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INCARNATION AND REINCARNATION.

In existence a higher kingdom than the preceding one depends upon a plus; upon more of the Soul than has been afforded incarnation by preceding species; upon a partial incarnation followed by a less limited; this greater incarnation by one still less limited, till the plus upon plus brings the species in which the whole Soul can be incarnated. Here we see Nature's order; the impersonal order compelled by the nature of the Absolute, the governing principle; and law and order are inseparable.

If a higher species than the human is possible, then the human species is not the highest attainable, and it must be followed by another; for the principle of continuity compels that the process of manifestation move on to completion. The Soul is eternal, its incarnation in varying grades of existence a necessity; its moving *through* existence is the manifestation that belongs to the whole. What, then, is immortality?

"This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God."

The Soul, by virtue of its nature and origin is eternal, but can any existing species be eternal? If so, how? Discrimination must be made between the Soul and a soul, for these and kindred questions to be answered. The words of the quotation given are addressed to human beings, as we call ourselves, to an existing species that includes all of the Soul previously incarnated. It indicates a possibility not pertaining to preceding species, that of knowing "the only true God," a knowing that comes only as lesser species followed by higher bring the one capable of it.

Is it not one thing to be, and quite another to *know* that you are? Is it not the difference between the eternal thing in itself, and the subsequently attained consciousness of it?

Though Man, the genus, with inherent Soul, be the eternal thing in itself, must there not be passage to knowing that it is, why it is, what it is, all that it is? Though subsistent Soul be eternal and merely passing *through* existence, the *eternal existence of any species* through which the eternal Soul passes de-

pend upon its recognition of the Soul, and the attachment to it that will enable the species to move along with it, instead of being left behind as the Soul moves forward.

Here we must look carefully to see the difference between the whole that is eternal and the part that is temporal, or that has beginning and ending. The mineral kingdom contains many kinds or varieties, no one of them exceeding the limitations of that kingdom, any and all of them revealing the possibilities of that kingdom. These kinds compared with each other may be good, better, best. No one of them can be the best according to the higher standard of comparison, the genus or being itself. The limitations of the mineral kingdom forbid this best. Its own best is the highest kind that kingdom can afford.

The Soul must be reincarnated because of the limitations of this kingdom, notwithstanding the variety it offers. Incarnation in the mineral kingdom, therefore, is insufficient. Though an eternal natural fact, as compelled by law, it is but a temporal fact as compelled by the great purpose that is being wrought out. The Soul moves *through* the mineral kingdom and is incarnated in the vegetable kingdom. This kingdom contains many kinds or varieties. As compared with each other they may be good, better, and best, and yet they are all on a level as belonging to the same kingdom. More of the Soul is incarnate in this kingdom than in the preceding kingdom. Any one kind in this kingdom affords as much manifestation of the Soul as the limitations of the kingdom itself permit, no more, though it may offer more than another kind in the same kingdom.

If the limitations of this kingdom are insufficient for the incarnation and manifestation of the whole Soul, it must move on. Moving through the vegetable kingdom it moves into the animal kingdom, which, in turn, presents its kinds or varieties, each of which is vivified by the Soul, more of it being afforded manifestation than could appear in the preceding kingdoms. These, too, are good, better, and best as compared with each other, and none of them is the best, as compared with the genus, Man. The whole Soul, the full recognition of Being, does not appear with any kind of this kingdom. Each kind is limited by its relation to the kingdom that is itself limited because it does not afford complete incarnation for the Soul.

No kind, so far, *can lift itself out of its natural limitation, join itself consciously to the Soul that is moving through all kingdoms, and move out of its own natural kingdom into a higher one by its own act.*

Any and every kind that cannot do this must be left behind by the Soul as it moves on to higher incarnation. Consequently the mineral, the vegetable, and the animal kingdom are temporary, or are left behind by the Soul that moves through them, and a new kingdom appears that must contain, not only as much

of the Soul as has been incarnate in the preceding kingdoms, but more. And according to the principle of continuity we find the human kingdom following upon its predecessors.

Each kingdom, in its order, is less limited than its predecessor, more of the Soul is incarnate in it. Will the human kingdom afford incarnation for the whole Soul? If it is too limited, it must be followed by another kingdom, for the great impersonal purpose will be fulfilled.

The Soul, moving on to complete incarnation and manifestation, must leave behind the several approaches to this completeness. It follows that only the species capable of recognizing the Soul that is being incarnated, capable of distinguishing between it and its temporal and limited incarnations, capable of conceiving of a *higher than its own natural* incarnation, can add its own intentional impulse to the greater impulse that is pushing the Soul to full manifestation.

The Soul is eternal, but a soul, within its natural limitations, is temporal; remains temporal unless it moves with the Soul to the point of permanency.

Is the mineral conscious of its Soul? Can it see, understand, and move with the Soul out of its natural limitations, volitionally? Is the vegetable conscious of its Soul? Can it see, understand, and move with the Soul out of its natural limitations, volitionally? Is the animal conscious of its Soul? It is the same Soul in all kingdoms. Can the animal see, understand, and move out of and above its own natural limitations, volitionally?

Observation shows that the mineral remains the mineral, the vegetable remains the vegetable, the animal remains the animal. They are left behind, left to their natural limitations, and a new kingdom appears, the human kingdom. In the human kingdom appear the characteristics of preceding kingdoms, for the greater must include the lesser; but this survival is not the *conscious*, continued existence of the mineral, vegetable and animal. It is persistence, rather than continued existence.

Their natural existence was temporal and limited as a part of a whole; a whole greater than any part. Survival beyond their natural limitations depends, logically, upon their consciousness of survival. The tiger that rends and tears persists in the human species. Does the tiger know that it is a tiger, know what it is as a tiger, know its own limitations? Can it compare itself with the human man in which it persists, and see the difference between them? Can it understand why it is the lesser and the human man is the greater? If not, then its continued existence is not truly existence but only persistence; for it has no consciousness of existence. It is without self-recognition. Equally is this true of the predecessors of the animal.

The Soul has been, in its continuous incarnation, reincarnated. The Soul of a soul moves steadily forward to fullness of

incarnation and manifestation. The human kingdom follows the animal kingdom. Will this kingdom furnish a species capable of such self-recognition? Will it furnish a species that will have, in its persistence beyond the natural limitation, continued existence?—understanding continued existence to mean consciousness of an existence continuing beyond natural limitations?

“If a man die, shall he live again?”

Again this all-important “if.”

It is desired to make plain the difference between natural persistence and continued existence, for the whole question of immortality depends upon it. The course of Nature is one thing, the possible course of a species is another. The course of a species consequent upon its natural place in the natural order, is one thing. Its own course through its ability to lift itself above its natural limitations is quite another.

All that belongs in the natural order is eternal in its place in that order, for the order is eternal; but only the kind in the natural order that *can* lift itself beyond its natural limitations can have immortality. For immortality is not merely continuing forever; it is *knowing that you continue forever*; it is *consciousness* of eternal life; it is conscious existence instead of unconscious persistence.

It follows, then, that for all species below a certain kind there is no immortality, even though each and all are eternal.

Let us repeat: to be is one thing; to know that you are, is another and subsequent thing. For only from knowing that you are, can the knowledge of what and why you are follow. And only from knowing what and why you are can immortality result.

The Soul is eternal in being. A soul is temporal from being. An existent soul gains immortality. Only an existent soul capable of such result can experience it. Neither the mineral, nor the vegetable, nor the animal soul can have immortality. The human soul may have it, for with the human soul is a capability not pertaining to its predecessors in the Soul's continuous incarnation. It has the power to conceive of its own nature. It can form an ideal. It can form and hold within it an idea of itself; hence it is possible for it as a soul, to know the Soul; know that which is moving through it to fullness of incarnation and manifestation.

This Power of the Whole pertains to the human soul. If it is used wisely, continued existence follows. If it is not used to the possible end, only persistence, instead of conscious existence can follow. Therefore, “What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?”—lose his own *personal* consciousness of existence beyond natural limitations. Even though he persist as a natural part of a natural whole, without a consciousness of that persistence that makes it a distinct personal

and individual conscious existence beyond the first natural boundaries, what does the persistence amount to *for him*? It is Nature only, it is not he.

"Ye shall be as gods." To what species are these words applicable? Clearly not to any species preceding the human. No lesser species can find, see, and know its Soul. The one that can find, see, and know, can become like it, if it will. The mineral never becomes the vegetable. It never becomes more than its natural limitations permit. It is found *in* the next higher kingdom or species, but it is not that species, for that species is more than the mineral. The vegetable species is found *in* the animal species, but it is not, does not become that higher species. The animal species is found *in* the human species, but the animal does not become a human being.

The human being can look upon the animal nature in him, for he can conceive it, but the animal cannot in the same way look upon the human being with which he is connected. The animal cannot adequately conceive of the human man or of its own nature. The animal does not *consciously* survive the limitations of his own species, and because he was not and could not be conscious of his natural existence as the animal—as predecessor to the human species. Incapable of self-recognition and self-consciousness as the natural animal, how should it know itself as the persistent animal nature in the human species?

Move this logical necessity along. If the human species is not conscious of what it is as such, as it is within its natural limitations, how shall it be truly self-conscious if it merely persists in a higher species, if such there be? Is not the analogy the same?

All doctrinal religions have taught the possible loss or possible saving of the soul. They have been instinctively right, and dogmatically and practically wrong, for they make God extraneous to Nature and divorce Nature from God. They have not seen and taught that there is both the Soul and a soul, the difference between them, and that while the one is the eternal, immortality is for the other.

Modern Theosophy with its attendant theory of Reincarnation has yielded for many what doctrinal teachings have failed to supply. But even here is this distinction, a distinction upon which so much depends, seen and understood by those who "believe in Reincarnation"? Does the popular aspect of the theory present it? Nay, even urge it upon those who are attracted by the theory?

As said before, admitting that a philosophy including a theory of Reincarnation as a part in a whole may be found to be sound, it does not follow that this theory in the aspect it wears for those who have not mastered the philosophy in which it belongs, is equally sound. In fact, the contrary is the case, if we

may judge by the common application of the theory on the part of those who believe without understanding, and by their explanations. The natural consequence, observable on every hand, is to magnify the merely natural, and minimize the greater possible. Good and valuable as any teaching which unveils Nature must be, no teaching that fails to emphasize personal possibility above natural persistence, can yield the necessary practical value, however great the intellectual interest it may arouse.

What men and women need most to-day is to be shown how to save their souls, for it is a saving that is a practical salvation for all the ills that are common to humanity. It is a salvation that is a redemption from all evil, from both conscious and unconscious sin, sickness, poverty, and death; a redemption in the present day instead of in a remote and hazy future.

The struggle between the natural and the possible is the eternal struggle which appears as the battle between good and evil, a battle in which good is triumphant and evil is vanquished when a soul finds the Soul and moves with it.

The magnificent intellectual structure reared as "Theosophy" to-day cannot fail to give intellectual satisfaction to hosts of dissatisfied ones who have broken out of doctrinal limitations and said good-bye to theological dogmas; but as a tree is known by its fruits, one who is alive to the crying needs of a suffering people looks for more than an intellectual satisfaction. He seeks a practical and immediate remedy for suffering, and he cannot rest content when told, "It will all come right in a future incarnation"; and especially when he is told that in this future incarnation he will have no memory of what he suffered in this one. Compensation cannot fail to be very visionary and shadowy to him, and a remedy now, when he is able to experience the relief consciously and rejoice over it, seems more preferable.

The gist of Christianity, the inner kernel hidden within the mass of doctrine constituting theology, is the need of and the means for saving the soul from that limited natural existence, that is its mortality, unto that existence beyond the limited natural that is its immortality; a saving that includes conquest over all that pertains to mortality, all that we classify under the general head of evil.

The ancient religions and philosophies, though their name be legion, have this same aim, the common trend of the old and the new. Strip off the clothing layer upon layer till the inner heart and core are revealed, and there remains the great question which each seeks to answer, "What is Man, and what his destiny?" When the non-essentials are flung aside and the essentials stand unclothed, a common nature, a common destiny, and common effort to fulfill it make all nations one kin. Universal principles stand forth and proclaim the universal brotherhood of man, a brotherhood which no one body of people can ever

make, for it is already and eternally made, and it persistently awaits recognition.

Whatever brings "life and immortality to light" now, to-day, is the agent for a practical help that humanity needs. Whatever postpones them to a vague and remote future, does not act as the agent for what is needed to-day. Here is where the great example furnished by the Prophet of Nazareth yields a practical help and practical immediate betterment of human life, not yielded—so far as the writer's observation goes—by the theory of Reincarnation and belief in it as the explanation of what and where we are to-day. Yet by the example of Jesus, his teachings and works, is not meant what is taught in his name to-day, but what is found in such records as we have of his life, and what is proved in our own lives by the practical application of what is found; an individual seeking and proving, yielding the individual result whose silent voice is heard above all the war of doctrines and clash of sects.

What one becomes by living to the best of his ability according to the teachings and example of Jesus of Nazareth is far more convincing evidence of what he was and what he said and did, than the most learned and profound argument for or against his claims can furnish. Facts are quite as stubborn as theories, and will, after all is said and done, convince the greater number of people.

The Gospels give us accounts of works wonderful to the uninitiated, works that have been called miracles. Were such works ever really performed? Who knows? No one is now living who can testify, "I saw him perform them." With the lapse of time they become more and more remote. How shall indisputable evidence of their authenticity be obtained? If following the directions given by Jesus results in the same works with yourself, has not one convincing evidence that such works are possible? Is not this evidence corroborative testimony?

If such results follow, he must have understood, taught, and demonstrated fixed principles. Those principles must be as operative to-day as then, and then as now. What he taught as redemption from evil, and salvation from suffering and mortality, must have depended upon these principles, upon knowledge and application of them, instead of upon himself personally. He must have been "the way, the truth, and the life" as the shower of the way, the truth, and the life that all men may find and prove. He must have been the great Individual lifted above the mass of the people, standing singly and alone in his knowledge of human nature, its natural conditions and higher possibilities, who demonstrated what his knowledge was and what could be obtained by means of it; and who thus opened the way for others to follow after him to the same results.

Because he saw, taught, and demonstrated universal fixed

principles, he built no church save the church founded upon the rock of individual and universal understanding of these principles; the church of like works, not of profession of belief in him. He said, "the works that I do ye shall do also." The results possible to-day, that have been gained to-day, prove his words true. They require no higher authority. "Facts speak for themselves."

He taught men how to save their souls. He never taught—according to the records—the popular and generally accepted aspect of the theory of Reincarnation. He showed, instead, the necessity of attaching one's personal consciousness to the Soul that is moving through temporal to eternal incarnation; the necessity of surviving consciously one's natural limitations, and how this necessity is met. Of what immortality consists, and how immortality is gained, is what he both taught and lived, a work which includes and compels the forsaking of mortality through victory over all that constitutes it. He showed that mortality belonged to our natural limitation, and immortality to our possible survival of that limitation, not failing to point out the difference between persistence after physical death and conscious existence beyond it.

The keynote of his life and teaching was "I and the Father are one." A oneness, an indestructible unity between himself as an existent soul and the imperishable being that is the God-Ideal, gave, through his recognition of it, a conscious oneness with the Soul of that being that moves through all species to permanent incarnation; and through that consciousness of unity with the Soul he was immortal, had put an immortality, while still using the fleshly organism belonging to the human species. As a soul he was the Son of man; as the Soul he was the Son of God, in him the two were united.

In ourselves the two may be united, will be, if we follow in the way he taught and demonstrated. The governing principle of the universe, the Absolute, was his Father, Nature was his Mother, and as their Son he was the third in that trinity. The place we may occupy he occupied before us, and proved for us the power of the Son over all the existence that is his begetting. The violation of this trinity, the practical divorce between these parents, has made their offspring illegitimate, and at the hands of sectarian churches Christ has been crucified afresh. At the hands of modern theories that exalt Nature and dethrone God, is he still crucified, and one must be deaf indeed who does not hear the blows of the hammer driving the nails home.

Never till God is recognized as Principle, and Nature the consequence of that Principle, can existence be understood and utilized to the great end; can mortality be displaced by immortality. Creeds and dogmas are valueless beyond their power to stimulate a needed recognition in a soul. When they fail to do

this they are worse than useless, for their limitations are added to natural limitations and there is still more to break through before a soul can attach itself to the Soul. Whatever is untrue is mortal, whatever is true is eternal. That only is immortal that can detach itself from the untrue and bind itself to the truth.

Only that species that can detach and bind anew can have immortality. Immortality is for any kind of a creature that can win it; persistence is for all kinds as parts in a great whole. The kind that, existing naturally, can continue to exist consciously, or beyond natural limitations, is and must be the kind that can conceive this possibility; and this kind is the human species, the human soul that includes naturally, because of the persistent plus, all that has preceded it. It is the persistent plus that has brought the possibility pertaining to the human soul.

Scriptures are not written for lesser creatures. They are for the kind that can reconceive itself and unite its work to Nature's work.

The conceiving, not the merely feeling creature can carry forward on its own account the work that Nature carries forward, adding its plus to the other plus. This kind may embody the truth to which it attaches itself through conception of that truth; may embody the Soul that moves along to complete incarnation, making a body that shall outlast the physical mold in which it is first formed.

Mental conception as well as physical conception is necessary to the perpetuation of a species as consciously existing. Natural physical conception gives persistence of a species. "First the natural, afterward the spiritual." There is no "afterward," as a conscious existence forever for the species that cannot conceive an idea of self. There is always the possible afterward as successor to the merely natural. The "Dawn of Mind" marks the point of juxtaposition between the natural and the possible that is called the spiritual; but how few members of the human race at any one time see the magnitude and scope of this stage in the great evolution.

The species to which belongs the power to conceive of self, a power which in its development by use becomes the ability to conceive of the whole Cosmos, is the species that can become god-like; a future that it is sure to actualize, if, gaining a true self-conception, it will carry that conception into action.

First the power to conceive, next the true self-conception, next the living to that conception; immortality is the consequence. Continued existence is not then a "coming back again and again." There can be no retrograde step. It is conscious connection with the Soul that always moves on, and never backward.

Resurrection *from* the dead, not reincarnation *of* the dead. Let this note be sounded up and down the land by those who see and know.

(To be continued.)

STILL HIGHER CRITICISM.

"And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The Lord hath not appeared unto thee." (Chapter IV.)

How true it is, that when a higher truth than is yet in the possession of the people is voiced by an individual, they say, "We do not believe it. Give us some evidence that what you say is true, if you expect us to believe it."

Because truth is abstract, because we see, think, and live according to impressions received through the senses, impressions that are contradicted by the higher truth, we cannot believe what one tells us, if it contradicts our impression. We must have proof, objective evidence, practical demonstration, before we can accept and follow.

Moses, as spiritual insight, is indeed leader and deliverer for those who are in bondage to sense-consciousness, but even he, God-ordained as he is, must furnish evidence of the mighty truth discerned and declared to the people. They will not follow where he leads, till they see with their own eyes, and they can see at first only the fact of demonstration, not the truth demonstrated. "Give us a sign that we may believe" is the old and new cry, the perpetual demand of the natural man.

So in the New Testament we find Jesus working the works which are signs of his nature and power for the people, demonstrations of the truth he declares to them. Both in the Exodus of the Old Testament and the other exodus of the New Testament, by which those who hear and understand come out of darkness into light, we find this necessity and how it is met.

"And the Lord said unto him, What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod. And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it. And the Lord said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand."

Remembering the important part played by the rod in the journey of the Israelites, we cannot fail to see that this incident must have a most significant meaning. As preparation for the

journey. to be made by the soul it is the perception of the power of Thought-Force, and its consequences which are of two kinds.

Thought is creative, it is the ceaseless action of the one Mind that is the origin of Creation and all it contains. It is the initial impulse for all that lives, continuing its onward movement *through* the living, a movement which is return to origin. This ceaseless action creates, brings to pass, all we experience. Result is inevitable because this Force is omnipotent and nothing can stay its course.

With the kind or quality of result, however, we have everything to do. That effect must follow cause is the impersonal law and order with which we have nothing to do. That our experience results from the action of Thought-Force, the power that brings it to pass, is the impersonal truth compelled by the nature of First Cause. But that the kind, or quality, of our experience is of our own making, is a truth waiting discovery; and great indeed are the consequences when found and utilized.

Because Thought-Force is the creative power, it creates for us, or brings to pass for us, our own thoughts. What we at first think, and even more or less unconsciously, is finally brought forth as experience; and our experiences are classed as good or evil according to whether they are pleasant or unpleasant. We judge them according to our sensation till we learn to judge them according to principle.

When we use Thought-Force ignorantly, blindly, through lack of perception and understanding, it hurts us. It is as the serpent that bites and stings us. We suffer, and we are afraid of suffering. We flee from it. This is natural, and we act in the natural way first, before we have found the higher way.

Moses shows us the higher way. Perception of the nature and power of Thought-Force, leads us to use that which, through our ignorance, has used us. Grasping the serpent in the strong hand of that possible mastery that results from true perception, it becomes the rod of power instead of that which we fear and flee from.

Oh! the mighty difference between this serpent and the rod of power; and it depends upon whether we have placed this power in the dust, throwing it away in our ignorance, or whether, seeing, we grasp and use it. On the ground, we having no conscious hold upon it, apart from ourselves, it brings what we fear and flee from. In our hand, grasped firmly, in connection with ourselves through perception of its nature and our relation to it, it becomes the instrument of salvation, the means by which the difficulties of the journey are met and conquered.

The thing in itself is nature, the impersonal. What it is to us, is the personal; and upon the personal, not the impersonal, depends the *quality* of result. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."

For how many generations has mankind been blind to this mighty truth, toiling under taskmasters in Egypt, waiting a deliverer while groaning under its burdens of suffering and sorrow. And when a Moses arises in the land and says, "Your sufferings are of your own making, you are using creative Thought-Force ignorantly and experiencing what it brings to pass for you," we are ready to stone him instead of follow him to the fair land of freedom. He must first give us a sign that we may believe.

"And the Lord said furthermore unto him, Put now thine hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom: and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous as snow. And he said, Put thine hand into thy bosom again. And he put his hand into his bosom again; and plucked it out of his bosom, and, behold, it was turned again as his other flesh. And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the first sign, that they will believe the voice of the latter sign."

Yes, they will indeed believe the voice of the latter sign, even if they are deaf, dumb, and blind to the first sign. "The theory does not interest me, I care little for it; but if I could be cured of my rheumatism I should think that evidence of what can be done."

Is not the voice of the "latter sign" most potent? Tell people, "Your illness is the consequence of your ignorant use, therefore misuse, of Thought-Force. You are not thinking as you should, and if you would be well and happy you must change your thoughts, your way of thinking," and they will laugh and turn away. But relieve them of suffering through your application of Thought-Force in their behalf, and they will say, even if grudgingly, "Well, there is something in it."

In this incident of thrusting the hand in the bosom is illustrated the fact that conditions opposite in quality result from the same action; our good and our evil are brought by the same action; the steady moving on of Thought-Force brings all to pass. Our own thinking is the same action. Whatever we think, our own action is the same. But the *kind* of thought we think determines the *kind* of result brought by the action.

Result from our thinking, unqualified, is the abstract truth due to the ceaseless action of Thought-Force. Result from our thinking qualified according to what we think, is the practical truth that is our constant experience. In both cases the action, our thinking, and the moving of Thought-Force are the same.

Moses puts his hand in his bosom twice. His action is the same, but the results of the action are widely different. In the one case it is disease, in the other it is health. The lesson taught is that results opposite in quality may come from the same action; that both disease and health result from the same action on our part; that whether Thought-Force is for us the serpent or the rod of power, has much to do with the result. It is always

the same force in itself; but the results it brings to us depend upon *what it is to us*.

If a powerful stream of water flows through a canal it will take up and carry along whatever it finds in the channel through which it flows. Moving itself, it will compel anything movable to move along with it; and all this will be found at the point where the channel empties itself.

Thought-Force moves through the canal of our own thinking, and empties itself in our experiences. In them must be found whatever was in that channel. The thoughts we habitually think are brought forth as conditions by this great moving Force. Consequently, conditions may be opposite in quality. All depends upon *how* we think.

When this explanation is given to those who have made no study of the subject, they are most frequently not ready to hear the voice of the first sign. But when one who understands uses the rod of power in behalf of one who does not, and who is suffering unwittingly what he has previously created, the relief that follows inclines him to listen to the voice of the latter sign.

And this is the evidence that must be given to lead people out of their natural Egypt; the preparation for future complete deliverance from the taskmasters and bondage. Consequently the works of Jesus, mighty works, or miracles to those who did not understand, were necessary as evidence for the people of the nature of his teaching. Theory and demonstration go hand in hand, and a kind of demonstration that can be received and appreciated is necessary.

"As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God."

As many as will press on to the understanding of the principles governing the demonstration, after having seen it, can gain for themselves the power to do the same, and more. They can not only do the same works, but become consciously what Jesus Christ was, the Son of God.

Our own exodus from all evil and suffering, whether seen in the Old or New Testament, is the same in nature. It is emancipation through perception and understanding of fundamental principles, roused through experience and some demonstration of what can be accomplished by use of the Creative energy of the universe. If this comes to us through the slow working of the natural way, it is the Old Testament way; if through the more sudden revelation of the meaning of it all, seized and acted upon, it is the quicker possible way, the New Testament way. It is the same exodus.

THE MASTERY OF FATE.

You are greatly troubled about the "sin against the Holy Ghost" ?

You need not be. You do not understand what it is? That is why you are troubled. Understanding of your own nature and destiny will shed light upon this problem and remove your anxiety. It is when we lack necessary understanding that perplexities overwhelm and submerge us. When found, it yields an explanation you have not gained elsewhere, for it is "Thus saith the Lord."

You have learned that the flesh and blood body is not yourself, have you not? That, veiled by the object, there must be the seeing subject? Flesh and blood cannot be the living soul. The living soul that uses flesh and blood cannot be the thing used. The machine is one thing, the user of the machine quite another.

This user of the machine, the living soul called by the family name to which you answer, occupies a position between its flesh and blood body and its real being, its Lord. It sees, naturally, only this body, with its environment, and not its real being. It must find and know its Lord.

Existence is for that purpose. Existence and experience are one. In existence, or by experience, this living soul turns, some time, from its flesh body and environment as the all, to its real being or Lord, and sees that being as the eternal reality back of all the sense-phenomena on the plane of the flesh body.

Then it—you—begins to live a new life. It—you—has been born again, born into a knowledge it did not have formerly; a knowledge that brings consequences before unknown. When this time comes for you—and it has come, has it not?—you begin to live according to this higher ideal. You no longer see yourself as a material being, created from dust, but as spiritual in your real being that you have found, as perfect, whole, intelligent, possessed of God-like powers.

You have a new self-idea as a standard for daily living, a mental pattern before your inner eye according to which you try to think and live. A hitherto unknown feeling grows up in you, a feeling of certainty, security, peace. You say, "whereas I was

blind, I now see." Existence itself, and all connected with it takes on a new meaning for you.

God used to seem so far off, and you had more or less fear of Him. Now the Supreme Love that is God stands at your right hand, never leaving nor forsaking you. The constant Presence is your strength and support, and all fear of God has left you. A new way of gaining knowledge appears to you, an opening up from within, a bubbling, gently flowing spring of the water of life, a quiet, persistent revelation that answers your questions and becomes a factor in your daily life.

You "seek unto the Lord" and the Lord answers you, for your own real being is all-knowing. The "Spirit of Truth" that shall lead you into all truth, enters in and takes up its abode with you. You are being led, led gently, where you used to be driven. You were driven hither and yon by your experiences, by their pain and unrest, before you knew of your real being and the meaning of existence; but now you are no longer driven. You see, even if dimly, where before all was dark, and you are drawn toward the light.

You feel this drawing and you move with it willingly, escaping the driving that before pushed you reluctantly along. Existence is a moving on, you know, and you see now that move you must, if not in one way then in the other. So at first you were driven forward, because you did not know how to move of yourself. Now you see and know and you move of your own volition. This indwelling spirit instructs, strengthens, guides, and comforts you. You are no longer as a sheep without a shepherd.

You see and know where before you were blind and ignorant. In your ignorance you believed yourself to be made of the dust of the ground with an uncertain and threatening hereafter before you when you should have finished your three score and ten years of this life; a life in which you were doomed to more or less suffering in spite of all you could do to avert it.

Now, with your different self-idea, you believe this no longer. You can see, to some extent, the principle that governs the problems of existence and determines their correct answer. You see that, logically, you are of the Eternal and not of the temporal, and that all existence is but the gradual knowing of your being. With your old view you made many mistakes, formed many conclusions that were untrue by comparison with the eternal standard, however true to you at the time.

But those sins—for an error is a sin—are forgiven you because they were not intentional; they were only natural. You were responsible for them in that you created the errors, or committed the sins, but only according to the law of cause and effect. You were not morally responsible, because you did not intend to create an error, or commit a sin. Without intention there can be no moral responsibility. There can be no intention to do

wrong till there is perception of both a right and a wrong, and the difference between them. Intentional doing of a wrong is impossible to the Adam-soul—you—for it does not know either right or wrong. It acts naturally according to its nature.

You formed your first self-idea and lived according to it, naturally, not intentionally. You sinned ignorantly and the forgiveness belongs to your lack of intention to sin. But now that you know what you did not know naturally, now that the Spirit of Truth has taken up its abode with you, if you deliberately and willfully act contrary to what you see and know, that sin cannot be forgiven you; for it is not natural, it is intentional, and you must work out its consequences to the uttermost. The law of cause and effect compels this result also.

Dismiss the idea of a God who will interfere with this law and lift from off you the consequences of your own thoughts and acts. There is none such. You can see instead, readily, can you not, that there must be a wide difference between a wrong ignorantly done, and one done intentionally?

A child does many things that are unwise, because it is a child, because it acts naturally, or according to the nature of the child. These are forgiven it because it is the child and knows no better. In those acts there was no intention to do wrong. But when the child has become enlightened, the enlightenment makes him a boy of fifteen, makes him more than a naturally ignorant child. If this boy does what the child did, this forgiveness does not belong to him for he knew better than to do what he did. The possibility of this forgiveness is destroyed by himself, by his intention to do what he knew better than to do.

The sin against the Holy Ghost is your own deliberate willful thought and action contrary to what you know to be true and right. Therefore the forgiveness that belongs naturally to lack of intention to do wrong cannot belong to you.

If you act always according to your highest perception and conviction of right and wrong, you will never sin against the Holy Ghost, for this sin lies in intention only. Even though you make mistakes, they will not "be reckoned against you." They may be contrary sometimes to the eternal truth of being, but they are not contrary to your knowledge of that truth. You sin against the impersonal truth ignorantly, but you may sin against yourself knowingly.

How many have feared for years, long painful years, that they had sinned the deadliest of all sins, the sin against the Holy Ghost; feared the more because they did not know what that sin was. They dared not ask God to forgive them, for that sin was beyond forgiveness, and existence became, consequently, a living tomb. How slow has been the coming of the "freedom of the Sons of God"; but it has come for you when you see what you really are, instead of the degraded specimen of humanity seen through theological spectacles.

Fear of hell has brought more penitents to the anxious seat than has love of God. You need have no fear of any damnation that you do not make for yourself. True, "he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation"; but this danger can be averted. You have but to act according to what you see and know and your future is safe. "The kingdom of God is within you" and you can enter in and dwell there, and no theological hobgoblins can destroy your peace.

God is Love, not wrath nor vengeance, and all along the line of your experiences that Almighty Love is working ceaselessly to manifest itself to you. Whatever the seeming to you, it is all-potent for you. Through whatever you come, it overcomes, and goes with you by day and by night to show the way in which you are going steadily toward God. Nothing can thwart its mighty purpose, turn it aside, prevent it from blessing you.

Evil is but the attendant shadow. The steadily shining light is the infinite Love that draws all to itself. Even though clouds impede its rays, it is there all the while, doing its work ceaselessly, and you are feeling its benefits at those times when you can get out of the darkness and chill of the shadow.

When you were a child your mother loved you. When you acted as the child, and, because of an unrestrained impulse, struck at her, she loved you just the same. Her love did not depend upon your recognition of it, but Oh! how much it became to you when you became able to recognize it. It waited for you, was faithful to you all the while you knew it not. It watched over and guarded you and led you in the way you should go, a constant presence that gave you only blessings. Yet how different was all when, no more a little child, you were capable of seeing and feeling that love. It remained the same *for* you, but it was far more *to* you than before.

So God, that infinite Love that is God, is always the same for us, but becomes so much more to us when we see and know that to which we are at first blind, because we are children in self-knowledge. The all-wise Father displaces the implacable ruler and we rest content in the certainty of a divine protecting Love.

Recognize your eternal relation to God, and fear nothing but to act contrary to such light as you have. When you do this, *you* are always right, even if your thought is not exactly in accord with the truth of being. When you live according to this standard you will never sin the sin against the Holy Ghost. Feeling the mighty Presence you will part company with fear and trust it wholly. "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me."

THE BREATH OF LIFE.

(When there is fear of a deadly sin.)

My hand has trembled and my foot has faltered because I had not found thee, O Lord!

My heart was weak within me because I felt thee not.

But now the trembling is past for I feel the grasp of thy sure hand.

The Almighty God that is Love has drawn near unto me and placed my hand in thine.

Now is my heart strong, for thou art the same forever.

My eye is clear, the tears are dried, and I see thee as over all.

I open my heart to the infinite Love which shall fill it utterly.

Feeling thy strong hand I lose all fear of sin and disaster.

I would live unto thee, and not away from thee, and I know that my desire shall not fail of reward.

I would not willingly forsake thee, and when my feet strayed far it was because I knew no better.

All the while, wherever my feet wandered, thou didst attend me and keep me safely.

I give homage unto thee, eternal and enduring Love.

Ever faithful art thou even when thy children know thee not.

Hand in hand with thee O Lord! I bow before its infinite Almightyness.

Above me, below me, all about me, it folds me safe and shields me from all harm.

I am in no danger of sinning against thee, for it illumines my way and I know where I should walk.

Confidence and peace are mine now, for with thee I come into my heritage to possess it.

I live in "green pastures" and "beside the still waters" to-day.

Love itself has led me there where thou abidest with me.

Through thee am I saved, by thee am I redeemed from all error.

Thou givest me wisdom and I see and know.

The Comforter has come unto me, and the song of my rejoicing ascends unto thee.

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Communications.—Those of a personal nature should be addressed to the editor, Ursula N. Gestefeld, and all business correspondence to The Gestefeld Publishing Co., P. O. Box 106, Madison Square Branch, New York.

Many letters have been received and many questions asked concerning the articles on "Incarnation and Reincarnation," now running in THE EXODUS. That they should stimulate inquiry is natural and hopeful. Too ready acceptance of any theory explanatory of life and its problems argues tendency to believe rather than to understand.

It is desired to answer all these questions as fully and as intelligently as possible, but to answer now would be premature. The argument against the popular aspect and acceptance of the theory of Reincarnation as sound explanation of "What and why am I?" is not yet finished, will not be finished for some months; and it is possible that as the argument progresses it may answer many of the questions propounded. With all willingness to answer them, it will be better to wait till the proposed work is completed.

Much depends upon the reader's ability to follow and carry on for himself a process of consecutive, logical thinking from the premise laid down. The true in itself can be reached in no other way. A series of "because" from a self-evidently true proposition, can alone bring us to a conclusion that is irresistible, logically. When the conclusion is demonstrated by experience, the cumulative evidence of its truth is overwhelming. We desire more than temporary satisfaction if we are really seekers for truth; and we will be willing to forsake that which has satisfied, even at the price of unrest for a time, if we see that it is not as logically sound as we thought it.

Many exceedingly intelligent people believe firmly that they have been in this world with different physical human bodies bearing different personal or family names many times, and that they will be here many times more, answering to many more such names. They find comfort and satisfaction in this belief. It remains still an open question as to whether this belief is

true, whether it is supported by logic and the demonstration of fixed principles, or not. Into this open ground any one may venture, and without the least desire to wrest from others that which satisfies and comforts them.

Seek for knowledge we must, it is instinctive in the human soul; and ever must the knowledge of to-day become the ignorance of the past, when compared to the greater to be revealed.

Not for nothing is the eager seeking observable all over the country. The close of this century witnesses a soul-awakening that promises a mighty influx of previously hidden truth. Demand and supply belong together and according to the one is the other. A stronger demand for soul-satisfaction than has been made for many years is being made to-day, and especially is this the case with the American people. They are reaching out for greater metaphysical, as well as physical, possessions. The expansion is in soul as well as in territory.

The effort is surety for a result. America may be the birth-place and home of a teaching that shall rank with those of other and older nations in its combined profundity and simplicity, and its adaptation to immediate practical needs and ends.

NOTICE.

Mrs. Gestefeld will spend the time from the 17th to the 31st of May in Denver, Col. She will give a course of ten lessons in the Science of Being, beginning with a public address on the evening of May 17th. All information may be obtained on application to Mrs. A. M. Bryant, "School of Divine Truth," 506 Mack Block, Denver, Col.