

REINCARNATION

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KNOWLEDGE OF THE LAW AND OF THE FUTURE

Karma is the law of re-action to action in the inner worlds of emotion and of thought. The slightest consideration brings the conclusion that karma is but part of far wider laws—that there must be lessons to be learned and duties to be performed that are set for the leading races of the world from time to time, so that vast parts of the world's population may learn them as in a mighty class of children at school.

To-day we can see plainly that confraternity must be learned. Out of the spurning of the lesson by one branch race of people has come the great war. When they have cast out of power those who falsely led them into their error they may with time learn the lesson they previously refused to accept and the civilized world will be ready for a new trial of fraternity.

Thus in a general way we can foresee the future. When America had purged herself of human slavery she progressed with miraculous swiftness to a high and honorable place among the nations of power, dignity and enlightenment.

It would seem inevitable that, with the impending purging of the world of organized opposition to liberty, equality and fraternity, we may expect a mighty advance in the world's enlightenment, power and happiness.

W. V-H.

RUSSIA

In these last three years of constant change, turmoil and bloody war great events have almost lost the power to stir us deeply,—the human race has become accustomed to violent emotions and startling news. But only a short time ago there has occurred something so unusual, so massive, so very unexpected, so full of glorious promise for the future, that the whole world has taken notice and rejoiced.

It was the great revolution in Russia. That which could not be done before, in centuries of peace, has now, during the world war, in a few days been successfully accomplished. The work which anarchists and nihilists could never carry out with their extreme methods of destruction, has been done by the will and thought-power of the upper classes of the Russian people. Perhaps never before has there been a change so great with so little loss of life and wealth.

Russia, once backward, to-day sets an example to the highly civilised and cultured states of Europe in which autocracy is still allowed to rule. May the European peoples who have been led by selfish dynasties into great and fundamental errors in principles of thought, swiftly free themselves from these invisible chains and join, rejoicing, in the forward march of new ideals!

And may the Russian people grow in wisdom, strength and beauty of their national life!

C. S.

HEREDITY AND REINCARNATION

It is, at present, still generally believed that the physiological theory of heredity explains everything in the human being that is more or less abnormal in a spiritual, psychological, moral or physical sense; in particular it is believed that it is always possible to trace back to parents and ancestors the prominent features and qualities of the offspring.

After Darwin's theory of natural selection was generally accepted by the scientific world, heredity was usually held to explain problems left unsolved by the Darwinian system of thought.

In spite of all this, it has still remained very difficult to explain *how* faculties of mind that are possessed by parents can be inherited by their offspring. A German physiologist has assumed matter to be endowed with memory, in order to bridge over the gulf between parent and child, and according to the theories of Weismann and

Haeckel it is the extremely small particle of germ-plasm that carries hereditary qualities.

It is clear that they are searching after a spiritual continuity, but, instead of looking for this continuity in the spiritual world,—the real side of things,—they try to find it in the material world, which is the phenomenal side of things.

Of course, there is a material continuity from parent to offspring, but does this material continuity really give us a sufficient foothold to explain for instance, the genius as a case of mere heredity? Can you fathom how a cell of germ-plasm can give the explanation of the deepest human emotions? Moreover, it is true that as regards his spiritual life a genius is almost always without parents, so that the merely material continuity does not sufficiently explain the rise of a genius.

Now, there is a teaching which can explain these problems. It is that of Reincarnation, once well known to many Church Fathers of early Christianity, but condemned as heresy by the Council of Constantinople in 553 A. D. According to reincarnation man is born on earth many times. Man is immortal. The conception of immortality is generally believed in; and now, would it not be strange if during man's immortal life he should not live on this planet more than once?

Reincarnation is the only teaching, or theory of immortality, that can sufficiently explain the genius; for we look in vain for material continuity to give a satisfactory explanation. The real world is not found in the things of merely physical existence, but in the spiritual life, eternal and everlasting, evolving from divine unconsciousness toward conscious divinity. H. A. K.

INTERNATIONAL LAW

Individual men of some development and good common sense gladly and willingly submit themselves to the authority of codified law, established for them by their government. Sometimes, as in democratic forms of government, the people themselves, through chosen representatives, make the system of laws by which they are to be governed in matters of conduct and in their relations to other men. In some countries the machinery of government has for many centuries been in the hands of a few people, recognised as having received their authority by right of birth, and these hereditary rulers have the power to make and administer the law for the whole nation. But even here the people of the nation have been trained to accept some code of law as binding for them. And under some system of laws the people of the world have been enabled to live together in some measure of harmony and justice, each man recognising that he has certain rights of conduct provided he does not violate similar rights of his neighbors and fellow-citizens.

Nations, however, in the course of history, have generally exercised their own separate wills, with less restraint and less recognition of the rights of other nations, than has been the case for individual men. Each nation has had its own ideas of what it regards as proper conduct in all its dealings with other nations, and has been more or less unwilling to accept the codes of law used by its neighbors in their foreign affairs.

But in the course of time, especially in recent centuries, when means of communication between

nations have been much improved and enlarged, there has developed more and more of a general understanding among nations as to how they should conduct themselves toward one another, both in times of peace and of war. This understanding has come to be regarded as authoritative and more or less binding. It is called "international law."

There was a time when nations could live almost a life of separateness from other nations. Under such conditions the principles of international law had very little application and could almost be neglected. They played only a small part in the thought of the world. But to-day the life of the world has become so complex and so intricately interwoven between nations as well as individuals, that hardly any nation can live without coming into close relations with its neighbor nations. The rapid stream of evolution is sweeping steadily and swiftly on, and it is now generally recognised by statesmen and thinkers that the world is really a family of nations,—some older, some younger; some stronger, and some weaker.

To-day the lesson of confraternity and co-operation among nations as well as men is an important one. The rapidity and smoothness of further evolution for this earth will largely depend on how fully the nations grasp this fundamental idea and adapt themselves to live in harmony with it. As yet the body of principles known as international law is somewhat vague and hazy, and there is no established international power to enforce that law. The result is that some nations are willing to act contrary to these

international principles and violate them outright, if by so doing they can apparently reap a material benefit for themselves. What is urgently needed is a League of Nations, including the more powerful nations, which will, by common agreement, bind its members to declare international law as actually in force, and to uphold its authority as binding upon themselves and all other nations.

Such an agreement would give to international law not only authority but power to enforce that authority against any offending nation or group of nations. It would give to international law a similar standing among nations as is enjoyed by the laws of a nation among the citizens of that nation. This would result in putting world-interests in their proper rank in importance as compared with the various national interests which so frequently are found in conflict with one another. It would not necessarily make future wars impossible, but it would lay down the proper conditions under which they might occur and the conditions which must be observed by the warring nations. In this way it would seem that the occurrence of other wars on a large scale could be made very improbable, and if they did occur, almost all of their needless brutality and destructiveness could be done away with.

The most important field for international law, however, lies not in the regulation of war, but in maintaining the ideals of international justice and fair dealing. If given the proper power for enforcement, it would command universal recognition and respect. It should bring about a greater measure of friendship between nations and develop the feeling in men that they are

citizens of the world as well as citizens of their own country.

If we study the history of modern times we can not but be impressed with the great fact that the world is swiftly coming into recognition of its own unity and solidarity. Great national catastrophes immediately call forth a generous sympathy and response from many other lands. Increased means of communication, commerce and travel have facilitated the making of many karmic links between citizens of different countries, and therefore between their nations themselves. Old thought-forms of selfishness are still present but they are rapidly rendered more and more harmless by the new thoughts and ideals which are in harmony with the large and powerful principles of international confraternity and co-operation.

The day of national separateness and jealousies must give place to a new age in civilisation, when nations will live contentedly in their own life and growth, without interfering with the rights of other nations, be they powerful or weak, to do likewise. Nations have their dharma, their own individual duties and privileges of growth, and they should have every opportunity to realise their aspirations and fulfil their destinies, as long as in so doing they do not violate similar rights of national life of their neighbor nations. Then nations will actually become members of a world-family, and their individual national lives will become definite parts of the life of the world and of the evolution of the whole human race.

C. S.

WHY ARE WE HERE?

The teaching of reincarnation implies the divinity of humanity. It inspires faith and hope, a noble self-reliance, profound respect for the views and rights of others, and a consciousness of power to overcome every weakness or temptation and to triumph over all obstacles. It helps us to regard each individual with sympathetic understanding, however poor, repulsive or degraded he may be, since the divine image is within him, no matter how deeply buried or disguised by outward appearances. It also helps us more readily to love even our enemies and to do good to those who hate us. It fosters co-operation and mutual helpfulness instead of competition and strife. In short, it helps us to manifest more easily the spirit of the Christ, because we see things from the standpoint of the life within, rather than of the forms without. Hence, there is no place for a spirit of harsh criticism, resentment or bitter condemnation. It does not cause one to approve error but to love and show compassion towards, and seek to remedy all manifestations of, human imperfection, teaching us that all so-called sin and wickedness are due to ignorance and a lack of spiritual attainment.

Therefore, reincarnation does not conflict with any of the branches of physical or metaphysical science in so far as their teachings are capable of demonstration and, if presented in a kind and catholic spirit, it will commend itself to all who sincerely desire to know the truth, and to do all in their power to relieve suffering humanity

and to help every struggling soul to a purer, nobler and more perfect life.

Let us consider now the principle of reincarnation. Every man is a part of the Supreme Life, and goes forth as a young soul to learn life's lessons by experience, transmuting experience into character, life after life. The universe exists for the experience of the soul.

We are all in our cycle of reincarnations, but we did not all start at the same time, for Life manifests in successive waves. After repeatedly disregarding the Law and suffering the consequences we finally learn the Law and work with it.

Each human individual is in a position to acquire divine attributes, but he is not invested with them in any developed condition. In other words, each man must earn his own divinity. Every man can learn by observation as well as by experience, so that it is not necessary to pass actually through every possible kind of experience.

Your present faculties, intellectual capacities, moral tendencies and spiritual condition are the sum-total of your experiences and observations in past lives plus your experiences and observations in this present earth-life.

At birth you inherited from your higher Self the wisdom, power and faculties gained from all your past experiences, and when you lay aside the physical body at death, you bequeath to your higher Self the sum of all experiences of the present earth-life. You are the child of your past; you are the parent of your future.

Your intellectual capacities, mental faculties, moral tendencies and spiritual development are the results of those of your individual efforts

which were in harmony with the natural laws of evolution; and such efforts have been made, some with and some without conscious knowledge of the good Law. There is no one else to be praised or thanked or blamed for your present condition, environment, position, limitations or opportunities but yourself. Each human individual has within himself the latent potentialities of divinity; in fact, he is now in the process of becoming a God, a wise, strong, beautiful and self-dependent center of power.

This higher Self or inner center of consciousness cannot be seen, heard or touched in the physical world; it is a *House not made with hands*. Spiritual things can only be spiritually discerned. The greatest realities are unseen.

We are our own Masters, and though we have to suffer or enjoy now the results of causes set in motion in the past by ourselves, it is for us to neutralize the undesirable causes with knowledge of the Law and thus to create our future.

In the study of soul-science we can never stand still, content to suppose that we have heard the last word on any subject. As we develop capacity to realize in a greater or lesser degree what it is to live in the higher worlds of being, we shall always find ourselves enlarging, embellishing and improving our earlier conceptions, and preparing them in this way to become the foundations of yet larger conceptions. The development of capacity to acquire the higher consciousness and divine attributes can only be secured by efforts emanating from our own determination in the physical life. *That is why we are here.* Perfection of character is the goal

of humanity. We are here in order that we may express completely the divinity that in essence we *are*. That is why we are sent again and again to the school of life. The school is quite strenuous but the lessons, once thoroughly learned, are learned for ever.

The manifold and complex destinies of men answer with rigid exactitude to the balancings between good and evil done by them in previous lives. Nothing is accidental as regards the soul. "Each man is his own absolute law-giver, the dispenser of glory or gloom to himself, the decreer of his life, his reward, his punishment." And in order to secure justice, the results must appear in the same world where the causes were generated by men. This means reincarnation.

The law of cause and effect is not a divine command but a natural inexorable law, and its penalties and rewards are as sure as the law itself. Punishment, as taught by Christ, is an aspect of love. It is love unveiling to us the hidden, intrinsic quality of evil, so as to bring the sinner to a better mind. There is no forgiveness of sin in nature, but we ourselves can forgive personal injuries. Nature never halts; it is progressive. You may forgive a man who sets fire to your house, but your forgiveness will not stop the fire. The nature of fire is to burn as long as it is fed with combustibles. Evil will continue as long as it is fed with evil. Hatred is overcome by Love. Fire is quenched by water.

We are limited in expressing our inner life by the obstacles which are the results of our own past errors. As we learn to overcome them, we gain wisdom, power, skill and freedom.

In the words of the poet Whittier:

“We shape *ourselves* the joy or fear
Of which the coming life is made.
And fill our future atmosphere
With sunshine or with shade.

“The tissues of the life to be
We weave with colours *all our own*,
And in the field of destiny
We reap *as we have sown*.

“Still shall the soul around it call
The shadows which it gathered here,
And, painted on the eternal wall
The past shall reappear.”

John Grainger.



It seemeth such a little way to me
Across to that strange country, the Beyond,
And, yet, not strange for it has grown to be
The home of those of whom I am so fond,
They make it seem familiar and most dear
As journeying friends bring distant regions near.

So close it lies, that when my sight is clear
I think I almost see the glowing strands,
I know I feel those who have gone from here
Come near enough to sometimes touch my hand.
I often think that but for our veiled eyes
We should find Heaven right about us lies.

Exchange.

"I AM THE SUN"

I am the sun. My fervent rays
Throughout my system wide I spread.
I radiate the ether blue,
Through which my brilliant light I shed.

My planets all, each in its turn,
My fiery furnace must pass through;
There into ether be refined,
From which to be re-formed anew.

I fill my system's vast confines,
With ether through my heat intense;
Then cold, the zero absolute,
As planets sends it back, condensed.

My brother suns have spheres like mine.
In orbits swung; each has his own.
Our ethers fill all cosmic space;
The universe is ours alone.

My offspring these, and part of me,
Each planet, comet, satellite;
I am them all, and keep them dight,
In dazzling, brilliant sunshine bright.

I am the water, and the land
From which doth spring, through warmth and rain,
Earth's verdure which makes man; I am
The verdure, flora, fruit and grain.

The beasts, the fishes, birds, and then
When nearly all is said and done,
I am the man that tills the soil.
Yes, I am you! We twain are one.

I am the soul that in you dwells,
—Essence of Universal Mind—
Incarnate life, repeatedly,
Its heritage throughout all time.

William W. Weiting.

A STORY BY A WOMAN

Once upon a time a woman was left a widow, with very little means, and five daughters, ranging in age from sixteen years to two years. The prospect looked rather dismal for this woman, as heretofore she had led a domestic life, with a husband (whom she married when very young) to love and care for her and for their children.

The husband's death was rather tragic, and at the death-bed of her father the oldest daughter felt a great responsibility fall upon her when, leading her mother from the room, she thought of those younger sisters. When the lack of means was understood by the mother and this older daughter, it was realised that something would have to be done to provide for the family and educate the children. So, gathering up what they had, the mother took her little family to another city, where she and the father had lived in happier times.

The mother was a particularly fine housekeeper and in all respects a very remarkable woman. So she set about to do the thing she knew she *could* do; in other words, make a home for her family, and quite a large number of other people, whom we shall call the boarders.

When everything was settled and the season came for school time, the younger children were all sent to a school in the neighborhood, but the oldest daughter, with a sinking heart, which she tried not to show, remained at home, as her mother's right hand and helper.

This oldest daughter, of whom the story is to tell, was a tall, slender girl, high-tempered and

proud-spirited, with the dominant idea at that time that it was her business to protect and, if necessary, to fight for her mother. She was often spoken of as the girl with the "dimples and the gazelle eyes," and for those she had to pay dear, as in this boarding house first and last there were a good many young men.

It was part of the girl's duty, as outlined in the plan which she and her mother had made for conducting their business, that she should meet the people, introduce them to one another, and sit at first at one table and then at another until the various ones were acquainted and felt at home. Let it be said that this girl with the "dimples and the gazelle eyes" was never allowed to forget them by the various young men; also that they always seemed to take it for granted that she was enamored of them. Many a time she stamped her foot in talking things over with her mother, and declared she would not sit at such and such a table again; but there did not seem any help for it, and the girl was by no means a prude. But from the age of sixteen, which she was at that time to the present moment, at a half-century, she contends that most of the men she has met, and she has met a great many, have much to learn about women, and one of these things is that frankness and vivacity in a girl or woman do not mean that she is intentionally coquettish or looking for conquest.

Well, after nearly ten years of happy struggle with the mother, the sisters grew, were well cared for, and fairly educated. At about this time a man came to board at the house, whom this girl finally married, and after these two

had been engaged for several months some one asked the man the color of the girl's eyes. He thought for a moment (and he was not color-blind), then he said he believed that they were blue; but really they were distinctly brown!

So we see that now and then a man *can* see past or through the "gazelle eyes and the dimples" and perhaps catch a glimpse of the *soul of a girl*.

Now, this woman has loved some men, and she does love a few men, but her heart goes out to women, and she hopes to see them beautiful and loving, but above all with a *strength of soul which shall raise the standard of men's thought of them*. And it seems that this should largely be accomplished when the human race more generally accepts the teachings of karma and reincarnation.

A Woman.

MY SOUL AND I

Like warp and woof all destinies
Are woven fast,
Linked in sympathy like the keys
Of an organ vast.
Pluck one thread, and the web ye mar;
Break but one
Of a thousand keys, and the paining jar
Through all will run.
O restless spirit! wherefore strain
Beyond thy sphere?
Heaven and hell, with their joy and pain,
Are now and here.

John Greenleaf Whittier.

CONSCRIPTION

At this time the United States are facing the problem as to whether the armies of America shall be recruited through conscription or voluntary enlistment. It is agreed that the United States shall take up manfully a large share of the work of bringing the world-war to a successful conclusion, but the methods of proceeding are subject to debate.

There are two views in regard to conscription which are worth while comparing, especially as they lead to the same conclusion, but by different routes. The first is the argument for conscription advanced by statesmen of the country, —who say that large armies must be raised and that not enough volunteers will come forward to fill the need. Therefore conscription is necessary. Furthermore the method of recruiting by selective conscription is just and democratic, because it will put the work of the war on all men equally and not merely on those who are willing to bear the burden, and thus allowing “slackers” to escape service in the armies.

From the standpoint of reincarnation and the law of karma this argument is quite acceptable, but much more can be added to it. The men who would gladly volunteer for war service are very likely to be those egos who have fought in wars in past lives and have already developed courage, heroism and self-sacrifice. But those who would not enlist would have in their number all the egos who have not as yet sufficiently developed courage and would therefore be most in need of the character-training which experience in war

can give. They have most to gain from wars.

Now, voluntary recruiting would merely result in furnishing war experience largely to such men as had the least need for it in order to develop the power-aspect of the ego; it would not result in training the characters of those who are most in need of developing the power virtues. But conscription would select from all men without reference to whether they are courageous or not. Thus it would give very valuable training to many who need it very much. And such egos as have had a part in wars of olden times would now be given a chance to show their fitness to lead and command where before they were, most of them, merely soldiers of the common rank and file.

Conscription may seem severe and in some respects it is severe; but it emphasises the fact that all citizens owe a duty of service to their country. Those who would not volunteer but are drawn into the war by compulsion, will gain very great benefit from their experiences, no matter whether they survive the war or fall in battle, and they will be proud to have had their share in the war after it is all over, and will joyfully admit their gain in new qualities of character.

Selective conscription is truly democratic, for it regards personalities equally and without fear, favor or discrimination. It calls to service equally the poor and the rich, the laborer and the capitalist, the jingo and the pacifist. It is the logical carrying out of the principles of equality and fraternity in the service of the country. All citizens must expect to give freely to their country when it is endangered.

"MISFORTUNES NEVER COME SINGLY"

A subscriber sends a clipping from a paper, from which the following is quoted:

"The mother of two children was bathing them when a government messenger arrived with word that the husband and father, fighting in France, had fallen a victim to a bullet. The eldest child, five years of age, started downstairs to open the door, tripped, fell and broke its neck. The mother hurried from the bathroom, hearing the fall, and when she returned the two-year old was dead in the bathtub, having drowned while she was away. Three hours later the mind of the stricken mother and wife gave way and she was removed to a sanitarium."

The subscriber writes: "An old adage, 'Misfortunes never come singly,' seems strangely exemplified in this case. Is such a saying and, 'It never rains but it pours,' based upon an occult truth?"

"I think that somewhere in occult literature I have seen a statement to the effect that there is some such a law, but just why the Authorities of Karma should, in assigning karmic re-adjustments to men, deal them out in that fashion, perhaps you can kindly explain. It occurs to me that in their great work these spiritual beings are possibly only following a law even greater than themselves.

"Assuming that such is the law, then I take it that what we call good karma is apportioned to us in the same way, though in the case of adversity there is more compelling of our attention as to the 'why' of it all.

"Often in my own experience I have thought both pleasant and unpleasant events came upon me in 'groups,' as it were, and for years I have understood that railroad men and sailors believe in the superstition (?) of accidents happening in blocks of three."

There can be but little doubt that the popular adages referred to are actually expressions of laws or truths of life. But we must be careful to consider how they could be explained in ways

more familiar to the ordinary physical world, before we regard them as demanding special occult explanations. We may realise the validity of the statement that there is an occult side to every thing and every event, no matter how commonplace, and yet we may perhaps find it most reasonable that these occult laws work quite generally (though perhaps not universally) along certain lines which are spoken of as "natural."

If all physical happenings occurred as though they were results of "blind" forces and energies, as held by materialistic philosophy, then the Law of Probability should apply with mathematical precision. Suppose we assume that half the experiences of life are pleasant and half painful; how would they come to the person, if all fell out as "chance" happenings? We could get one answer by placing, say five hundred small white marbles together with the same number of similar black ones, shake them up thoroughly and then let them run out in a single line, in a V-shaped groove. Let the white ones represent joys and the black ones sorrows. The order in which they follow one another would be a possible order for the thousand joys and sorrows of life. How would the balls be arranged?

The result will probably be that the alternate groups of whites and blacks will be made up of varying numbers, so that there will be a large number of single white marbles between black ones, a considerable number of pairs of whites, somewhat fewer "triples," and so on. This result would probably be not very different from the distribution of joys and sorrows in human life.

It may, however, be quite possible that this

distribution does not follow the mathematical law of "chance" events, but that there is a more pronounced "bunching" of the two kinds of experiences; that the groups of joys and sorrows contain, on the average, less single members than would be the case for "chance" events. In this case there would be apparently a satisfactory proof that events do not happen by chance, but according to some definite law which does *not* work out according to the mathematical law of probability. This problem would be most interesting to study and obtain statistics for. But it is difficult and would require much time and skill.

In case it could be proved that joys and sorrows came rather more "bunched" than a chance pair of opposites, we would think next that the occult explanation, or the accounting for facts according to the law of karma, would involve the law of cyclic action; and this might well be the law that is even higher than the Authorities which administer karma. In other words there would be a period of joys and this would be followed by a period of sorrows, the two phases alternating in a regular order. The man would be subjected to a period of difficulty, followed by one of lightness and relief.

But when we come to consider such cases as are illustrated by the clipping, where a whole family is involved in fatalities, then we have much more likely material evidence that the law of chance does not operate universally. If events happened by chance, then *any* group of, say five persons, would give similar statistics as to the occurrence of joys and sorrows as any other group of five persons, no matter whether the

five belonged to a family or were quite unrelated.

If this problem were presented to many people who had had much experience in life, they would probably all agree that family groups would really show more cases of "bunched" fatalities or misfortunes (and also of joys) than groups of men chosen at random. If this were accepted as an actual statistical fact, then we would have an absolute proof that "events do not happen by chance." Now, what would be the explanation of such a law of family life, according to the law of karma? It is very simple and natural and is indicated in the phrases "family karma" and "collective karma." These phrases are used in recognition of the fact that certain groupings of men not only have actually coming to them experiences which are shared by them in common, *but which are the results of collective action in previous lives in similar groupings of these egos.*

Here, again, it is necessary to be very careful and use the utmost discrimination. There may be formed an association of persons, as for instance, a stock company, the members of which are all strangers to one another. But after they join together in that grouping, things will happen to them in common; and this would be true even if there were no such thing as "collective karma." But a knowledge of the law of karma would lead us to believe that these persons were not drawn together into the formation of the stock company by mere chance, but that they probably had done similar things in past lives. Thus certain experiences will come to them as direct results of their collective actions in their past groupings.

How would we be able to find evidence that this

view is correct? It would be very difficult, for most of the experiences coming to groupings of persons would be such as would affect them through the fact of their common group interests.

But just such cases as the one quoted from the clipping give evidence of the kind we want. The fatalities occurred *individually* and yet they were "bunched" in time and applied to members of a definite group,—a family. The man of the world could not give any sort of a satisfactory explanation. But students of karma would say that this family had probably lived in some similar grouping before, and had taken part, *all together*, in some very serious action,—a matter such as inflicting death upon others. The karmic results of such a collective action would be very likely to react upon all the persons at about the same time.

Another case of probable collective karma, this time for a different "grouping," may be given. When Warren Hastings was governor of India, he sent a young man named Bogle to Tibet to try to establish friendly relations with that country. Bogle was for some time an honored guest of the Teshu Lama. He also visited the two nephews of that high dignitary in their country home, and became their warm friend. Some years later the Teshu Lama visited the Chinese Emperor, and Bogle was about to leave India to meet his friend again in Peking. A letter that he had written to the two young Tibetans was returned with the note that they had both suddenly died. Bogle died just after starting on his journey, and the Teshu Lama met sudden death in China.

Such cases do occur. The world wonders, calls them "coincidences" and forgets. C. S.

CONSTRUCTION AND DESTRUCTION

To construct, this is the work of men; to destroy, that is the work of gods. To build up takes much time and effort; to tear down is a work of a moment. For building it is necessary to have some one who understands the art of building; for destroying, anybody will do.

Then why should men confine their work almost wholly to building up, and leave to higher beings the work and responsibility of destroying? The reason is found precisely in the fact that there is great responsibility connected with the work of destroying. After all, a higher knowledge is necessary to destroy than to build.

Men may safely engage in constructive work. The work may sometimes be of little importance and value, but it is directed positively and when it is accomplished, something has been gained. Construction is effort invested in a helpful way; it is in line with evolutionary progress. To construct, it is not necessary that man should know of the larger evolution and just what relation his work bears to other parts in that larger scheme of things. All that the man needs is the lower knowledge of the art of building, whatever the thing to be built may be. In other words, technical knowledge is sufficient, and a deeper understanding of the meaning of things is not at all necessary.

But it is otherwise with destruction. This is, in general, a loss, a step backward in the larger evolution. It usually entails a heavy karma of pain and suffering upon the destroyer. Sometimes, indeed, destruction is really a gain, but

in order to be sure of it, one must know more than is given to ordinary man to know. One must know the Great Plan and also that it is really helpful to the Great Plan that the thing in question shall be destroyed. Moreover, one must know just how to destroy so that there shall come no harm to any one or at least as little harm as possible.

Man has conquered many of the forces of nature and has learned how to use many of nature's energies. Usually he uses these energies constructively, but sometimes not. It is quite evident that humanity is still far from being sufficiently responsible that he may be allowed to gain control over still more potent energies. He would be very likely to use them for purposes of destruction, without having the right to do so.

There are tremendous energies of nature which can bring about terrible catastrophes, such as earthquakes and floods, or even the sinking away of large areas of land. Such are quite out of man's reach and knowledge, and it is well that they should be. Men are still too infantile to be given the means to destroy the human race.

The people who practice and teach destruction in any form are more to be pitied than condemned. They are often acting from motives that are high and noble, but perverted when applied to the various problems of society and economics. A little knowledge would oftentimes be sufficient to turn them in the right direction. And the most powerful of all knowledge is the law of evolution as carried on through karma and reincarnation.

C. S.

A PARABLE OF EVOLUTION

Those who live in touch with Nature learn her language and can understand all her children and what they say, even as they understand each other.

Nature speaks with many voices: some are soundless, speaking to the heart alone; some are full of divine harmony, filling the ear with ecstatic music; some speak of ordinary, everyday wants, hopes and aspirations. Nature speaks through the winds, the waters, the swaying trees, the birds, the flowers, the butterflies, the tiny insects.

Nature speaks in the glorious sun-rise and in the refulgent sun-set, in the sweet, refreshing dew, the gentle rain, the resounding thunder storm—in fact, Nature is always speaking, if we will only hear her voice. Nature is an emanation of God, although 'He transcends Nature.' By listening to Nature's voice we may, as did Adam, hear the 'voice of God while walking in the garden in the cool of the evening'; and we may hear it crying out to us for help in the slums of the cities, though He does not need our help—it is we ourselves that benefit by the help we give (when we give it without hopes of reward) in the strength it gives us, for by helping another to lift his burden we acquire strength to bear our own.

When I sat down this morning to write, I intended to tell the children of the *Legion* a simple story of some of Nature's children. Will they care to listen?

Swinging in the warm sun in a hammock made of a service berry leaf and lined with silky

threads lay a family of small black threads about an eighth of an inch in length; they were wee caterpillars and were enjoying themselves in their isolated home.

One, more daring than the rest, crawled to the edge of the leaf and, looking over, spied a large and beautiful caterpillar on some leaves below. He was nearly three inches long, green in color, with orange spots on his sides. "Oh, how lovely you are," cried the tiny mite, "I should like so much to be like you." "You will, some day," answered the large one. "What must I do to become like you; so beautiful and strong," said the little one in awe-stricken tones.

"Just grow," was the answer; "I, too, am growing; some day I hope to be like my parent."

"Who is your parent?"

"My parent is the same as yours; but we both must change our bodies and put on many new ones first."

"I do not understand."

Just then a splendid swallow-tail butterfly sailed past. "See," cried the big brother, "we may be like him if we grow."

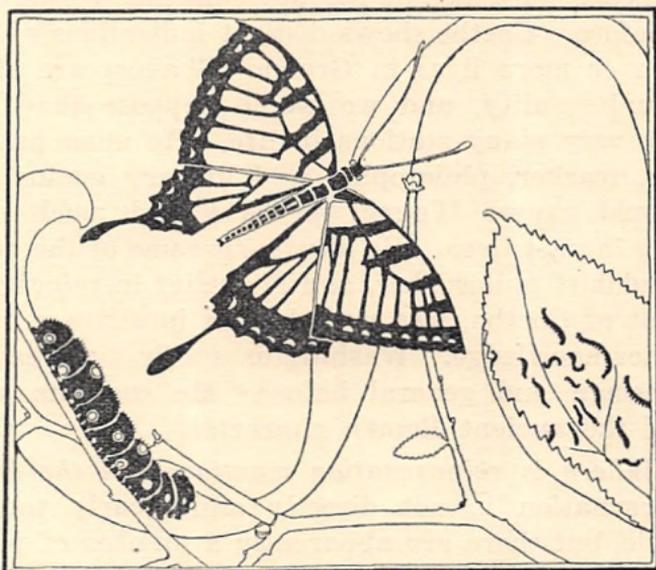
"How beautiful," they all cried; "can we indeed become like That?"

"After many changes," said the older caterpillar; "but grow all you can; just grow."

The small worms were filled with delight, and followed Nature's plan, and grew, and grew. But by the time they were grown as large as their older brother, he had changed his body, first he built himself a tomb; then he disappeared. Oh, how the little ones mourned! They thought that they would see him no more. "And he said that

he would grow like our parent. Do you think that *That* really is our parent, and that we shall be like him?," they asked one another.

Many days passed and there was sunshine and rain, and many changes in the weather. Then, one day when the sun broke through the clouds and his beneficent heat fell upon the tomb—lo! it opened, and from it emerged a radiant form—the caterpillars held their breath a moment. Then



one said: "Behold, he has come again in the image and likeness of our Father. He has changed indeed, and we too have changed; we are no more the tiny black threads we were when we first saw him. We may be like him if we do as he said—just grow, and grow."

Children, this story is for you; but perhaps some older ones may read it too. And remember to grow, to evolve,—for evolution is His plan. Therefore, let us grow till we become perfect, even as our Father in Heaven is perfect.

S. L. Allison.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

28) *How is genius developed?*

H. P.

Genius or talent is simply the result of concentrated, one-pointed efforts made perhaps in a large number of lives in the past. It is the reward of Nature for earnest striving and putting forth of energy in a definite direction.

29) *What were the past lives of such men as Goethe, Wagner, Shakespeare and Washington?*

H. P.

We do not have any information as to the actual past lives of these egos, but may be sure that Goethe and Shakespeare were men of literary eminence perhaps many times before. Goethe shows distinct indications of having had one or more lives in Greece. Shakespeare shows a great universality, and we would suppose that he has lived in very many stations in life. He must have been a ruler, teacher, philosopher and literary genius before. We would expect Wagner to have had much musical training in past lives. He shows out some of the qualities of a Buddhist philosopher, and his belief in reincarnation, like that of Goethe, was probably an intuitive recovering of former knowledge. Washington surely must have been a statesman and general before. He suggests a noble type of the ancient Roman character.

C. S.

30) *Where is reincarnation mentioned in the Bible?*

Reincarnation is not directly and clearly taught in the Bible, but there are apparently a number of passages which take it for granted, and the teaching seems to have been well known to the philosophers and churchmen of early Christianity. There are a number of books and pamphlets published, which discuss this question fairly thoroughly, and the evidence is quite strong.

In the 90-th Psalm it is said that "The days of our years are three-score years and ten." This means that "The years of our earth-lives are seventy."

The *Wisdom of Solomon*, 9:15, says: "For I was a witty child, and had a good spirit. Yea, rather, being good, I come into a body undefiled."

With the idea of reincarnation in mind, study the following passages in the Bible: Malachi 4:5, Matt. 11:11-14, 16:13-16, 17:10-13. Luke 9:18-20; Matt. 14:1-2, Mark 6:14-16, Luke 9:7-9; John 9:1-3.

31) *What do you think of Freud's theory of dreams?*

The Freudian theory has probably much of truth in it, but, like many other theories, it may easily overreach itself and attempt to be too inclusive and universal.

32) *Do souls return to earth immediately after death?*

No; the souls of men do not as a rule take re-birth immediately after death. The normal course of Nature is that the life of the man is first gradually withdrawn from his astral body, or emotional nature, and finally from the mental body, or concrete mind, into the real man, individuality or ego. These periods of after-death life depend chiefly upon the amount of experience gained in the earth-life and on the nature of the ego himself. For an ordinary civilised man a full life of seventy years might be followed by twenty or thirty years in the astral world and perhaps a thousand or fifteen hundred years in the mental world, or "heaven." Then the process of re-birth would take a short time only.

C. S.

33) *How would you explain apparitions and so-called ghosts?*

H. P.

Apparitions or ghosts may be the dead person himself in his etheric body or in his astral body when seen by psychic people, or people momentarily psychic. Sometimes they may be merely strongly materialised thought-forms of the man. The ghosts seen around grave-yards are usually the discarded and disintegrating etheric bodies of recently deceased persons. They are physical, but of very subtle matter, so that they are not visible to the ordinary range of vision of the physical eye, but only by an extension or increased sensitiveness of it.

C. S.

34) *What and where is the astral world?*

H. P.

The astral world is all about us. It interpenetrates all of this physical earth, and extends far beyond its atmosphere into space, filling a spherical space that reaches out to the distance of the moon. As astral matter is of an altogether different order of matter, very much more subtle than physical matter, it may occupy the same space with it. Our astral bodies similarly interpenetrate our physical bodies, and extend some eighteen inches out from the surface of the physical bodies, all around them.

FIELD NOTES

Denver Group reports that meetings were held every Monday from 2:30 to 4:00 p. m., in Room 3, Woman's Club Building. The following subjects were considered: "Heredity and Reincarnation," "Why Do We Not Remember Our Past Lives?," "Is It Just That A Man Should Suffer For What He Is Not Conscious Of Having Done?," and "How Man Grows Through His Reincarnations."

The average attendance at these meetings was twelve. The discussions showed how intensely the public is becoming interested, which is very encouraging.

Cleveland Group meets fortnightly at the homes of members and friends, and the subjects are discussed by some one member in a paper.

Two new Charters have been issued: Dallas, Texas, seven members; and Kansas City, Missouri, nine charter members. A number of certificates were also issued.

Illustrated lectures are given by members of Akbar Group on Sunday evenings at 8 o'clock in Room 706, Fine Arts Building, Chicago, Ill. Recent titles were: "Resurrection and Reincarnation," "Life, Death and Rebirth," "Our Co-operation with Evolution."

BOOK REVIEW

The Amulet: A Tale of the Orient is a peculiar book; the title proclaims it a tale but the story is so interwoven with an occult philosophy that that really becomes the dominant thread, while often both are broken off to give place for patterns of geography, history, travels, manners and customs. The prelude is set in ancient Babylon, where two lovers, learning from a wise man of inevitable separation in that life, but told to look forward to a happier future incarnation, prefer suicidal sleep to such a thwarting of their dreams. The story takes up the life foretold. One is a Russian, the other English. They are in India, but travel to Tibet, the land of mystery.

Many expositions of karma and reincarnation are given.

The author of *The Amulet* is Katherine Treat Blackledge and the publisher is Warren T. Potter, Los Angeles,

G. S. M.