguise, and that the eternal law of balance is once more verified: everything in itself is just as much good as bad; it has equal aspects of truth and falsehood, of good and evil, of help and of hindrance. It is only in our own limited understanding that anything may seem to be unduly overweighted in one direction, that the balance seems to be lacking, that conditions appear to be unjust.

Therefore, it is our great opportunity to take advantage of any extraordinary conditions that may happen to exist, that we may learn the great lessons that are being illustrated on the screen of time by the great school-mistress called Experience. And when the world-conditions are of espe-

cial suffering and distress, when destruction and fury seem to be let loose among the nations,—then comes our greatest opportunity for gaining the richest of prizes, the greatest lessons which humanity is being asked to learn, indeed is given the privilege to learn. For the very fact that world-catastrophes are being thrust upon the nations means that a correspondingly great good is also within reach of those who will search for it in the true spirit of service, of selfless dedication to the larger evolution of the world.

Can we recognize some of the great lessons to be learned from the difficulties now existing between many nations? We may be quite sure that the present troubles lie largely in the jealousy and rivalry for commercial power of the nations. While individuals have accepted the law of brotherhood and mutual service, nations have not yet learned to do so fully. While individuals have been subjected to the law and authority of their country, nations have not yet been brought under the sway of international law. Nations may recognize principles of international law in times of peace, but in war they will almost always yield to the temptation to disregard them whenever they would secure thereby the objects of their desires. There is as yet no practical way of enforcing any international law; no matter how just and necessary, upon any recalcitrant nation engaged in war. International law exists only in theory, not in practice; there is no established international court and no executive authority which would enforce a decree of such a court. A street quarrel is stopped by the nearest police but when two nations are fighting, the other

nations are forced by custom to stand by and watch the horrible slaughter in utter helplessness.

These conditions must be changed. As President Butler of Columbia University points out, nations must develop the international mind. They must practice friendship and respect and much of brotherly love; they must develop also an international conscience; they must learn the great lesson that "Above all nations is Humanity."

C. S.

WHAT SHALL WE TELL THEM?

After a few years of close attention to the teachings of Karma and Reincarnation I thought I should like to tell a great many people about them, and looking about I concluded to visit a large prison and see if the authorities would allow us to go and give some lectures to the inmates. Those in authority did not seem to think they were suitable for the place.

Again, in company with another member of the *Legion*, I went to a large public institution for the care of many types of so-called unfortunate people, but here they thought it best to refuse our offer of lecture, lantern slides and so on, as not suitable.

At about this time I attended the conference of the American Association of Social Hygiene. The fact of one's going to these various places in order to inform one's self as to conditions is perhas not a matter of importance, but the conclusions to be drawn from the experiences are quite interesting.

The people one meets, who are doing all this very unpleasant work, impress one as such wonderful, self-sacrificing people, their efforts as very untiring, their tasks in many instances as so very disagreeable, that one asks: And to what end do they work?

They work to alleviate the sufferings of many who are at best not well equipped for the fierce struggle of life, either in the criminal class, the diseased class, or, more hopeless than any, as it seems, the feeble-minded. These latter they try to teach, and if that is impossible, then some one has to attend to the commonest needs of their physical bodies, feeding, cleansing, eliminations, and so on.

As one looks at many of this last class, ranging in age from eighteen months to eighty years, with mis-shapen physical bodies, distorted faces, and such pitifully vague movements of the hands, one asks one's self: "Would I be willing to care for and attend on these?"

Well, some fine young women do it, some whom I saw and talked with. And I walked away with a heavy heart, asking myself what could I give them from my understanding of karma and reincarnation which would lighten the burden for them? They could not work harder: it did not seem one could tell them anything of self-sacrifice or service. And so I pondered.

One day I thought of it all again, and the vision and the answer came clear and strong. What shall I tell them to help them? "Tell them the *cause of the effects with which they deal*. Tell them of the law of karma and the fact of reincarnation."

Ella L. Cutler.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

4) *Must we go through every kind of experience in order to develop spirituality?*

It is quite probable that spiritual development is going on all the time in men, but in general it is a very slow process. If the questioner has in mind the actual attainment of the completion of spiritual development, as is probable, then the answer would be: Yes, in the sense that every type of experience is really needed; no, in the sense that all actual concrete experiences are not necessary and in fact not possible.

It may also be noted that one may gain valuable experience without actually living through the experience for one's self, in an objective way. We may learn from the experience of others, if we are wise and exert a strong will to do so. But this is not easy, and it is not the method by which most men learn the lessons of life. As a rule the particular experience must be "driven home" to men, and this means that they have to pass through the experience themselves in a personal way.

A word might be said about the true meaning of "spiritual development." It does not mean either righteousness, morality, religious or intellectual knowledge or psychism. Development in any of these directions belongs to the personality, a temporary expression of the spiritual man, or ego. But spirituality means that phase of man's inner nature which is most intimately related to the Will and the use of the will energies of nature.

5) *When the consciousness expands, why do we not see the change expressed in the body? And should there not be a perfect physical body as the result of spiritual perfection? If so, why the perfect body without spiritual perfection?*

We may here understand by "consciousness" the inner nature or life of man, as opposed to his lower bodies. But, when deeply analysed, this consciousness is itself partly objective (body) and partly subjective (life within the body). Now consciousness works through bodies, and, as is well known, consciousness and body affect and interact upon each other. But there may well be changes

or development in one of them without a noticeable corresponding change in the other, at least not immediately, or even in one life-time.

The problem involves the parallel evolutions of form and life. In longer periods of time, embracing a series of incarnations for one ego, it would be seen that any decided change in one, either form or life, would be followed by a corresponding change in the other. Particularly is this true in the case of spiritual development. But as it is a fact that the evolution of forms reaches a certain stage of perfection or completeness before the evolution of life does, it follows that man may have a fairly perfect physical body and yet be undeveloped in his emotional or mental bodies, to say nothing of spirit.

It is also true that there may be great mental development without any corresponding spiritual progress. These facts would be true for a single life, but would not necessarily be true for a series of lives.

On the other hand it is well known how easily the human face can be moulded by the unseen forces of character. The face is recognised to be an open index to the man's character, at least for those who can read.

The influence of karma must not be left out of account. It may be a man's fate to live and work in a defective or imperfect physical body for one incarnation, and yet he may, by the force of his inner nature, develop true spirituality. But once spiritual development has been attained to some considerable extent, then the physical body would in later incarnations become more beautiful.

6) *Why should we choose what we are to develop?*

There is no special compulsion on us to choose what we are to make out of ourselves. Men naturally, through their karma, fit themselves along certain lines and develop into egos of definite characters. But as soon as we can gain a realisation of the Great Plan of the Supreme Will, which is the Evolving of all life, then we can cooperate consciously with the Divine Will, thereby hastening our own evolution and power to help others.

Men are not likely to choose to train themselves in spiritual ways without a realisation of the great importance and value of doing so. When they realise clearly

that Evolution is both inevitable and desirable then they will help to guide their own future destiny. All our difficulties of evolving are necessary to develop a realisation in ourselves of the meaning and the beauty of the evolutionary scheme. When it is fully realised we can not avoid helping in that work. And this means choosing our own work and path through life.

It is a fact that man shapes his future lives by his present life. When this is thoroughly understood, then no man of sound common sense will allow ill-chosen activities, feelings and thoughts to make for himself a great mass of difficulties for his own future growth as an immortal ego.

7) *Please explain what is the "aura" of man? Can the beautiful colors really be seen? Can they be seen with the physical body?*

The "aura" is all of man's being which is not physical, or made up of physical material. It is the man himself in his higher, invisible bodies,—the astral, mental and the spiritual. It permeates the physical body but also extends some eighteen inches away from the surface of the body. It forms an egg-shaped mass of fine matter, in the midst of which is the physical body.

These higher bodies are full of living energy, showing itself as matter in rapid vibrations of different kinds. This means that the material is colored, just as a flame may be colored red, blue, yellow or white, depending on the kind or rapidity of vibration. The colors really can be seen, but only by means of a higher, psychic sight. There are many people who can see something of the heavier matter of the astral aura of other men, but very few men can see the mental bodies of auras.

As the aura is not physical, it can not be seen by the physical eye. There is an etheric body for every man, which corresponds closely to his physical body. This may be seen by some sensitive people with their ordinary sight. It is known as the "etheric double."

The colors of the astral matter of man's aura may be coarse and heavy and far from beautiful. But the colors which appear in the mental body or the mental matter of the aura are always very beautiful. The same

kinds of colors as are known physically re-appear in the astral and mental worlds. But they are very much more refined and delicate and thus really quite different. They are said to be higher octaves of the vibrations which cause physical colors.

C.S.

FIELD NOTES

A strong class of seven students have formed a Group in Fargo, North Dakota, as the result of the excellent work there of Serena Flattume, a member of the *Legion*.

A number of new applications for membership have been received from our energetic leaders in Holland. A new Group has been chartered for den Helder.

The recently formed Group in Rockford, Illinois, holds meetings every Monday evening for study and very interesting questions are discussed. The first three questions answered in this issue were sent in from the Group. It would be well for other Groups to do likewise.

Members of Wallace Group in Idaho have placed subscriptions to REINCARNATION in every one of the twenty public libraries of that state. This is very important work; and every member would do well to try to help increase the number of library subscriptions. Hospitals and penitentiaries also afford excellent opportunities for reaching people who may be greatly helped and given a new view of life and its wonderful meaning.

The last mail brings twenty-one application for membership from New Zealand. Our friends there are very active and are building up a strong organisation.

Members who have not yet seen or made use of the *Legion* circulars (thirty for ten cents) would do well to obtain some. They can be handed out to the general public and will give fairly correct ideas of the meanings of karma and reincarnation. Remember that the *Legion* does not aim primarily at making believers in these teachings, but at a wider spreading and popularising of the knowledge of karma and reincarnation.

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