

# **REINCARNATION**

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## *THE CONSENT OF THE GOVERNED*

Americans and Danes are interested to-day in the negotiations for the transfer to the United States of the tiny isles of the West Indies held by Denmark. Efforts have been made more than once to bring about this important change. In a world-war little Denmark could not well defend them, but to America they would be useful beyond words. They lie far out in the Atlantic, rocky outposts of the continent. If fortified they would make most useful coaling-points and would offer refuge for our wounded fighting monsters of the sea.

Word comes at last that the people of the islands are expressing a wish for the consummation of the plan. They long to have their fate

decided that they may go on with their business unhampered by discussion. And the Danish parliament is said to plan a vote by the islanders in order that they may record their wishes.

The consent of the governed—a vital principle in the American ideal of government—presupposes the ability of a people to decide and clearly to express itself. A barbarous or a heterogenous land cannot do this. Such a people may be obliged half unwillingly to bear the rulership of an alien race. Of the latter we have an example in India, whose population is not homogenous and has neither common customs nor common ideals. America does not desire to acquire the territory of an unwilling people.

The consent of the governed cannot be interpreted to mean that a few may secede or that a state may break away from a great federation.

Yet the spirit of the age demands that the peoples of the world shall be so governed that rulership shall be maintained without the galling of the yoke; that the people's voice shall always be heard in the governing and that oppression shall be unknown. Respect for language, for religion and for national unity even when nations are included in federations or are absorbed in empires is emphasized in the popular thought of our age and belongs to the deeper command of the world's supreme unseen Ruler.

The new order of the world will be more harmonious, sweeter and fuller. The people must feel that they are not far away from God and that He can to some extent express His will through them.

W. V-H.

*IS GOD UNJUST?*

It was the close of a sultry summer day as two men sat at the stern of a boat taking its way across the beautiful New York Harbor. The rush of the day was over, and the peace of the evening was at hand. A cool breeze had sprung up, bringing relief to the thousands of city sufferers and tending to abate the scourge of sickness which had fallen upon the community. The sun, already low over the Western horizon, was casting a rosy glow over sea and sky. It seemed like a divine benediction and a promise of unfailing protection.

Something of this feeling was expressed by one of the men who marveled at the way in which all things work out rightly in every case. To him it seemed that never in all the universe could anything happen which was not for the best.

At this, the listener interposed. Such claims ran counter to his judgment and observation, and he refused to make God responsible for the wrongs and mischances without number to be observed at every hand. In the city behind them little children by the hundred were being stricken with a dread malady. Scores were dying, and even greater numbers were left paralyzed, many for life. What had these children done to deserve such a fate? Some were babes; others had just begun to take a trustful, wondering hold on life. The promise of robust maturity,—of an equal chance,—had been ruthlessly destroyed. What right had we to attribute this to God? In one of the houses visited, the children had been left unscathed. The mother, an attractive, refined

young woman in her early thirties, had been stricken down, leaving her husband and children sadly in need of her. What had she done that this misfortune should come upon her? What had her husband and infant children done that they should suffer even more severely in the calamity?

Why pretend that things which were so obviously wrong, were perfect and altogether right? Of what avail to say that they worked out for the best of the community and individuals, when the harm directly resulting from such misfortunes could be clearly seen and felt? Indignant at what seemed an attempt to impute to God responsibilities so foreign to God's wishes, the man thus reasoning continued:

"If," he said, "we agree that things happen for the best and that it is desirable that ill health, misfortune and death should come as now through our faulty conditions, why seek to remedy them? What incentive can we have for improved sanitation, for the research and labor of the doctors in their desire to safeguard and prolong life? Why seek in other ways to change the physical or moral status of peoples if only good can befall them? All initiative or attempt to improve on life is useless if we admit that what happens is bound to be for the best anyway. Providence is inscrutable. That there is a God we may agree, but let us not on this account shut our eyes to the facts and pretend they do not exist. The world is full of injustice, imperfection and suffering. God either cannot or does not choose to correct them. You and I can, and should, do what we can to better conditions, but man will

never succeed in remedying the larger part of the gross inequalities that prevail."

So natural and frequently met is this viewpoint that it was with full sympathy and a certain recollection of his own previous similar attitude, that the friend made rejoinder.

"It is true that we should not seek to judge the Infinite by what is limited and imperfect, nor to place responsibility for human ills upon the Divine in Whom there is no imperfection. However, although the ways of Providence are inscrutable in that we are not yet sufficiently developed to comprehend them, the light is breaking and if we seek we may perceive enough to disclose their general method and effect. From our lowly perspective let us not seek to judge specific instances, for we have not at hand the full information which we need. If life begins with our present existence, and ends in our present death, inequality and injustice appear triumphant. If we conceive life as continuous, with a long past behind us, and an unending future, how completely incapable are we to disentangle the skein, and say conditions are not working out best at this particular place, because viewed from this moment of time they seem so incomplete. In this progressive universe we are all living all the time, and are gaining just as fast as we learn the lessons of experience. No man can judge what another needs, but all may see that life does furnish richly of experience to all who will but learn the lessons so clearly given.

"In this marvelous world we grow step by step. New lessons can only come with new and better conditions. Why need we try to better

conditions now prevailing? Because we are evolving. Even though sickness and trouble and all crude and hard conditions may be and constantly are being used to work out the needed experience of some, the number is increasing of those who, through past growth, deserve better conditions, less of pain, more of opportunity for physical, spiritual and moral welfare, and the world must, therefore, progress as a whole. It is in the line of growth as a part of God's wondrous scheme for our march toward Divinity, that conditions should steadily improve and higher lessons be taught. So, we each gain as we contribute, through sincere endeavor, to the improvement and upbuilding of this our world."

The sun had sunk below the ridge of the distant hills, and the calmness of the Infinite Who works in perfect harmony through diversity into unity, touched the hearts of the two men as they stepped from the boat at the end of their short sail.

*E. S. Suffern.*



*STRAY THOUGHTS ON INDIVIDUALISM*

The aim of human evolution is the ultimate perfection of the individual. In this lies the justification of individualism. It is not enough to be a perfect saint. He must be a perfect man, before he can pass on to a higher evolution. Among other things he must be a perfect warrior. Before a man is qualified to take care of others he must be able to take care of himself. The same thing applies to nations. The man who is remorselessly selfish, caring wholly for his own interests, crushing down all opposition, fighting like a demon for his own hand, is taking a valuable step in evolution. He is developing enormous strength. Having developed that strength, just one more step is required,—that he should use his strength in helping others, instead of helping merely himself. Without strength, without the power to withstand and to achieve, his altruism, his sainthood, his desire to help others, are all of little account in the stern struggle of life. He may want to help others; he may desire to shield them, to protect them, to lead them on and up by a fiery example; but if the poor man has never himself been through the rough and intricate mazes of life, how can he pilot others? The individual must learn, then, to take care of himself before he can qualify for the higher and more god-like task of caring for others. At the present stage of evolution the vast majority of human beings are only sufficiently advanced to be taken care of. The workman wants somebody to give him a job. He wants leaders to tell him when and how to strike. Soldiers must do as

they are told, must act in masses without volition. Voters do the same thing. So do church members. The masses want somebody to lead them, to tell them, to coax them or to drive them. They are not sufficiently evolved to be able to think or act on their own initiative from the ground up. Of course a very pretty argument or controversy might be made to evolve out of all this, but for the purposes of this article we shall assume that things are as described. The reader will remember that there are two sides to every question. If there were not two sides, there could not be one side. If there were not two sides there would be no side at all.

Before a man be self-sacrificing, he must have something to sacrifice. This implies the faculty of acquisition, for a man cannot give what he hasn't got. A man cannot even sacrifice opinions unless he has previously had the brains to acquire and to form opinions. What may be called occult altruism demands that if a man have two coats he should give one away to some person who has no coat at all. But occult altruism will not provide him with a superfluous coat. A man must get before he can give. Before he can be a conscious benefactor to his kind, he must at some stage or other of his evolution have been a selfish individualist. The savage, in his lower stage, is an individualist. The brainy capitalist, who happens at the same time to be selfish and unscrupulous, is an individualist. Through selfish individualism, strength, self-control, and the capacity to do things unaided, are developed, or if not strictly unaided, with the power or the faculty of compelling the aid of others.

This is a money-making age, and success with a capital S is generally associated with the getting of money. But let us get away from the money idea, and try to illustrate the point we are trying to make, from another point of view.

The Italian city of Florence was a commune. Had it been peopled by individualists, each forming and holding opinions, and giving such effect as he could, to his own opinions, irrespective of authority, civil or ecclesiastical, what sort of a response would the subjoined appeal have met with? It was desired to build a cathedral, and in 1294 the following public edict was issued:

“Whereas it being of sovereign prudence on the part of a people of high origin to proceed in its affairs in such a manner that the wisdom no less than the magnanimity of its proceedings can be recognised in its outward works, it is ordered that Arnolfo, master architect of our commune, prepare models or designs for the restoration of Santa Maria Reparata with the most exalted and most prodigal magnificence, in order that the industry and power of men may never create or undertake anything more vast and more beautiful; in accordance with that which our wisest citizens have declared and counselled in public session and in secret conclave, to wit, that no hand be laid upon the works of the commune without the intent of making them to correspond to the noble soul which is composed of the souls of all its citizens united in one will.”

And because there was no individualism in religion at that time in Florence, and no individualism in civic politics, the city being a commune, the noble cathedral arose, to the glory

of God and man. Surely, you say, that is a great tribute to the spirit of the age.

But pause a moment. What was the price paid for this religious collectivism? Was it not the stifling of religious freedom of thought? And how can man expand if he is under bondage—any kind of bondage—imposed from without? And if we pass on for a few centuries we find that the individualistic principle manifested itself in the Lutheran “Reformation.” It was apparently in the scheme of things that a new ideal should be set up. The “value of the individual” was to express itself in the demand for religious freedom. Individual religionists demanded, successfully at last, that they should no longer be regarded as criminals. It mattered little whether dogmatically the rebels were right or wrong. What did matter was that the individual was demanding and achieving the right to think, and believe for himself. It is quite a moot question whether Europe advanced or retrograded in the matter of religion; but it seems clear that it advanced in virility, in the courage of its men to take care of themselves in worlds higher than the material. And this rebellion against ecclesiastical authority has been going on ever since. And if it has not made men more saintly, it has at least made a great many men stronger. Men are standing on their own feet, in morals and intellect; and however befogged they may have become in the process, they are better specimens of the genus homo. The man who has proved himself able to walk in a fog, will walk all the more assuredly and confidently when the fog has cleared away and the light is around him. He

has advanced. He has grown. He has taken another step on the road of individual self-reliance.

This applies equally to all other lines in which man has cut himself loose from dominance and learned to be his own man.

It might well be asked what would happen if the City Fathers of Chicago to-day were to issue a public edict calling for the erection of a cathedral with "most exalted and prodigal magnificence, . . . to correspond to the noble soul which is composed of the souls of all its citizens united in one will"? There would probably be a consensus of opinion that the said City Fathers had suddenly gone crazy. Yet why? Simply because the religious collectivism of the Middle Ages has given place to religious individualism. Broadly speaking Chicago is composed of people of one faith—the Christian faith—even as was Florence. But individualism has split these Christians into well-nigh innumerable sects and shades and antagonisms of Christian or un-Christian thought, until Chicago has no "noble soul composed of the souls of all its citizens united in one will." Even if the City Fathers succeeded with "prodigal magnificence" in building a cathedral, it is problematical whether any but a section of the people would consider it compatible with their eternal salvation to worship in it; and this, you might say, implies a severe condemnation of individualism in religion.

What is the conclusion of the whole matter? Is it not that, whether in religion or in things material, there is no halting place. Man is learning. He is experiencing. He is moving on, as through a maze, but still moving on toward

that ultimate apotheosis of experience, which in the course of untold ages, will mean the completion of the cycle of human evolution. Human evolution, whether material, moral, intellectual or spiritual, is woefully incomplete. Before humanity has reached its divine goal the conflict of forces must go on. The pairs of opposites, the push and pull, the ebb and flow, the day and night, the good and evil, must ceaselessly contend or recur, and gradually man, thrown periodically, life after life, into this vortex of warring forces, will through the development of his latent powers and the shedding of his imperfections and of his selfish desires, approach nearer and nearer to the divine image until at last "salvation" will be achieved.

But before this can be accomplished the collectivism which at present is best expressed by the simile of a flock of sheep, being shepherded for the butcher, and the individualism which may be indicated by a roving wolf, seeking what he may devour, must be replaced by a real, a genuine and a general altruism; and, remote as the goal may be and is, all good men and true should strive to bring it a little nearer. The goal is certain, for the powers that be "slumber not nor sleep." The way is long but the end is certain. Man will return to his Father's House, the home from which he came.

*John Hawkes.*

*AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER?*

Little Belgium's karma descended upon her in the form of Germany's legions. She did battle nobly and well but the forces were too great and she was overcome. And now that it is over, we stand a nation abashed, overwhelmed by the realisation of our own stupidity. We were our brother's keeper and well it might have been for us had we remembered to inquire as the battle raged: "Watchman, what of the night?"

Again and again is the question asked: "How far may we interfere with the karma of another?" and as often we are told to *go forward fearlessly*; that no help can be given that has not been earned, though a helper may fail to see his opportunity.

Time provides a perspective in which apparently isolated facts are brought into combinations that emphasise relations unsuspected between causes and effects. Effects of causes ages old may lie buried in our hearts,—seeds of causes that are to be,—and who shall judge those effects as good or ill with less perspective than lies before the Master's eye?

Isolated from their parent cause; portending nothing of their future dharma, how can we judge as facts the actions of another? Our acts are so often expressions of phases of our nature which we ourselves do not understand, echoes from that long-forgotten past for which we are now only relatively responsible; but until the world admits the truth of reincarnation this fact must go on unproved and humanity must continue to bear its burden of misjudgments. But still insis-

tently the question presses: how far may we venture in our efforts to help a brother? If we see him standing at the edge of a precipice, his head reeling and his eyes blinded, shall we simply tell him kindly, politely, of his danger, and then leave him to his fate? Or, forgetting self and the possibility of being drawn into his karma, shall we grasp him by the shoulder, support and steady him, and lead him away from the brink? Both ways, we believe, are open!

If we stand aside with hands off he may plunge into eternity—thereby paying off a debt of karma through the destruction of his physical body. If we interfere—he may live to accomplish such deeds of heroism as shall enrich the world and may earn the right to have cancelled for himself masses of karma of equal quantity. How shall we choose? Perhaps a hint may be found in the *Bhagavad Gita*, where the Blesséd Lord says: “Thy business is with the action only, never with its fruits; so let not the fruit of action be thy motive, *nor be thou to inaction attached.*” And in *Light on the Path* we may read: “Inaction based on selfish fear can bear but evil fruit.”

*Clara Jerome Kochersperger.*



*THE MEANING OF ILL HEALTH*

As the ancient Romans said, "Mens sana in corpore sano," a sound mind is found in a sound body. If there are exceptions to this rule, they do not invalidate its general application. To be of use in the world, whether in material, mental or spiritual matters, it is quite essential and fundamental that the physical body be healthy and in the best possible working order. This fact becomes all the more clear to our minds when we realise how closely the different bodies of man,—physical, emotional and mental,—are related to one another and how the subtler bodies rest against and upon the physical body as their foundation and support.

What is the meaning of ill health,—that grim reality which seems to be so well known to our human race? What causes it; what will banish it; what is the lesson of it for us all?

Ill health comes to us not by chance but as a necessary result of our own living, if not in this life then in others of the past. We may rest assured that we ourselves are responsible for our sicknesses. We have, some time, somewhere, lived in ways which were not harmonious or natural. We have disregarded the laws of nature and hygiene and thereby made the karma of ill health which we are now reaping.

It is quite possible for a man to disregard the laws of health, and often he may not experience disastrous results in his present life-time. But there will come a time when the karma of negligence or wilful violation of nature's laws will return to the man and afflict him with ill health,

even if he has lived the new life with due regard for health. And then the man will wonder why this trouble came to him.

It is our business to learn the laws of health of our physical bodies. If we live in a haphazard way, without conforming as nearly as may be possible to a carefully chosen standard, we will almost surely come to grief. Nature will throw back upon ourselves the irregularities which we permitted ourselves to indulge in. We should make a study of the laws of well-being of our own physical bodies. Without carrying this to extremes, we can easily pay some attention to our physical life and the effects of various foods and other influences upon our physical health. And having recognised certain foods as bringing about unpleasant results, we should resolutely avoid them in the future. If we do this as a regular thing, then we will have very little difficulty in recognising, whenever any ordinary troubles appear, what have been the causes of our various bodily ills, as they arise. And thus we are enabled to correct the troubles and to avoid them in the future.

There are two classes of ills: one is made up of troubles which we have brought upon us by incorrect living in the present life, and these cases are usually the more numerous of the two; the second class comprises the diseases which belong to our unexhausted karma of past lives. Careful living would reduce the first class to a low minimum; but the others often come upon us in spite of all we can do. But if we deal with them in a common-sense way, accepting them gracefully when they prove themselves inevitable, and

doing our best to make them as harmless as possible,—then we are rapidly paying off our debts contracted in the past, and may take comfort from the fact that when these debts are paid, they are paid for ever, and we are set free from their hindering effects.

There is a great lesson which we must all learn from our ill health and the careful study of the needs of the body: it is the lesson of the golden mean in right living, of adapting ourselves to conditions and yet maintaining our bodies healthy and able to deal efficiently with such work as we need to do with them. Ill health means that there is some inharmony in our relations with nature, and it is our business to correct this at once, if possible. Ill health warns us that there is something wrong, and we may well be grateful to it for helping us to find the right way once more. According to the law of balance, we may expect that there is as much good as there is evil about any one thing or any condition, and if we see only the evil aspects of ill health we are not making full use of our valuable experience.

Health is not merely a matter of importance for the physical body but also for the higher bodies. If a man often allows himself to feel any one of the undesirable emotions, he weakens the health of his emotional, or astral, body. For instance, habitual depression, or living "in the blue," will result in a very unhealthy state of the astral body, which also weakens the physical body and lays it open to the possibility of attack of various disease germs. The mental body is more free, but its prejudices are like sores and cancers in the physical body.

C. S.

*THE POSITIVE SIDE OF REINCARNATION*

Very often, on first presentation, the thought of reincarnation brings with it a feeling of distress and resentment that we should have to come back and go over again our sufferings and our troubles, our doubts and perplexities. Too often this side of the question presents itself,—the negative instead of the positive side, which is so beautiful. How wonderful to think back to the moments in which we have tasted the great joys of life; the exhilaration of youth, the moments when all accomplishments seem possible to the free, undaunted spirit of youth, when like the Good Fairy we open our arms with welcome and lift our faces to life. And that other moment when we know we have met the friend for whom all previous time has been a seeding; the baby's first cry to the mother heart, the joy in the child's moments of victory. All the past ideals and hopes and joys which in later life are as old lace laid away in lavender too precious for common use, too frail to handle, will come again with the new body when the soul returns.

*Maud G. McDonald.*



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*THE WORLD OF THE REAL*

Men live in the life of the world under conditions continually emphasising its reality, and yet all that belongs to this world is most transitory and impermanent. We know this, but few of us have the courage to admit it and face the consequences of this admission. Although the world is made up of things that are constantly changing, we are trained to feel at home in this vast moving mass of things and to try to obtain in it such comfort and strength as will enable us to bear our daily burdens.

But there are times when the illusion of the worldly life is quite apparent and fails to convince us. Then we feel the loneliness of our life and we long to find something that is true and real and permanent. We wonder what life means and whether it has anything of value about it for us. And when we have sought for a sufficiently long time and with enough of earnestness we find that there *is* a meaning and that there *is* something real in life, if only we know where to look for it and recognise it when we find it.

The world around us is but a playground for countless forces and energies. They act and interact under a law of necessity, of rigid cause and effect. We, too, are in part subject to this law of karma, action, for we have bodies built up of material drawn from nature and this matter is always under the sway of natural law. We have learned to identify ourselves with the bodies of the personality,—the physical body, the body of feelings and the body of thoughts,—but this is a mistake which must be corrected as soon

as possible, if we wish to become free from the karmic ties which hold us fast.

The lower worlds, the worlds in which the personality lives, may be regarded as a vast mechanism, a most wonderful and intricate piece of machinery, with energies stored up in it in various and curious ways, and which may be liberated to flow into definite channels and produce definite results. We know something of these energies and how to use them in the physical world to drive our countless numbers of machines. But what most men have not yet learned is that feelings and thoughts also represent energy and can produce definite results under the proper conditions. Thus, nearly all the things which make up the man's world of life are quite mechanical and may be used by manipulating the energies of nature with knowledge and skill.

If this is so, what part of us is it that may control and guide those energies? Not all the energies of the world are controllable by human beings but only a small part. But men actually have within them a subtle part of their being or life, which is outside and beyond the influence of the lower worlds and their energies, if they would recognise it and act accordingly. That is to say, men are complex in nature and while much of their outer being,—the bodies of the personality,—is subject to the law of karma, of action and reaction, there is a higher self in every man, a being who is quite beyond the reach of karma. This higher self is the ego, or the permanent part of man, untouched by death.

The ego lives in a world of wondrous realities. It is the world of the real, the ideal, the abiding

and the true. It is only with reference to it that there can be a meaning for the vast life and change in the worlds of the personality. Without it the life of humanity is but a hopeless problem with no answer. But when the world of the ego, the true man, is recognised and kept in mind and heart, we may feel the "peace that passeth understanding," and know with utter certitude that all is well, no matter what is happening in the world of rapid change.

And, as we grow and increase our consciousness of the egoic world and its peace and strength, we learn to work in the lower worlds without fear or hate, without being attached through desire to our work or repelled by its evil or unpleasant qualities. It is then that the law of karma begins to loosen its hold on us and that it becomes a powerful means to aid us in our work, for we then work with knowledge and not in blindness and ignorance. We work with much greater skill and wisdom and power, and if need be we can draw on our true fund of strength, which "belongs to all pure souls equally."

The world of the real may seem vague and meaningless to some who first hear of it. But it seeks not to convince. It bides its time, for time is but of small account for it. "The mills of the gods grind slowly, but they grind exceeding fine." When the ambitions of men have "turned to dust and ashes in their mouths," when they have learned that all the wealth of the world is not worth having for any reason that belongs to the world, then they will listen to the silent voice within, which will lead them to find in themselves a world whose smallest riches can not

be bought with all the wealth below, but which may be held by all pure souls in common.

Were we to gain the wealth of the higher worlds for ourselves alone, it would only make us unhappy. For we would feel the pain and suffering of the world without being able to relieve it. Happily such is not the case. No man can gain the riches of spiritual life without helping and enriching all mankind. The "real things" cannot be held by men for themselves. They transcend the limit of individual as well as personal existence.

Every soul who finds his way into the larger life makes this same finding a little easier for all other striving souls. Every effort that is made to live the spiritual life in the outer world in spite of difficulties will make it easier for others to do likewise when their turn comes. This is because each man who strongly makes these efforts helps to train the subtle mechanism of the spiritual worlds to respond more easily to the higher thought and will.

The powers that are thus gained are powers that may only be used if used for the well-being of the Life of the world. The man who has learned freely to use these powers experiences the bliss that belongs to true sacrifice.

How fascinating, how difficult, how wonderful, is the world of the real! Were we left without the guidance and help of those who have the power to live there, we could hardly hope to know much of it, nor to learn to use our consciousness there with wide-eyed wakefulness. But those that seek shall find, and for those who knock it shall be opened!

C. S.

*SOUL BONDAGE AND SOUL FREEDOM*

Curious, indeed, is the Law of Balance, which means that in the universe opposite qualities shall always exist together. It seems to be a law of consciousness that there must be a drawing apart of any quality before there can be awareness. We feel sensations only because there is a change of the quality of the influence which we are feeling. Were there no change in qualities we would not have any names for them, because we would not even be aware of their existence.

The soul, or ego, of man is both bound and free. This is his own illustration of the universal law of balance. Man feels his bondage, because he is partly free; he feels his freedom, because he is partly bound. Were his condition always the same, he would not know of the qualities of bondage and freedom. Only as he moves backward and forward between bondage and freedom does he become aware of his condition. Neither state could have a meaning for him without the other; each one involves the other.

What is it that binds the ego? It is his bodies, his karma, his outer nature.

The bodies are limitations. Each body limits the ego who uses it, to the particular world to which its matter belongs. Each body limits a part of the ego to a particular aspect of consciousness. Thus in the physical body the ego deals with actions and he is conscious of acting. In the astral body the ego feels sensations of pain and pleasure, through which he becomes conscious of emotions. And in the mental body he is conscious of thought changes and thought

activities, and he lives in the mental aspect.

But the bodies also give freedom to the ego. Without the physical body the ego is powerless to affect physical matter; having lost his physical body in death, he can no longer move physical objects about. Only the possession of the physical body enables the ego to express himself in action. Only through the physical body can man learn the lessons and the laws of the physical world. Thus the very body which limits the man's life to the action aspect of consciousness also gives him freedom to act upon physical objects and move them about.

In a similar way the astral body limits the man to consciousness of emotions and at the same time gives him freedom to use his consciousness in having emotions and in using astral matter.

And, finally, the mental body is of such a nature that the ego in the mental body can only think and study thought-forms, but it is also the very thing which enables the ego to have the powers of thought and develop them by making use of them. Without the mental body the ego would be free from its limitations but also he would be unable to think, so that in his freedom he would be in bondage and while he is in the bondage of the mental body he has the freedom of expression in the consciousness of thinking.

Furthermore, if the man experiences no change with respect to his bodies he would not know that he was either bound or free. Thus the very fact of his having continuous life in the various bodies gives to him the knowledge both of his freedom and his bondage. And in order to teach him this knowledge, the Powers That Be

have instituted the continuously turning Wheel of Births and Deaths. The man is successively given and deprived of his bodies. This is what is meant by Reincarnation.

Reader, do you ever feel a longing to be free from the prison of the heavy, clumsy physical body? If you do, then remember also that by virtue of possessing the physical body you have the wonderful power of moving about heavy physical objects, which means the applying of the wonderful divine energies of Will. Remember that although the physical body is stiff and clumsy in comparison with the higher bodies, it gives you a tremendous power, and in the use of this power you grow to become Power itself, that is to say, you develop that aspect of god-like consciousness which is Will.

It was said that karma constitutes a part or phase of man's bondage. Karma, for an individual, is that mass of results of all his past activity, of which he has not yet experienced the return action, or re-action. It is all those reactions of his past actions, which have not yet reacted upon him and exhausted themselves in so doing. It is that part of the man's past which is still alive for him, still full of energies which are to be returned to his bodies of the personality and affect them and modify them. This karma is slowly reawakening from latency, becoming manifest, materialising itself in the world to which it belongs,—physical, astral or mental,—or in more than one at the same time. It is assuming definite shape, collecting the old vibratory energies which the man has sent forth from his bodies, and pouring in upon the man from

invisible space around. Some karma is so strong that the man can not oppose it successfully: this is loosely spoken of as fate. Some of it may be turned aside or changed by fresh efforts which the man puts forth to maintain himself in his present condition or course of living. All of it comes to him at the right time and all of it he must account for. It is his harvest which he is constantly reaping from his past sowings. It is the continuous effect of all the causes which he has himself set going.

Of course this karma is something which limits the man's life, for it means that in part his life is already laid out for him, and that he will meet with various definite experiences, both painful and pleasant, both hindering him or helping him in his living of his life. The man's karma is therefore a part of his bondage, the fixed conditions under which he must work. But it is also to be rightly regarded as his freedom, for it furnishes him with the means exactly suited to his development to continue his soul evolution in an orderly manner, each life continuing in that stage of evolution which he has succeeded in reaching by his past lives. It furnishes the man with just those difficulties and resistances against which he must work and push, and which will develop in him those very qualities of character of which he stands most in need. It must not be forgotten that karma is both "good" and "bad," or better said it is both helpful and hindering in his evolution as an immortal ego. Where a man reaps the results of his past efforts and aspirations, for instance, to become a great musician, his karma has brought him greater free-

dom to express his inner life and nature. This will be readily admitted by all. But it is no less true that the hindering karma of obstacles to be overcome equally brings freedom for the ego, for it represents something which stands in the way of his further growth and which must be cleared away before the ego can advance. Besides, it always carries with it a lesson which the ego must learn, and which he learns by mastering the difficult situation. This gives him an added power to express himself rightly and thus it increases his freedom. If the obstacle had not been presented to the man, he would always lack just that power and wisdom which were developed in mastering the difficulty, and therefore his egoic life would be incomplete and not free. Should he fail to solve the problem rightly, then his actions will again draw to the man at some future time the necessary reactions which will repeat the difficulty, and thus enable him to regain the present lost opportunity of learning the lesson or gaining the necessary power. The man may postpone the learning of the lesson time after time, but he can not set aside the difficulty and go on in his evolution without the final freedom which it brings to him. Thus the man can not thwart his own egoic evolution by his actions: all he can do is to hasten or delay the attaining of its various stages. Thus the law of karma binds him in order that he may be free. If he were not bound, he could not obtain freedom.

The third thing which binds the ego is his outer nature. This is what corresponds to that part of the ego's own life, or inner nature, which has been able to show itself out in the lower

bodies in various ways, such as habits, or modes of expression and faculties. The outer nature is the result of the outworking of karma upon the man's bodies. It measures in a way the evolution of the matter which he has earned the right to have and use in his bodies. For the matter in our bodies has very definite qualities and modes of showing out the life-energies of Nature.

Now, how does the outer nature bind the ego? Evidently in this: that he can only express himself through his outer nature. This outer nature not only allows him a certain, limited expression, but it forces him to express himself in its prescribed ways. For example, when something funny is presented to the personality, the man is constrained to laugh, and to laugh in just that way which is the result of old habits of laughing. It is said that the stage of the development of the ego, as far as it can be observed in the personality, is nowhere made more evident than in the way in which the man laughs. Other external modes of expression can be controlled to a large extent and made to show the personality as something different from what it really is; but when the man laughs, he throws something of his very soul qualities into the laugh. It is said that the great sage Pythagoras tested the fitness of those who wished to become his disciples by their way of laughing.

But here again, while the outer nature binds the soul or life of the ego in very definite ways, it at the same time gives it its freedom. For by expressing himself through his bodies in his outer nature, the ego develops his powers of action and even lays the foundations for the

future building of his higher, spiritual bodies, in which he will live and be self-conscious, some time in the future, whether it be far distant or near at hand. And when he is able to live in the higher realms of spirit, then the necessity of living in the life of the personality is broken. It is then that the ego is wholly freed from the bondage of life in lower bodies. And this has been made possible only because of the curious dual nature of the life of the ego, which is partly bondage and partly freedom, while the ego lives in the bodies of the personality.

The ego, in his long evolution, continually oscillates in consciousness between the opposite poles of bondage and freedom. By these means he learns to know more and more about the nature of both and recognises that within himself are to be developed the powers which will free him from bondage and enable him to live in the freedom of his innermost Self, in the unity of the brotherhood of all life.

It is important to recognise that one does not have to wait for freedom to come in the life after death, outside the physical body, in "heaven." Freedom is not so much a thing dependent on outer conditions as it is a matter of inner consciousness and inner powers. There are egos who are unevolved and who are practically helpless and unconscious in their own world, even if they have no personalities living in the physical world. But the man who is far advanced in spirituality may develop the consciousness of his egoic life and experience its wonderful bliss and freedom even while living in the physical body. Only the Truth and our Self can make us free. C. S.

*THE STORING OF KARMIC ENERGIES*

*Where are stored the karmas that a man by his good or bad thoughts has generated, and that will bring him reward, or punishment, in the future?*

The Jain Scriptures teach that karma is a reality and is a kind of invisible matter which acts as a force by changing the individuality of the living being. Karma is a part of the nature of every embodied or mundane living being, and consequently as an influencing force it has always been in existence. Soul and karma have always been in combination, the karma being composed of subtle forces which have been generated by soul combined with matter.

These karmic forces are the sole cause of the misery, or happiness of each soul; thus the states which all beings are now in, have been brought about by past experiences in former lives. Speaking of man, as soul and matter in combination, causing good and bad actions to manifest through human beings, the Jains teach that the business of life is to obtain freedom by separating the soul from the various passions—desire, love, hate, lust, anger, pride, covetousness, deceitfulness, etc. The punishments which we get in the form of unhappiness, sorrow, pain, and general dissatisfaction, are all self-made, and are the working out of the forces of karma which we have previously generated. Our rewards consist of all the good karmas which we generate by striving unceasingly to develop our spiritual nature.

When we begin to realise fully that we are in the bondage of karmas and that by such bondage our real self is concealed, then we shall strive to break our chains by purifying our thoughts in order that good actions may veritably result. Thus the task of conquering one's lower self is the true work of all human beings; consequently liberation from a state of existence within which all thoughts, words and deeds create further karmic forces, is the highest aim of the human soul. This ideal is the only way whereby one can gain a knowledge of the real soul, and the pursuit of that ideal is the true path to travel upon, if spiritual evolution is to be fully realised by all earnest seekers for Truth.

A. Gordon, in the "Jaina Gazette," (India).

*FIELD NOTES*

The last mails have brought seventeen applications for membership in the *Legion* from Holland and eighteen from New Zealand. A new Group is to be established at Arnhem, Holland. Evidently the work is progressing steadily in these countries.

The Sunday evening illustrated lectures in the Fine Arts Building of Chicago have been continued without break during the summer. Mr. I. I. Nelson, of Austin, Texas, has given a number of these lectures, which were well received by the audiences.

Some six hundred copies of this September number will be sent out to hospitals throughout the country.

The *Legion* has just received two hundred bound volumes of REINCARNATION for the years 1914 and 1915. Members will do excellent work if they will purchase these volumes and place them in public libraries. For prices see the second page of the cover.

*BOOK REVIEW*

*Fifty-Three New Thought Experiences*, by Forty-Nine Writers. The Elizabeth Towne Co., Holyoke, Mass.

The book is full of characteristic New Thought optimism. It carries splendid lessons to those who are inclined to yield tamely to any limitation or obstacle that may confront them. To "be up and doing," to strive mightily, is the keynote of the book. It is a pleasure to see that the idea of Karma is given in an early article as one of the basic principles of the New Thought philosophy. If this great Law, a knowledge of which some consider indispensable to the proper conduct of life, were stressed more in its wider meanings, the New Thought movement would lose none of its undoubted effectiveness in our present-day civilisation. There are many questions connected with freedom of thought, feeling and action which need careful study in the light of the law of karma. The message contained in this volume will reach many in helpful ways and open up new modes of life. *I. I. N.*

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