

REINCARNATION

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THE WORLD'S NEW LIFE

Wars scourge humanity; they have origin in the errors of men, often wilfull, and wars are the karmic reactions of unworthy deeds. The gods let those errors of men find resolution in the sufferings of war.

But where wars are past and the effort of men has been worthy of their heroic origin and estate, then the gods give reward in surges of increased life. The Logos breathes by waves His forces into the world. The gods often dispense His force in vast rushes of power.

Now, for those nations that have acquitted themselves nobly and well, the life forces will flow mightily, and the works of civilization will be carried forward with a splendid swiftness.

What a complex plan is that which brings together great masses of karmically inter-related egos embodied so that they may by joint action harmoniously perform the huge tasks of Man successively, according to the Will of God! A mighty and a lofty force must be applied to maintain the harmony. It is comparatively rarely that we see the flowering of human effort. After war's agonies have been travaillingly borne, the bloom of human hope and striving often appears.

We stand before one of those epochs when under special guidance very favourable and potent discharges of force will carry forward most swiftly, in favored lands, the weaving of the design of God. The crudities of yesterday must be replaced by new refinements. Humanity deserves and will receive certain new ameliorations of its strivings, and new powers with which to perform its colossal tasks.

Great self-restraint must be practiced by all men—not to act wildly but temperately during this new probatory period.

W. V-H.



*OF REVERENCE TOWARD THE
SPIRITUALLY GREAT*

To know ever so little the spiritually Great is to revere Them. We see at once that They are nearer God than we. They stand between us and God and are mediators between Him and us. To revere Them is to revere God.

They are as brothers to us, for They feel always Their sonship, and ours, to God. And They know us always as younger brothers who need only to grow to become as They are.

A great spiritual writer and teacher has lately called attention to the idea, entirely valid, that our Logos is not only our Father but also would be as Brother to us. He wishes us to stand beside Him in consciousness as co-workers in the broader fields of endeavour that belong to the universe at large. The attitude of brotherhood that we may assume toward Him would aid us to accept responsibilities conceivably somewhat parallel with His, though, of course, infinitely lower in degree.

Once an occultist, now well-known, said, in illustration of his feeling for this comradeship and tolerance of the Logos, and not irreverently, that if he met that Being he would doff his hat and say, "How do you do?" And by this he meant to indicate that the Great Being would respect him and would give him the right to greet Him without cringing, as worthy, through the spark of His own divine life and being that He had given him.

Col. H. S. Olcott, one of the great leaders of a world-wide occult society, is said once to have addressed his own mighty spiritual teacher, an Adept of the Great White Lodge, as "Daddy!" But this was the utter antithesis of irreverence, thoughtlessness or even bad taste. The man was himself a heavy-bearded senior in everyday life, of much dignity of personality and place. But no doubt his heart was racked with his own feeling of regret that he could not be and do all that he wished for the cause of his Master. Swiftly must his thoughts have rushed over the possibilities of expression when he met and knew, in a flash, the mighty and wise Being of his dreams and would fittingly address Him. Father, demi-god, teacher, prince, saviour must have been inadequate as titles for his ideal visitant, even if he had had time to study such modes of address.

But, Oh! the infinite eloquence of his act and speech when he fell upon his knees and assumed the attitude in heart of his early boyhood; casting away all barriers of feeling and speech, confessing himself hopelessly inadequate of expression and but a child in such presence he greeted that Majesty with the familiar and accepted word of childhood days—"Daddy!" A whole world of self-abandonment was there! His heart must have beaten swiftly when he thought as he spoke, "Will He accept me in my confidence and abandonment of all pretence as a little, loving boy?" And I know that the Master understood and that His mighty warrior heart melted instantly toward this trustfulness, and that the chela, though advanced of years, assuming such humility and

offering such childish love and devotion, was taken to his Master's heart!

Some people think that Americans have no proper reverence for the great. Let us accept that as a fact. For we love the attitude of reverence, we rejoice in the contemplation of the Great, we find the strength of soul that the angels draw from the glances of God when we can gain eagle-courage to look into Their eyes! So, if we admit our defeat in adequacy of acts of reverence, we may look forward with joy to the myriad opportunities of future ages to contact Them and to pour forth our souls to Them, gladly letting grow on all occasions our feeling of reverence and worship, and forever hoping that our perpetual inadequacy may give us renewed privileges to try to make our acts of reverence and adoration equal the measure of our worship and aspiration!

Nirvana must have for its heart of life the choral worship of God by all His creatures. In Nirvana our worship shall be accepted as equal, worthy. National modes will be forgotten and all will be of one brotherhood.

W. Van Hook.



CONSTITUTION WEEK

The far-seeing friends of the American constitution have just concluded a special week's effort to rouse the people to the appreciation of our government's greatest single gift from Providence. Our constitution places certain limitations upon all the departments of government, and it is framed to prevent the tyranny of temporary majorities over the minorities that may represent the true view of the country's need.

A wave of socialistic laxity in thought and in morals lies over our country. There is a marked relaxation after the high idealism of the war-period. *Legion* members may well aid the great cause by stoutly resisting laxity, opposition to the Constitution and indifference to the high ideals of our country's life.

Here in America many strong souls are coming in to lend aid. The future of those who are being given incarnation among us must be assured by those who thoroughly oppose looseness and weakness in our moral attitude.

W. V-H.



THOUGHTS ON THE TEACHINGS OF THE
UPANISHADS AND THE BHAGAVAD-GITA

“Thou art That!” naturally unfolds itself into the statement that man’s birthright is absolute existence, knowledge and bliss.

The adumbration of this fact filtering down into consciousness gives shape to the three basic desires—as desire for continued existence, knowledge and happiness. All desires are reflections, phases, fragments or combinations of these three basic desires and have behind them the entire force of all human endeavor, the whole force of karma and must eventually draw the desirer and the desired together.

As vehicles of consciousness are evolved by the interaction of the without and the within and using vehicles already developed, the Self first identifies and then denies his identity with each in turn as he retreats ever inward, which explains the Buddhist doctrine of “No permanent ego.”

Subba Rao states that no consciousness that has the sense of ego can comprehend Parabrahm but shows the Logos to be the Ego of Egos within the cosmos and consistently makes Him under the influence of illusion as seeing Parabrahm as Mulaprakriti. Bhagavan Das gives Him a simultaneous dual consciousness affirming and denying His identity with His system simultaneously, which makes “Yes” the answer to little Johnnie’s question: “Can God turn a grindstone both ways at the same time?”

Briefly put, human evolution seems simple but in its practical working out requires how many millions of years! And why the involution that made this evolution inevitable?

It seems the Great Breath comes and goes and one breath makes the next necessary.

Elliot Holbrook.

RECOVERY AFTER KARMIC DISCHARGES

With almost exact regularity suffering occurs, for men, followed by relief from the agony and a renewed period of spiritual exaltation. The evolutional progress of the ego is closely related to the rapidity with which this cycle is lived through. And recovery from suffering is inseparable from a return to that condition in which new applications of karmic force can be applied and be endured.

The Master helps to diminish the force of the karmic discharge, strengthens the pupil to endure and gives aid to him in recovering his philosophic equilibrium.

So we should make it our positive business to put aside promptly the experience and the active memory of suffering. Thus we may lighten the burden of others and diminish the trouble we make for our Masters.

Devices of thought and small ingenious ways to diminish our consciousness of suffering or to rise to the realms above it we must not despise, but study and cherish.

W. V.-H.

THE CLIMAX OF THE LORD'S SONG

The divine heart overflows in the concluding words of this wonderful oriental poem. So full of art has been the work that the reading of it all consecutively fills one with enthusiasm and interest, not suggesting a task of deepest philosophic study. And at the last the joy of the supreme secret which The Lord has discovered and which He finds He may transmit to humanity floods the whole being of the Holy One.

All the schemes of progress toward God, of much complexity and difficulty to many men of certain types, presented in the body of the poem preceding, have their value for the earnest seeker and student of the Path. What joy, then, shines out in the final statement that Man reacheth perfection by each being intent on his own duty! The Lord of the Cultural System provides the supervision, the ordering, the coördination and the evaluation of men's labor together. They, like the cells and the organs of the human body, make up the wondrous organism when they functionate together as a whole. They then make Adam Cadmon, Man the Whole, Divine, the expression and reflection of our Logos in His offspring. Truly Man shall reach his perfection, His adeptship, by playing his part worthily amid his associative tasks of daily labour, felt to be the service of the Logos as Divine Builder. The Divine Singer hastens to make clear that it is by worshipping God through the performance of one's duty that man may reach the high initiation

which opens fully those labours that are distinctively of divinity.

To have reached the point where one is fit to become at one with the Eternal is to have attained perfection, to have overcome all that binds to the personality. Then the Man is fit to become the Eternal, to be at one with the Logos, to read His intent and to join consciously in the realization of His Plan.

The incomparable verses that tell of Man's mode of progress and the goal flow on to the words "he forthwith entereth into the Supreme," and then the Sage, still acting in the lower planes, may by the grace of God obtain the Eternal, indestructible abode. This dwelling-place, this the true House not made with hands, may be attained, made one's own. And, since it cannot be material, it must be the abiding-place, the support on all hands, of The Logos against every difficulty. And the abode is indeed eternal, in the Heavens.

The vision, the attainment of The Essence of Life in realization, make all the future of Divine association and bliss assured.

Nowhere else do we find the love of God for Man spoken of so forcefully. "Beloved art thou of Me; then by my Grace of paternal love, yielding to you the inmost secret, be thou my devotee, sacrifice to Me, prostrate thyself before Me. *Thou shalt come even unto Me!*"

And by what mysterious method is this accomplished? It is by no alien or remote process. The heart of every man needs but to open toward God the Father to make this possible. Even in

the midst of duties when troubles come Man may let them fall off and flee to God for shelter! "Sorrow not, I will liberate thee from all sins!"

A secret this! A secret of the divine Love! It is not to be told those who would be injured by the reaction of their own ravings. But the Man who, full of faith, merely heareth without reviling may reach the heaven worlds, having been relieved of karmic limitations.

Arjuna confesses his full satisfaction and freedom from delusion.

The final ecstasy of Sanjaya is the wonder of the poem! "I heard this marvelous dialogue of Vasudeva, of the great-souled Partha, causing my hair to stand on end!" Again and again the recalling of the dialogue causes Him to rejoice!

And well He may; for the final and wholly satisfying secret of all is the simple fact that God's love, God's Grace suffice to deliver Man from his low estate and sweep him upward to the Eternal Father.

W. V-H.

RECOGNISING THE LAW

It has been well said that the most important study of man is man himself. But that study would be difficult unless the man studies at the same time the great universal law of nature which is the expression of the way in which all changes in nature take place. So much of the man's personality belongs to the lower realms of nature and comes under the sway of the law of action and reaction, that the man could not go very far in his study of himself unless he also studied the law of nature, karma.

There is another very important reason why the study of karma is desirable. Were man to think only of himself he would quite naturally tend to become egotistical, over-conscious of himself and especially of his lower self, the personality. But the study of nature leads man to some extent to forget his little personality: he thinks of that which is not himself and finds it full of living interest and importance. Thus he is making the proper correction for the undesirable tendencies brought about by self-study.

When man considers himself frankly and honestly, he finds much reason to be dissatisfied. There is very much in his life and habits which is quite faulty and needs to be changed for the better. But he finds, fortunately, that his personality is a creature of the moment, easily guided into other ways. He finds it constantly changing, growing, developing. On the other hand nature presents herself to the eyes of his mind as something almost fixed and unchanging. Her superficial appearances are indeed in a state of constant flux or change, like the flow of a great stream, but if he looks a little deeper he easily finds the more permanent elements. These are the types or molds or plans of the Great Architect, according to which the visible forms in nature are built up. It is their reality and strength which brings about the relative permanence of the various species of life. These types, together with the "Will to Live" of the Supreme Life, maintain order in the world of living beings.

It is a strange thing that man, living in nature as he does, is so little aware of the greatness of the law of karma, or action! It must be that the

full realisation of the meaning of this law is as yet far away for men! Even students of life who have carefully studied the law for many years frequently engage in actions, feelings or thoughts which they themselves should know to be harmful or undesirable, at variance with the smoother flowings of human life. Thus it is a kind of ignorance that continually leads men to act in ways which inevitably bring about unpleasant results. Even those men who have realised something of the universal and inflexible workings of karma in physical matters, are often making use of their feelings and thoughts in ways which bring about injurious reactions upon themselves and those dear to them. It takes much more experience in life, that is, more lives on earth, for a man to learn the lesson of the law in the world of the unseen, than in the visible world.

Perhaps it would not be far from the truth to say that most men are as yet very ignorant of the law even in the physical world. They are continually grasping, or scheming to grasp, physical things, objects of desire. In its universal aspects the law of karma places no restrictions upon men as to what they may have, but it does require that at some time or other they must make the proper re-adjustments, so as to compensate nature for what has been taken or used. Also dealings with other human beings must be at some time balanced exactly and justly. Of course, each man has a large total amount of unexhausted karma, consisting of all the energies of nature which he has made use of in all his past lives and the past of his present life, and which energies have not yet been restored to the

normal condition out of which they were taken by the man. And this "individual karma," belonging to the man himself, because he has in a sense created it, may and does have a great deal to do in the way of limiting the man's success in obtaining the things he desires. But it is true that a strong desire, persistently held by the man, is a powerful force in nature which is almost sure to result in drawing to the man whatever he desires.

Now, the immediate result is the gaining of the thing desired. This fills the man with satisfaction, and his power of repeating the same process is increased. But there is the more hidden and remote fact that nature demands, exacts and finally obtains just and accurate compensations "for value received." Therefore, if the man, while he was succeeding in gratifying his desire, had not given adequate returns to all departments of nature concerned, if he had obtained anything from other men without full compensation, then he would at some time have to readjust all these disturbances of his own in the balance of the wealth of nature, either willingly or unwillingly, knowingly or unknowingly.

Now, if the law is difficult enough to recognise in the visible material processes and changes of nature, it is surely much more difficult when the changes of nature are unseen, as is the case with human feelings and thoughts. Even our most advanced students who have written on the workings of karma are apparently not yet in possession of the full details as to how the thousands of feelings are balanced which men hold about their fellow-men. The processes of re-adjustment to normal

conditions in the astral, or emotional, world must be complicated indeed, and it is known that they usually take longer periods of time to be completed than the physical processes or changes.

But while we may not know much about the details of the exact workings of karma in the astral realm of nature, we may confidently hold to the general principles of the law of karma, and with constant, persevering study we can learn a great deal about these workings of karma in the activities of feeling. We may make a study of our own feelings and of those which come upon us from the outside world, and sometimes our patience will be amply rewarded—as *must* happen, according to the law of karma—by our gaining an insight into the meaning of some of the feelings which may have come into our life quite against our will. Often we can observe how the feelings which react upon us are simply of the same kind as we ourselves have made use of in the past, and the reaping of our own sowing.

The law of karma is so universal and all-inclusive that those who study it in its workings are often lost in wonder and admiration. There is no caprice, no favoritism, no escape from its action. It seems mechanical but it applies to life itself. "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." The more we study, the clearer becomes the conviction that "Whatever is, is right." And this does not mean that we ought to be satisfied with whatever is to-day, for to-morrow, for we are capable in some measure of exerting free will, and can help to determine the "whatever is to be" for to-morrow.

C. S.

LETTER TO GERMAN GROUPS

The *Karma and Reincarnation Legion* has grown considerably since the new year began, both in membership and in the number of groups. Some groups are very active, others could be more energetic in holding meetings, and there are some members who are inactive.

Now, it is not the important thing to say, "I favor the teachings of karma and reincarnation, and am quite conversant with them, therefore I am joining the *Legion*." What is wanted is rather that the teachings be carefully studied so that one may pass the knowledge on to others. And this can best be done if those interested come together in small groups for study, where every one can speak, thus offering opportunity to throw light on problems from many directions and to resolve doubts, much more easily than when one works alone at home. By studying together and exchanging views one may improve himself in logical thinking and speaking and thus become fit to give lectures.

The founding of groups for study is not a scattering of forces but a releasing of the forces of many for this special purpose, in small, congenial circles, which again redounds to the benefit of all.

During my travels last winter, going backward in time, I was in Elbing and lectured there on "Karma and Reincarnation in the Life of the Individual and of the Nation." Lectures were given on the same subject in Königsberg to the Lodge of the Holy Grail and in Tilsit to a public audience. Groups were formed in Saalfeld, East Prussia, and in Wehlau. In Löwenberg, Silesia, where I remained for a long time, the members were the most energetic. We met every week under the leadership of Herr Josef Effenberger; there were always talks followed by animated discussions and many questions. The leader gave frequent readings, finally on the subject of life after death. It was his own swan song, for he passed on to that life soon after. All had loved him very much,—he was a true and earnest believer in the teachings of karma and reincarnation. Death was for him nothing to fear, as his wife told us, and she and all of us had a practical experience of what these teachings mean.

Karma and reincarnation are teachings which become for him who has gained a little understanding of them, an ever brighter guide upon the pathway of life and in all conditions of life. They bestow a joyful peace and power; they are as a pole-star seen from the flood of phenomena. Our own imperfection itself must make them clear to us. It is written, as you all know, in the New Testament, "Ye shall be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect." Now, who among us is even approximately near to this high goal? And yet it is the goal that has been set for us. Many Christians explain this command by saying that this perfection is reached after death in the bliss of eternity, upon another star and in a spiritual body. But could this command have such a meaning, considering that it was given to us upon this earth, if it were to be realised under conditions and states different from those on earth? A command given for this earth must also have the possibility of fulfillment on this earth. If it seems to us unrealisable and will remain for a long time unrealisable, it is nevertheless a divine command, given in order that it may sometime be fulfilled, given in order that we may even now use every moment of time to prepare for it, and not postpone anything to a beyond, which would be an easy and convenient consolation. The command, however, is not to be a convenient consolation, but a goal always before us, which is to be and can be realised. While this is to be our final goal, there is yet another goal and command, formulated in practical words, but which was unquestionably given for *this* world, and it is this, "Love your enemies; bless those who curse you."

How, now, are we to fulfill this command, given clearly and as it were to every man personally? How difficult, how almost impossible it is to obey this command! We know to what extent we fail in this respect, in private life as well as national life. Yet the command was given to be fulfilled upon earth, for it cannot refer to a spiritual or heavenly state, since there are no enemies there, or those who curse us. The command is to be fulfilled on earth and that can hardly be done unless we return again and again to earth, where we transgressed the law or were not ready to accept it, until we shall have learned

to apply it to our enemies and persecutors. For even according to the orthodox teaching of the Church hardly any one would hope to reach heaven with this command unfulfilled, and would thus have to suffer eternal pain in hell. Viewed in this light a heaven which can be gained through grace and by faith would probably be unthinkable even for our human conceptions of love and justice. Therefore the logical conclusion is surely justified that it is necessary for us to return to earth in other bodies under corresponding conditions, in order to meet again our enemies and those who oppress us, until we and they shall have learned and know how to apply the command. In the night which we call death, in that higher consciousness, however, we are alive and awake, and we view with heightened insight the causes and effects of our past actions on earth, meditate on them, learn from them and draw conclusions from them, in order that we may put our gain in clear vision into application and use, after we have returned again to earth life. That is the cycle of life, death and rebirth, which repeats itself until the law is fulfilled. What we have begun here in one life-time we must continue. Or should everything remain fragmentary and incomplete for the individual soul? That would in very truth mean that the life of the individual and of all creatures would be the toys of fate. That could not be the meaning of existence.

Let us assume, however, that there is in all and in every one a single spirit or life which permeates all matter in all of its separated, manifold parts and that it pours itself out as it were into these parts in order to overcome them, that is to refine and ennoble them and shape them to ever purer manifestation of the one Spirit, God. In other words life is the way of the outgoing and returning of the One Divine Life, unconscious from the atom (beginning in the atom in material manifestation) to a perfect, divine being, self-conscious, endowed with the knowledge and experience gained on the long journey in order finally to feel itself in spirit and in truth at-one with the One Life, in the All-One.

Johanna Luise Guttmann.

Düsseldorf, Germany. Königsplatz 21.

EUROPEAN TOUR OF THE SECRETARY

(Concluded from page 348)

[The Secretary visits the country retreat of the well-known Buddhist scholar and author, Dr. Georg Grimm, at Neubiberg, near Munich, with Dr. Seidenstücker.] Here he has a small house; near by is a little room for meditation and study. In the grounds is a little shrine with a figure of the Lord Buddha. It rained, and the party went into the house, to converse, while partaking of a picnic lunch. Dr. Grimm holds that the Buddhist scriptures teach that men are rarely reborn as men, and thinks that they are much more frequently reborn as animals. This problem is of extreme importance to students of reincarnation, and the solution may probably be found in the fact that the Buddhist scriptures speak of changes of state as "reincarnations." Thus when a man dies he is said to be immediately reborn in one or other of five realms or "worlds" (of consciousness), one of which is the animal world. It is in fact held by many students of reincarnation that for a man to be, after death, at once reborn as a man is a rare occurrence, as there are other states to be first passed through before another human incarnation is again reached. In this sense of the word Madame H. P. Blavatsky taught in *Isis Unveiled* that "reincarnation" of a man as a human being was very rare. The Secretary tried to point out to Dr. Grimm that for a man to become an animal would be unreasonable in the light of evolution, but he would not admit the logic of the argument. Dr. Seidenstücker, the younger of the two Buddhists, kindly took the visitor to the adjacent home and headquarters of Herr Oskar Schloss, who has been for some years engaged in publishing many books and some magazines on Buddhism in the German language. Unfortunately he was absent; some information was kindly given by a young lady in the office. Then Dr. Seidenstücker walked with the visitor to the railway station and bade him farewell as he had to return to Munich. Herr Kühlechner met the Secretary and took him to a photographic gallery, which had been engaged, where in the evening a meeting was

held with Herr Rösch, who had also been at Weimar, and nine of his friends. The talk was well received and it was decided that a *Legion* Group should be formed. Nine applications were signed. Herr Rösch walked home with the visitor, and there was interesting conversation.

On Thursday the Secretary, parting from his kind host, took an early train south, and again admired the Bavarian country. The course was up-hill; at Immenstadt high mountains were near by. From this point the journey was through mountainous country. Lindau, on beautiful Lake Constance, was reached at noon. Here the boat "Bavaria" was boarded, which started across the lake to Switzerland. It was an ideal trip: the sunshine was rich and warm; the breeze, cool and refreshing; the water, a fairy-like grey-blue, such as Corot painted it. Peace hung over the lake, separating feverish Germany from calm Switzerland. The landing was made soon at Romanshorn; where a train was taken, to Zurich, leaving in an hour. The country is rolling and hilly. Farmers were haying. There were many fine fruit orchards and the country looks prosperous. Zurich was reached soon. The traveler stayed over night and next day at Pension Wehrle, in order to meet Mr. C. T. Strauss, a prominent Buddhist, who arrived the next evening from Germany. He has a large list of Buddhist correspondents in other countries. Near midnight a train for Geneva was taken.

Saturday, August 25, the traveler woke up early and saw the beautiful Lake Geneva close by. Lausanne was reached, and then Geneva at about 8 a.m. A very pleasant visit was paid to Monsieur Quartier-la-Tente, the Grand Chancellor of the International Masonic Association, who is doing splendid work. Another visit was made at the office of the Federation Abolitioniste, a society working for the complete abolition of prostitution. In order to see more of the Swiss scenery the Secretary decided to take a slow train to Italy, rather than wait for the Paris Express until evening. Wonderful views were had of the mountains, getting steeper and steeper as the train sped on; the lower slopes were fairly covered with vineyards. As it grew dark the long Simplon tunnel was traversed on an electric train to Domodossala in Italy. After a delay of a few hours the Paris Express arrived, and

was boarded, a ticket having been bought to Venice.

Sunday, August 26, stops were made at Arona and at Milan. Northern Italy is like an orchard or field laid out in many sections. Corn was getting hard; and vineyards with black or green bunches of grapes were a common sight. After passing Br scia there is a very wonderful lake, called di Garda, lying between the outlying Alps and the highlands below: the water is of an exquisite clear blue. Almost all the way to Venice the dark blue southern Alps were seen to the north, seemingly standing straight up from the level country,—a most inspiring sight! Finally the train ran over a long bridge and stopped at the station of Venice at about 11:30 a.m. A gondola took the traveler and his baggage to Pension Visentini, near San Marco. Most of Sunday afternoon was spent in or near this marvelous church. It is not large, but the endless variety and exquisite grace of its interior architecture and sculpture fairly enthralls the aesthetic sense. In the late afternoon a public service was held and many Venetians crowded in. There was much impressive chanting, calling upon the Mother, queen of heaven, by many names, with the prayer, "Ora pro nobis." Outside, in and around the plaza, thousands promenaded.

On Monday a visit was made to the beautiful church of Santa Maria della Salute, which, though quite near, just across the Grand Canal, had to be reached by a circuitous route, leading over the Iron Bridge. Sra. Fanny Michelin, a *Legion* member, was visited in her shop near San Marco. The day was spent in seeing the art treasures of Venice: first those in the Ducal Palace, a magnificent structure, telling of the time when Venice was in her glory and prosperity. In the afternoon a visit was made to the Academy of Arts, possessing several fine Veroneses; and then, after a longer walk, the Church of San Sebastian was entered, the kindly sacristan explaining in French the wonderful paintings, nearly all by Veronese. The tombs of the two brothers Veronese were indicated by brass slabs on the floor. Late in the evening a gondola was taken to the railway station, where a train for Florence was boarded.

No friends were met in Florence; a day was spent in visiting the Duomo, the Uffizi and Pitti Palace art gal-

leries, and then the night train was taken for Rome.

On August 29, early, the "Eternal City" was entered. A young friend, Signor De Vincentiis, met in Vienna, was found, and under his kindly guidance a visit was made to St. Peter's and other points. A charming hour or two were spent in conversation with Dr. Carlo Formichi, professor of Sanskrit at the University of Rome, and one of the leading Buddhist scholars in Italy. He told of a very interesting philosophical conference held some time before, in which he had championed Buddhism, the result being that public attention was strongly drawn to that religion. There are, however, very few actual followers of Buddhism in Italy. Dr. Formichi spoke very highly of Dr. Tucci, a former pupil of his, who is like himself an ardent worker and writer for the cause of Buddhism. Dr. Formichi speaks good English, as does his good sister; both are now members of the *Legion*. The professor greatly admires the work of Dr. Dahlke, of Berlin, whom he styles the St. Paul of Buddhism. Dr. Tucci was not found at his office. In the evening the visitor was taken by Signor De Vincentiis to the home of a friend where he met Signor Meloni, a very devoted theosophical leader in Rome, and Signor Francavilla, the party conversing in French. Signor Meloni asked keen questions about the *Legion* work. After a very fraternal farewell the Secretary boarded the night train to Naples.

Thursday, August 30, the Secretary woke at 5 a.m. The train was passing through low, flat country with luxurious vegetation. Heavy grapevines hung from ropes stretched between trees. All at once a view of Mt. Vesuvius was had, with its uprising cloud of smoke. At 6:44 the train arrived at Naples. Much of the day was occupied with the formalities of getting safely installed with baggage in a cabin on the "Conte Verde." A pleasant visit was made to Prof. Di Fabio, head of Co-Masonry in Italy, where several friends were met. Late in the evening the ship put out to sea, and the lights of Napoli and Vesuvius gradually faded out of sight.

After a fair voyage New York was reached on early Sunday morning, September 9, and two days later the traveler was again in Chicago, after an absence of 106 days. All was found in order.

C. S.

BUDDHISM IN CHINA

In the Oriental Book-List for April, 1924, of the publishing house of Otto Harrassowitz, Leipzig, appears an article by Dr. Eduard Erkes, under the title "The Rôle of Buddhism in Chinese Spiritual History." It is very valuable and an abstract will be given:

Of all religious systems which were taken into China, such as Hebraism, Christianity in various forms, Iranism, Manichaeism, Islam and Buddhism, the last-named alone has influenced Chinese thought and even made itself at home. China to-day appears to be a Buddhist country, and its spiritual development in the last two thousand years has been vitally influenced by Buddhism.

Buddhism represents the only great culture, the Indo-Iranian, which has so far penetrated into China. It is from India that various branches of Chinese culture,—philosophy, religion, art, music, the healing art and astronomy,—were deeply affected, even as early as four centuries B. C. It is possible that Lao-Tse, of the sixth century B. C., was already conversant with Indian and Persian thought.

Taoist writers since the fourth century B. C., such as Lieh-Tse, Chuang-Tse, and others, were familiar with the teachings of the Indian Sankhya-Yoga, such as yoga practices, reincarnation and the cycle of life. The introduction of foreign ideas was facilitated by the internal unrest in China, as the feudal system decayed, while the peasants were oppressed, economic stability uprooted, the social order dissolved and morality weakened.

The first appearance of Buddhism in China was certainly as early as 217 B. C., when Buddhist teachers arrived. It was the period when the Emperor Shi-huang-ti of the Ts'in Dynasty (246-206 B. C.) overthrew the feudal lords and established private ownership of land. This caused a great expansion of Chinese national life, with increased foreign commerce.

In the year 61 A. D., the Emperor Han Ming-ti was referred in a dream to the Lord Buddha. He sent an embassy to India which returned in 67 A. D., accompanied by Buddhist disciples. This was the first great official recognition of Buddhism in China.

Although the feudal system was gone, there continued for many centuries the struggle for land, until the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, when large estates were finally parceled out among tenants. This long period, with its exaggerated feeling of the pain of existence, greatly favored the Buddhist cause, and gave it its tendencies throughout the mediaeval times.

Buddhist monks translated their scriptures into the Chinese language, and made themselves useful in practical ways. The drinking of tea was introduced in the fourth century A. D., by Buddhist monks, who had been using it to keep awake during their long exercises at night.

Buddhism found especial favor in southern China, where Taoism was strong, to which it closely allied itself. Technical terms were borrowed from Taoism in order to express Buddhist ideas. Old Chinese gods and goddesses were probably re-clothed in Buddhist forms. The Taoists themselves explained the Lord Buddha as an incarnation of Lao-Tse. The very much revered and popular Buddhist Chinese goddess of mercy, Kwan-Yin, seems to be a personification of an aspect of the Tao principle.

With Buddhism there poured into China vast streams of Indian and Greek art. Even to-day China possesses the most beautiful Buddhist temples of the whole world.

Ancient Chinese religion seems to have been mainly concerned with the worship of ancestors. Teachings of future life were rare. In the elegies of Ch'u, about 300 B. C., heaven and hell are described, but with no idea of retribution. The Buddhist teachings of reincarnation easily gained popular favor. The ethical values of karma and reincarnation were understood and accepted very generally among the masses. On the other hand Confucius has remained the master teacher of practical virtue. Public and private benevolence was of very ancient standing in China. Even kindness to animals is an old Chinese virtue.

Such Buddhist teachings as individual efforts for salvation (liberation) and the ascetic life, with its celibacy, found themselves in sharp conflict with the Chinese national ethics, in which the family was always regarded as the unit of social structure, and not the individual.

To Chinese thought the overcoming of social imperfections always appealed more than fleeing from the life of the world. Politics was the field of Chinese efforts for salvation, rather than religion. It was only in 335 A. D. that it was officially permitted for native Chinese to enter the life of the Buddhist monasteries.

The organisation of the Buddhist priestly hierarchy was a mighty factor for the success of Buddhism in China. Priestcraft was indeed known in China, in its shamans, but they had no organisation and had remained relatively uninfluential. The Buddhist hierarchy was closely associated with popular Taoism and its priests. Both religions served the oppressed, suffering masses whose political struggles were often carried on under the cloak of religion. Monasteries became centers of activity for numerous secret societies, and were often visited by reprisals on the part of the government. But Buddhism was not only in popular favor among the masses; it was cultivated by the upper classes and enjoyed the moral and financial support of the imperial court.

Since the Han Dynasty (206 B. C. to 220 A. D.) Chinese literature was strongly influenced by Buddhism, whose ideas, forms and legends gained wide currency. Chinese philology was decidedly enriched and improved by Buddhist innovations. The methods of transcribing Sanskrit into Chinese was due to Buddhists, and later the Korean alphabet was invented by a Buddhist monk.

Chinese architecture owes much to Buddhist genius: there are the triumphal arches, Pai-lou, and the pagodas, which serve as memorials to the dead and as protection against evil influences. These pagodas are very frequent; they represent in their construction the Buddhist idea of the structure of the universe. The plastic arts flourished especially in the time of the Wei (380-580 A. D.) who were Tungus and much more receptive to Buddhism than the somewhat skeptical Chinese population. In this period and in the following T'and Dynasty (617-907 A. D.) were produced the best examples of plastic art not only for China but for the whole world. Buddhist art at first worked strongly in Indian ways, but soon developed a characteristic Chinese style whose productions far

excelled those of Indian and Central Asian Buddhism.

The transference of the Buddhist patriarchate from India to China, where it remained from 526 to 717 A.D., showed how well Buddhism had found for itself a home in China. The period of the T'ang Dynasty marks the high point of Buddhism, but also the beginning of its retrogression. While the Chinese Empire was a great world-power, the internal conditions were ruinous, and tens of thousands of peasants whose lot had become unbearable streamed into the Buddhist monasteries, which thus deprived the empire of productive labor and became centers of political plottings. Many people entered the monasteries who were unfitted for the celibate life and caused disturbances. For these reasons the government made Buddhism the scape-goat for some of its difficulties and there were numerous persecutions. After the ninth century A. D. several expulsions of masses of Buddhists took place, together with the closing of monasteries. At one of these persecutions 260,000 churchmen were forced to return to the worldly life.

As it became clear that Buddhism and Taoism could not solve the social and economic evils, as the masses had hoped, these religions lost ground to Confucianism.

In the twelfth century Buddhism and Taoism regained some of these losses. But about this time was carried out the drastic measure of destroying large landed estates and distributing them among the masses, which amounted to a social leveling. China, united materially and spiritually, found in the Neo-Confucianism of Chu Hi its national religion, with its organisation borrowed from Buddhist forms.

The Mongolian Yüan Dynasty (1280-1368) officially announced itself as Buddhist, mainly from political motives, such as the control of Tibet. Since that time Tibetan Buddhism, Lamaism, has found a home in China.

Since the time of the Yüan Dynasty Buddhism was no longer accepted by the cultured classes, but among the masses it did not lose favor so rapidly, and even experienced revivals during times of national distress.

Only in very recent times there has begun a thoroughgoing regeneration of Chinese Buddhism, which is most intimately connected with the entrance of China into

ernational relations, resulting from the "open door." This latter has caused a great industrialising of China and has produced a mighty proletariat of labor, which does not know the contented life of Chinese peasantry, but vegetates under most unhappy conditions. At the same time there has arisen a motley class of intellectuals which no longer limits itself to Confucianism. Thus the times favor the return of transcendental religion and philosophy into the foreground. And thus Buddhism has to-day the prospect of again playing a leading rôle in Chinese life, and indeed has its propaganda and literary activities, which have been aided for various reasons by Japan, the spiritual center of modern Buddhism. In any case Buddhism, which is very closely interwoven with the Chinese spiritual life, but has on the other hand many points of contact with Western thought, enjoys greater possibilities in China than other, foreign religions whose teachings harmonise neither with Chinese nor with modern European thought. But it will never be able to replace Confucianism, which will in the future, as in the past, remain the spiritual backbone of the Chinese nation.

Abstract by C. S.

Buddhists of Japan, China, Ceylon, Burma, Korea and Tibet could come to the rescue of the sixty millions of untouchables in India and make them join the Buddhist brotherhood. This would be a grand achievement. The Dharma recognizes no caste and wealth except moral character. Japanese Buddhists can do a great civilizing work in India by bringing the Dhamma back to India after an absence of nearly one thousand years.

There are nearly a hundred Christian Colleges established in various parts of India by the British and American missionaries with the help of the contributions of the rich and poor Christians of England and the United States. The greatest of all gifts is to give the Dhamma to the non-Buddhists. Will not the Buddhists of Asia come forward with their pennies to re-establish Buddhism in the land of the Buddhas? Japanese, Chinese, Koreans, Siamese, Tibetans, Sinhalese, Burmese wake up and send Bhikkhus to India to preach the Good Law!

From the August "Maha-Bodhi."

WHAT WE MAY DO IN THE LEGION WORK

Those who join the *Karma and Reincarnation Legion* do so undoubtedly because they are in sympathy with the object of the *Legion: To popularize the teachings of karma and reincarnation.*

Now that the time has arrived in the world's life when humanity as a whole should grasp and accept the teachings of karma and reincarnation, what greater privilege could one ask than to help in the work of spreading the teachings. For those who earnestly desire to serve, and are seeking their niche in service, what more is needed to spur them on than the knowledge that the time has come for certain things to be done, and if they wish they may have their part in helping to do this work.

There are, of course, many ways in which the object of the *Legion* can be carried out. There is first the organization of groups to study the laws of karma and rebirth.

Then there is the putting before the public writings dealing with the subject of the two laws. If one has sufficient influence with any newspaper or periodical to have articles dealing with the subject of karma and reincarnation, published in it, this affords one of the largest channels for reaching the public.

One should seek out his favorite way of aiding in the work, and then push at it as hard as he can. The little magazine that is published by the *Legion* should be put on the reading tables in public libraries. For five dollars the magazine could be sent to ten public libraries for six successive issues. Of course it would be well to ascertain beforehand whether the libraries would accept the subscriptions. Then if one were willing to hazard a small amount he could probably have the magazine put on sale at book-stands,—that is he could purchase the magazines (at a reduced rate) from the *Legion*, arrange with the booksellers to put them on sale at their stands, and at the end of the month what copies had not been sold he could send to prisons, hospitals or other places where people are confined for one reason or another.

Of course if one had the ability in the line of writing of scenarios that would be accepted by a producer, he could do invaluable work for the *Legion*, for of all the

channels available at the present time, the moving picture offers, to the writer's mind, the greatest possibilities for reaching for the first time possibly the largest number of people in the presentation of the teachings of karma and reincarnation. But in order to have a scenario of this kind accepted and put into a picture, the plot or story would have to be cleverly written and make a strong appeal both to the emotions and intelligence of the average movie picture goer. If something of this kind could be produced upon a very large and magnificent scale, as were the pictures 'Robin Hood,' 'The Covered Wagon' and 'The Hunchback of Notre Dame,' the effect upon the audiences would be correspondingly great.

What is needed, of course, is some good writers dealing with the subject, and for that reason it would be well for members of the *Legion* to try their hands at writing on this line, and—who knows?—if the effort is made, more than one may discover he has literary powers that he never dreamed of possessing.

Frances Patrick.

FIELD NOTES

Mr. C. E. Nelson, Johannesburg, who was the second Representative of the *Legion* for South Africa, writes:

I thank Dr. Van Hook for acting on my suggestion and appointing Mr. Henry Silburn as Representative for South Africa. I have personally handed to him the Authorisation which he was very pleased to receive. He has already arranged for one or two lectures in a public place on "Karma and Reincarnation."

I think our message is spreading through South Africa, and my reason for thinking so is that years ago when I used to speak of these things, especially of reincarnation, I was looked at somewhat strangely as though I were speaking of something of which my hearers had never heard or which they thought the dream of a madman; now there is no ridicule and when the subject is mentioned questions are asked and information sought. This is a good sign and though it may not mean that the majority are accepting the principles yet they are

enquiring and thinking and that of course means that in the end they will be convinced of the truth.

Sr. Emilio Traverso, of Lima, Peru, has been appointed *Legion* Representative in his country; the membership has been increased to 59 and there are two groups.

Mr. Jacques Bienfait, a *Legion* member of Amsterdam, Holland, who has been at the University of Wisconsin, and has recently returned home, writes that the *Legion* work in Holland is continuing strongly. The magazine of the Dutch *Legion* is appearing regularly once in two months. A new set of literature is to be printed and methods of distributing it have already been arranged.

He writes that it is not always easy to find group-leaders who are always active. This is especially true because the *Legion* work requires a certain indifference as to immediate results, which must, however, not be allowed to lead to inaction. Mr. Bienfait humorously remarks: "But if this work did not have its special difficulties, what would be the fun of it?"

Italy continues to do good work. At the annual convention of the Theosophical Society in Italy the *Legion* work was reported and noted with approval. There was held a meeting of the various group leaders and problems relating to the work were discussed.

Through the efforts of Mlle Marguerite Kamensky the number of *Legion* members in Florence has been increased to 42, of which only three are not Italians. It is expected that in the coming winter the group in Florence will do very excellent work.

Austria has increased her membership to 160. In Vienna there have been given monthly lectures on the subjects of karma and reincarnation by Herr Karl Riedel, Representative of the Austrian *Legion*. These have been uniformly successful and have served to bring in a considerable number of applications for membership.

The membership of the German *Legion* has reached over three hundred. Frl. Guttman, the Representative, visited the mining town of Dinslaken-Lohberg and gave lectures. Twenty-four applications resulted. The plan of

work that was adopted here is very commendable: There are to be a number of small groups, rather than one or two large ones. In this way more opportunities will be offered to contact the public and reach more who may be introduced to some knowledge of karma and reincarnation. A local secretary reports for all the groups to the Representative. At stated intervals the leaders of the different groups meet in order to exchange information and study ways to make the general work more effective. Several groups are already chartered.

Dr. Zoltán Ráth is *Legion* Representative in Hungary.

Sr. Domingo Pita is Representative in Argentina.

Those interested in German books on Buddhism are invited to correspond with *Legion* headquarters.

THE CONFERENCE OF LIVING RELIGIONS WITHIN THE BRITISH EMPIRE

At the Conference of Living Religions Within the British Empire, held in London, September 22 to October 3, it is probable that the Muslims maintained, what was stated in the October *Islamic Review*, that the Qu'ran is the sole exception in all sacred literature to the sweeping judgment of scientific research, which has impeached the authenticity of almost all revealed books, and that "It has remained proof against all corruption and interpolation. It keeps to-day its original purity, and has reached us in the same accents and stresses in which it was given to the Arabs at its revelation."

WORLD TOUR OF MISS GRAY

Miss Edith C. Gray sailed for Asia on August 28, to visit Japan, the Philippine Islands, China, India, Egypt, Turkey, Italy and other European countries. The tour will take about a year.

Miss Gray will meet audiences and individuals in the interests of the *Karma and Reincarnation Legion*, the Women's Protective Legion, and the Friends of Buddhism.

In Honolulu some workers were found, and a cablegram announces that Miss Gray has reached Japan.

FOR FRIENDSHIP: FRANCE-BELGIUM-GERMANY

There has been published the first issue of a German publication of 16 pages, *Die Botschaft des Friedens*, by the German division of the Theosophical League for the Rapprochement of France, Germany and Belgium. The secretary and editor is Herr Alfred Heidrich, Laubanerstrasse 269, Löwenberg, Silesia, Germany.

This work is important and praiseworthy in the highest degree, and any one able to read German will do well to send a dollar bill to Herr Heidrich for a subscription. The publication is to appear monthly.

This League was formed at the European Theosophical Congress in Vienna last year, and a number of lodges in the three countries named are in friendly relations.

BOOK REVIEW

The Reign of Law, by C. Jinarajadasa; Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras, India. Price: fifty cents, paper binding.

Under this title the author presents readers of Europe and America the most sympathetic and intelligent brief statement of Buddhism that we have encountered. Himself a Buddhist, the author understands the spirit and intent of the religion and vividly transmits his feeling to his readers.

The most striking and convincing paragraphs are those in which, with the enthusiasm of life-long experience, he describes the religious observance of the full-moon days in Ceylon. With a happy abundance of detail he makes clear to us the activities that include visits to the temple, sacrificial flower offerings to the Lord Buddha and the ceremony of listening to the exposition of doctrine by the priest. The joy and the satisfaction of the day we cannot help sharing. The contrast with the lugubrious observances of some other religious orders is pronounced indeed.

Every student of the Wisdom should have clear-cut ideas of the Buddhist religion and its effects upon the people who seek God through it. And here we have, in easily attainable form, a brief and accurate account of it.

Weller Van Hook.