

REINCARNATION

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THE WORLD'S KARMA

The whole body of men of the world has its karma and it is inextricably bound up with the karma of all the living things dwelling on our planet. Then, too, the karma of our world is bound up in that of the other planets and the beings that live upon them.

Part of the karma of our world will be expended upon it with pain, part with joy and happiness, while most of it will bring, at once or in swift alternations, the two opposed phases of that subjective quality of reaction.

The world's life progresses from the creative phase to the dissolutional phase. The first phase is of the awakening of materiality; the latter is that of return to the relatively spiritual life. Hence the world's life is like one of our days, in which we awaken, become immersed in the objective activity and, when the life-giving sun has set, we return in sleep to such a spiritual life as we have earned the right to enjoy, while the body's life is in partial abeyance.

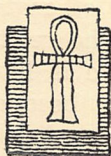
The world's karma is shared by all men, and every man is responsible, in a certain way, for the whole world's karma. While men are no more evolved than are our most civilized people they have the opportunity spread before them to enter into the study of karma—*The Law* that includes all our life and its meaning—and they, we, may take part in the balancing of the world's debt of error and ignorance with loving service to the plan of God.

There are Those who have done this in ages past—who have served the world and The Vast Scheme of Things with knowledge and wisdom. They are The Elder Brothers; They are Gautama Buddha, Pythagoras, Phidias, Plato, The Man of Bethlehem, Paul, Rosenkreutz and many more.

Now many signs point to the lightening of the weight of our World's Cross. The dread war that harries us will leave the planet cleaner, freer.

But the plan of Nature and of Him who sustains is ever calling for us others to join Those who make sacrifice, to aid still further in the balancing.

W. V-H.



“SOMETHING FOR NOTHING? NEVER”

One occasionally hears the above expression used as a sort of proverb, and the user, if questioned, will generally claim to believe it.

Now, I wonder if most people who use it, really do believe it, and if they believe it so completely that they are willing to let it become a rule and guide for their conduct. I doubt it much, for if such belief were carried to its logical conclusion it would shut off many of the activities of the ordinary man of the world. Any man using such a guide is neither a man of the world nor is he ordinary within the commonly accepted meaning of these terms. Still the fact remains that it is the ordinary man that usually uses the phrase.

It really seems as though many men recognized the fact that anything desirable that one gets must be paid for, either before or after possession. Of course students of The Law believe that this is quite true and they have a name for the broad law of which this is one aspect.

A gambler would hardly admit the truth of this saying, as his whole endeavor seems to gain what he wishes without giving an equivalent. Such a striving to gain fruit without labor carries within itself the seeds of failure. It may be in this life or it may be in another that the gambler will learn by bitter experience that the good things come by earning and not by gift, but learn this fact he must.

Not only the gambler but all of us have to learn this, and the sooner we learn, the better

it will be for us. Nature is not ultimately kind to the waster or the drone.

Justice requires that each man do his share and contribute his portion to the common fund according to his capacity, and sharing in the work is the only thing that gives one the right to share in the result. Results are both temporary and permanent, and, after learning that if we wish results we must work for them, we are taken one step further and shown that we should work for permanent results and not for temporary ones.

All of this is part of man's evolution and is governed by the broad law which is called karma by those who make it their business to study it.

Karma is kind to the wise, for they work with the law. Karma is kind to the foolish, for by the law they become wise. Karma says many things to many people, but it says to all:

"Something for Nothing? Never."

William Brinsmaid.

For, while Brahma reposes in calm sleep, embodied spirits, endued with principles of action, depart from their several acts, and the mind itself becomes inert;

And, when they once absorbed in that Supreme Essence, then the divine soul of all beings withdraws his energy, and placidly slumbers;

Then too this vital soul, with all the organs of sense and of action, remains long immersed in darkness, and performs not its natural functions, but migrates from its corporeal frame.

The Laws of Manu.

A TALK WITH "MRS. CHARLIE BROWN"

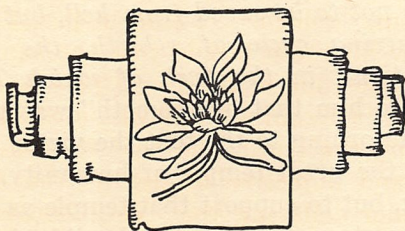
A question often presented to the believer in reincarnation is, "If we have lived before, why do we not remember?" I am satisfied that here and there are children who do remember, but as the child gets older, the memory fades away. I do not belong to a "psychic" family as far as I know; theories do not "cut much ice" with me; I want the facts first: having the facts, it is then often necessary to hunt for a theory that will explain the facts. The practice of adopting a theory, and then trying to make the facts fit the theory, is, I fear, a great deal too common. Probably there is hardly a person in existence that has not a tradition, ancient or modern, of some strange or supernatural happening, which cannot be explained on ordinary physical grounds. However, the point is whether cases do not exist of children showing a memory of past lives. Let me state my fact.

A few days ago I was visiting a daughter of mine who has a little girl whose third birth-day happened during my visit. As my daughter lives at a distance, I had had but little opportunity to get really acquainted with the little tot, a rosy and strong little creature, without the slightest trace of the uncommon about her. Her mother had told me about her little oddities, so I was not altogether unprepared. I have a knack with little children, and Vera and I hit it off to a nicety. On her third birth-day I got her talking about the people she knew, but whom nobody else knows. I will just mention a few things she told me, not excitedly but in the most matter

of fact way. She knows a Mrs. Quincham. When she is on the street Mrs. Quincham walks along with her and they talk. "Mrs. Quincham," she said "calls me Mrs. Charlie Brown, but I tell her I am not Mrs. Charlie Brown but Mrs. Nellie Brown." I asked the child whether Mrs. Quincham was tall or short. Without hesitation she said she was short, and in the course of a not unskilfully conducted cross examination I got other details. Among other things I said, "What coloured eyes has she, blue or black, or what?" She stood thoughtfully for a second, as if making a mental picture, and then said, "Brown." She also had brown hair, if I remember rightly, and wore a dark dress. It also appeared that Vera had at least two children of her own. By the way she has a baby sister a few weeks old. Speaking of her own children I noted that she placed herself on a perfect equality with her mother. For instance, she herself was Mrs. Nellie Brown, and she did not speak of her mother's baby as such, but as Mrs. M—'s baby, giving her mother her designation as a married woman (or as it happens to be, a widow). I thought this very peculiar. I asked her the colour of her own child's hair, and she replied as composedly as an old woman, "golden." I said to her, "I suppose you know all these people just the same as you know me or your mother, or Uncle Bert." Her reply was, "Of course." It was evident that she was telling the truth, and that these folks were as real and objective to her as the furniture. Her mother tells me that Vera constantly has invisible children to play with her, and that it is simply wonderful to hear her talking to them

and sometimes ordering them about. She is a healthy child, with quite an obstinate little temper of her own on occasion, and at any suggestion that her friends are fanciful, she gets quite incensed. Without going into further details I may say that my conversation with my little granddaughter on her third birthday, was, in its way, by far the most extraordinary talk I ever had with a human being. I tested her very carefully, and saw no sign of imagination or invention. The whole business was to her apparently a simple matter of fact. What do you make of it, reader? Does it, or does it not, point, among other things, to Mrs. Quincham and Mrs. Nellie Brown having been friends in a previous life. Possibly Mrs. Nellie Brown's husband's name was Charlie. The little tot remembers that her own name was Nellie, and she is not sufficiently advanced yet to know that she might have been known to her friend more as Mrs. Charlie Brown than as Mrs. Nellie Brown. If my granddaughter is a reincarnation of Mrs. Charlie Brown, I should be obliged to any occultist who can tell me who Mrs. Charlie Brown was.

John Hawkes.



THE USES OF THE TRUTH

Now what differences ought to appear in a life in which the teaching of reincarnation is definitely held? First of all, looking at life with that wider horizon should give us a patient strength and an absence of hurry which are not very characteristic of modern life. With the loss of the doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul from Christianity, and the consequent endlessness of heaven and hell, the whole fate of an everlasting condition was made to depend on this single life. Inevitably, with that change of thought, hurry became one of the marks of life. Just as in a boat where there is danger of wreck there is a panic and struggle, so with all those who believe in that nightmare of an everlasting hell and the dream of an everlasting heaven, this element of hurry enters into life—so much to do, such vast issues, and so brief a time. Life becomes a struggle, in which failure is to be met with everlasting pain. With the loss of belief in reincarnation, to be 'saved' also lost its ancient meaning—that the cycle of rebirths was over, and that the man had become "a pillar in the temple of my God to go forth no more." *The old Christian idea was not to be saved from hell, but from the ever-recurring cycle of rebirth, the perpetual 'resurrections' in the flesh of which Tertullian spoke.* "To him that overcometh" was the promise and according to the text the victor became a pillar in the great temple of humanity, no more to go out, but to support that temple as a mighty upholding strength. That splendid idea of salvation has turned into the petty individual salva-

tion of a single unit of the human race. But when it is realised that we have many chances, that every failure brings success a little nearer, and that the last failure is the threshold of success, then a great strength grows into the life. There is plenty of time, endless opportunities, and the fall of to-day is the rising of to-morrow. And slowly, as that thought of reincarnation becomes part of us, a principle to be lived, we find our life take on the calmness, the serenity, which come from the consciousness of an immortal life. We are living one day out of many days, and what we cannot do to-day to-morrow we shall inevitably achieve. Mighty is the power of it, when once it is fully recognised, and when we feel that there is nothing beyond our strength, for we have time during which our strength may gradually evolve. But not only that; all the people around us take on a new aspect when we realise the fact of reincarnation. With our friends we have a closer tie, for everyone we know as a friend comes out of our past, Spirit hailing Spirit across the blinding veil of the material body; and we realise the immortality of love as we realise the immortality of life. And when instead of friends we meet an enemy, how different the aspect when we know the truth of reincarnation; What is the enemy? Some one we have wronged in the past, some one to whom we owe a debt, and he comes forward to claim it. The payment sets us free. He is a liberator, not an enemy; he gives us the opportunity of paying off a debt, without the payment of which liberation may never be ours. When we see him in that light, what becomes

of anger or resentment? What becomes of any feeling, save gratitude to the one who takes from us the payment of an ancient debt and leaves us free to go along our road? None can injure us save ourselves; the enemy who seems to strike is only our own hand striking our own face, our own action come up in a new incarnation. If we are angry, we are angry with ourselves, resent ourselves, are revengeful against ourselves. There is no enmity when once reincarnation is thoroughly understood. Looking at it thus, a great bitterness will go out of our life. For the thing that hurts is not the injury, but the resentment, the sense of wrong, the feeling of being unfairly treated. Those are the stings which give pain to any action, and when it is only the payment of a debt, none of those is present; there is only the bringing into equilibrium of an ancient wrong. All the stings vanish, and the mere activity remains, which restores equilibrium.

And when thus we have looked at friends and enemies, what of the circumstances of life? Reincarnation makes us realise that the circumstances around us are exactly those that are best for our growth and evolution. It is a profound blunder to imagine that in any other circumstances we could do better than we are doing now. People say: "If only my circumstances were different I could lead such a much more useful life." Error! You are doing the most where you are; anywhere else you would do worse, not better. You are surrounded by exactly the things you want for the next step on the upward path, and the moment you are ready to take any other line in life that moment that line

of life will open before you. Is there a clog in the family? That is exactly the clog wanted to teach you patience. Is there business that interferes with you? That is the thing you want to bring out qualities in which you are deficient. In every single case, so wise is the Good Law, the circumstances round you are the very best that the wisdom of an archangel could plan for your growth and unfolding. The peace that that knowledge brings to life it is impossible to describe. All fretting vanishes, all worrying ceases to be, anxiety for something different no longer gnaws at the heart. A complete, absolute, perfect content comes down upon the soul, and in that content the lesson of the trying environment has been learned, and it will gradually modify itself.

And even that is not all the benefit which grows out of a real understanding of reincarnation. It gives infinite tolerance, infinite patience, with all around us. The great trouble of the truly good man or woman is that people will not be good in the way that he or she wants them to be good. "If only my neighbour would do what I think he ought to do, how much better his life would be." Good people worry themselves almost to death, not in improving their own lives, but in reforming the lives of their neighbours. That is all wasted work. The Self in each knows his own path much better than the Self in anybody else can judge it for him, and establishes his road in life according to the unfoldment that he desires and needs. He takes his best path. "But," you say, "he is going a wrong path." Wrong for you perhaps but

right for him. The lessons that that Self wills in his present body to learn, who can judge? Do we know every incident of his past experiences, his past trials, failures, victories, so that we can say what now he wants for the next step in his unfolding life? That experience that seems to you so terrible may be the very experience he needs; the failure that you think so bad may be the very failure that will make success inevitable. We cannot judge our own lives, blinded by the body; how then shall we judge the life of another? There is no lesson more vital than not to try to control and shape others according to our own ideas. Has it never struck us that in this world—which is God's—there are infinite varieties of forms, infinite differences of experience? Why? Because only in that infinite diversity can the infinite powers of the Self be made manifest. What is a fault to us, blinded and ignorant, is just what is wanted when it is looked at from the other side. We need to choose our path according to our knowledge and our conscience, and leave others to choose theirs. "But," you may say, "do you mean we should never advise, never counsel?" No. That is the fair help you may give; but you should not try to coerce, should not say: "you must *now* do this." Sometimes in a chord of music a discord is necessary for the perfection of the harmony. It sounds very bad, standing alone, but, as part of the harmony of a great chord, that note that was so discordant enriches and renders perfect the chord. Half the secret of the wonderful chords of Beethoven lies in the power with which he uses discords. Without them

how different his music would be, how much less rich, less melodious and less splendid. And there are such apparent discords in human life. Clashing out alone they startle and even horrify us, but in the final Word those discords also find their resolution, and the whole chord of life is perfect. Reincarnation teaches us that we see such a mere fragment of a life that we cannot judge it. If I almost covered up a picture on the wall, how could a spectator judge of the beauty, or lack of beauty, of the whole? Similarly, how shall we judge of the beauty of the picture, in which what seems to us a defect may be the shadow that lends depth and beauty to the whole life, that is so much more complex than we imagine? If all the lives were made according to our stupid ideas, what sort of a universe should we see around us? But the universe is God's thought, and He is manifesting in it at every point, and when we see what seems to us a sin, it is wise to ask ourselves: "What is meant by this manifestation of the Self?" not to condemn it. Then we learn. We need not copy it. For us it may be evil. But we should never judge our neighbour. That is the law laid down in every great scripture. The attitude of the student of divine wisdom should always be that of a learner in life: "What has this man, or that circumstance, to teach me? What have I to learn from this problem?" In this way we should look at life, and doing so, we would be so interested in it that we should have no time to judge or blame, and our life would begin to be the life of wisdom.

Annie Besant, in "The Theosophist."

FROM A LETTER, (V)

It is by no means uncommon to be able to "report no progress whatever." But this must not and should not discourage us. The important point is not so much the making of progress than the striving to do that which we feel in our best moments is clearly our duty to do.

The thought occurred to me, on reading your letter, "Is it really a misfortune that what you expected failed to be realised? Might it not just as well have been a piece of good karma or "luck" that it fell through?" We often hope for certain things to happen, and think they are best, but the great Law gives us instead that which we have earned and which is always for our best in the long evolution of our true being.

Our conception of God should always be so high that we should not feel that He can ever be ungrateful to those who serve Him. Nor should we think that He takes a personal interest in our earthly affairs, even though they may seem, at the time, to be very important. The evolution of the world is being guided by many greater and lesser Intelligences, and it is not possible that all human beings should be given those things that they think best for themselves. It is well that this is so; for if we always had our desires fulfilled just as we wished them, then we would never progress. As a matter of fact, we do gain that which we desire strongly for a sufficiently long time, but there is a certain orderly arrangement about it all. We have had, in our series of lives on earth, many conflicting desires, and naturally there must be some bal-

ancing of these desires. It comes to this, that we obtain those experiences which we have earned the right to have, and in general we obtain them at such times and under such conditions that our egoic evolution is thereby helped.

It is not difficult to explain why those who serve the Self, or Over-Soul, or God, the most, are the very ones who suffer "the flings and arrows of outrageous fortune." Those who dedicate themselves to the service of God or Man in a true, selfless way, are accelerating their own evolution, and this means a swifter working out of those things which are their due, or karma. If I want to serve the Great Self, then I am willing to work out my old karma as fast as is possible, for it is well known to students of The Law that as long as a man has much of old karmic debt left unpaid, he can not really be of much use in higher work.

The humiliation you speak of is quite natural. But there is always a cause for everything, and surely also for this case. We may not always overcome or avoid the feeling of pain, but let us not yield to it wholly. It is for us to maintain at least a part of our nature above the plane of the ordinary life of the world.

To understand in some small way the relation of God to us, consider the fact that your own physical body is made up of millions of millions of tiny cells which are alive. You do not know a single one of them, nor are you interested in their individual welfare. You do know that they will best fulfil their small lives and destinies if you yourself maintain a normal, healthy life and make your own progress. Perhaps you may feel

that at some time, when you have yourself become a very high Intelligence, these cell lives, or the life within them, may again have a part to play in your organism, your world. Perhaps then they may have become conscious reasoning beings, and they may wonder why the "God" of their universe does not grant their desires, and often seems very unjust. Yet, though your powers may be very wonderful, and though you then might give your attention to the lesser beings in your body, or world, you might have so much more important things to claim all your attention, the doing of which things would mean so much more to the lesser lives as well as to those still higher than yourself, that you would deny yourself the privilege of giving your attention to these lesser beings individually. The Great Intelligence in whose body we live, move and have our being, has surely much greater things to do than to attend to our human desires and petitions. It is not because of lack of love or power that He withholds anything from us which we want. But He knows what is best for Him to do, and that He does. Meanwhile there are many lesser beings than He, who take care of the administration of the world and its creatures. And though these are not so powerful, and not so wise, they have enough power and wisdom to balance the many accounts and karmic adjustments, the credits and the obligations of human beings.

It is not possible for an ordinary human being to explain just why suffering comes to you. To say that "it is karma" means simply that the speaker believes in The Law according to whose workings in orderly ways all earthly happenings

take place. When a student says of a painful event, "It is karma," he does not mean that anyone deserves his freedom from suffering. But he does mean that what happened did happen in accordance with Law, because it was bound to happen, because of the causes which brought it to pass as a logical result of past acts or causes.

Now, a word about those "thoughtless ones" who have caused others suffering, who have not yet developed sympathy and understanding. If such be the true description, then why feel anything else about them than charity? We know that human beings differ enormously in their development of character qualities, and we should not expect more from any one than that which it is in his nature to give forth.

Your statement, "If spiritual evolution means heart-ache and pain, I and they (I think) would prefer not to evolve so rapidly. One has *all Eternity* to progress. I would like a reasonable rest and refreshment by the wayside." deals with a very vital question. Now, it is not true that "spiritual evolution means heart-ache and pain" without qualification. If a person had nothing but heart-ache and pain, he would be almost sure to fail to evolve. In general, at this time, very rapid spiritual evolution does involve much of suffering but has also the balancing and redeeming quality of inner peace and joy. And all of us who want it so, will have more than "a reasonable rest and refreshment." After a short and painful earth-life will come a comparatively long and blissful period of heaven-life. In our ordinary life people do not mind making sacrifices and suffering pain, in order to attain

some material advantage. Then why not apply the same idea to our higher self? Can we not afford to suffer much in physical bodies, if thereafter we have a long time of heavenly life, in which the bitter experiences are transmuted into faculties and wisdom, that we may be the better fitted to go down into another earth-life, after the long rest is over?

The philosophy of life which students of karma hold, is not one of making light of suffering, nor glorifying it. Suffering means always a waste of precious energy. On the other hand, we do not believe in "the pleasures that belong to youth" and the pleasures of life generally, as representing a high aim. We *do* believe in the philosophy of a reasonable balance between pain and pleasure, and we *do* believe that we have the understanding of the world's pains and pleasures that will enable us to derive, from either one or from both, those things which will mean for our true selves much greater power, wisdom and capacity to love.

Mrs. Besant says truly: "The end of all true philosophy is to put an end to pain." But to put an end to pain, we must transcend it; and to transcend it, we must pass through it.

It is a fact that men owe a big debt to Nature. What they are and what they have, they owe to Nature. So we must be willing to pay our debts, and we can just as well make it an occasion of inner joy even while our outer personal bodies may have to bear some acute discomfort and pain.

We must never forget that the experiences of life are very, very insignificant when compared with the attitude which we take toward them.

Curiously enough, you have expressed a great

truth in the words, "I tell myself it is no use to hope." But if this means that you take up an attitude of despair, then this is a matter which needs radical changing. The man who understands the workings of The Law, does not hope for anything; he does those things which seem to him to be the necessary things to do in order to bring about those ends and aims which are for him the highest. After having done them he simply trusts in The Law to produce the necessary effects. If the results are not those which he had in mind, then it is simply that other and older causes had something to do with the changing of his plans.

You say that you "can not see the justice, nor the working, of karmic law in the lives of the happy, prosperous, heartless people" about you. Remember that they are perhaps not of your own age in soul evolution. They may not have the same lessons to learn as you have; or their lessons may be much easier. And if they are not making good use of their opportunities, why, then they must inevitably experience lives of greater hardship, in which they will have to struggle hard to maintain themselves. We can not see the justice of karmic law by merely looking at single incarnations, or earth-lives, for The Law has *all Eternity* to balance the accounts of men, just as you and I have *all Eternity* in which to make our progress.

Suppose you look at the lives of young children, who may be happy, prosperous and perhaps also heartless. Why is the period of childhood usually a happy one? Because they must first grow to something of maturity before they can be ex-

pected to face the world's work and difficulties.

To study karma in a single life-time, you must study your own karma. You will see, if you are earnestly seeking for the truth and the light, that you are not only experiencing things which are inexplicable, and therefore to be referred to your former lives on earth for their causes, but also you are meeting the logical results of your works and acts and thoughts and feelings in this present life. Those who are willing to evolve usually receive their karma faster than is the normal rate.

It is sometimes hard to hold to any philosophy of life. But we may at least do one thing. We may always remember that the world moves swiftly along, and the afflictions of to-day will have an ending, every one.

There is one very wonderful remedy for our troubles: We may seek for some one whose difficulties are greater than our own, and help them as far as possible. And usually we do not have to seek very long to find such a case.

If we can turn our attention more to the things that are altruistic and idealistic, and less to the troubles of our personality, then we should do so by all means, for it will help us to be happy.

Let us do our best, no matter what may be the result, and trust in The Law.

X.



THE VALUE OF PRACTICE

Man is a complex being: he has bodies capable of acting in different worlds of consciousness. These bodies serve him as means of acting, of dealing objectively with the things which are found in the various worlds. They are not in any true sense the man himself, but his instruments, his machine. He lives in them, acts through them, affects other beings through similar bodies, and is in turn affected by them through his own bodies. He himself is not any of his bodies, not even the whole group of them.

The use of his bodies for man is three-fold: 1) they enable him to gain experience, through which he grows in content of consciousness; 2) they offer him the means of exercising his spiritual powers, such as the will, in definite ways; and 3) they are the foundation on which the superstructure of his spiritual complex of bodies is slowly but surely being built. It is by action, right action, action in harmony with the law of evolution, that the man gains this three-fold result, for which he has come into material bodies to earth-life.

When a man realises the plan of evolution, the progress that he as ego is striving to make, and the ways by which he may move forward in his own evolution,—when he has understood and accepted the great truths of karma and reincarnation,—then he sees clearly that he must make full use and wise use of his bodies. He must work with them, in them and through them with great power and skill. He must try to do his work as nearly perfectly as possible. He must

make full use of the time when he may be active, for after the day "the night cometh when no man may work." It is through right action, well-chosen and carefully done, that a man may work out his karma of the past and avoid making hindering karma for himself in the future.

While man works in the bodies of his personality, he is necessarily under many limitations, and one of the greatest of these is the lack of time in which to devote himself to the real work, the work which counts most for the progress of the world. He has, it is true, twenty-four hours each day, but a large part of this time is used up in various ways which are necessary for the maintenance of healthy bodies but are not directly productive in the greater work. There are many activities which are a matter of daily routine and consume a considerable part of the hours of the day. Also the man often has to learn the routine of some trade or occupation, spending much time in familiarising himself with new ways of doing things and in acquiring skill in working with various tools or machines. And in this routine work he necessarily uses up a large part of his available energy, and has that much less to apply to higher work.

Now there are a few facts which are important in regard to routinistic work. Firstly, in the learning of it the man exercises his bodies in new ways and he is obliged to pay close attention and exert his bodies very strongly. This may all be quite tiresome to the personality, but for the ego himself it means new powers and more growth. If the man resolutely applies himself to mastering some difficult technique, such as neat

typewriting, or better still, proficiency in playing the piano or some other musical instrument, he will not only gain most valuable experience in so doing but he will practice the routine until his bodies become accustomed to the work and can perform it more or less automatically, that is, without conscious supervision on the part of the man himself. Thus the learning of new routines is one of the greatest aids in human evolution.

Secondly, when routinistic activity has been very thoroughly mastered by careful practice, then the man may continue doing that work, over and over again, without spending much conscious effort on it, and thus conserving his energies for higher uses. In the early stages of the evolution of the human physical body, many if not all of the life activities of the body had to be practiced by conscious and long-continued effort until these functionings of the body were so thoroughly learned by the body that they became automatic. Thus, for instance, breathing needed conscious effort and much attention on the part of animal organisms, probably for long ages, before this physiological routine became automatic, as it is in our bodies now. The same is true of the blood pumping action of the heart and the consequent circulation of the blood, the digestion and assimilation of food, and in fact the functioning of any organ of the physical body. Our bodies are very wonderful machines which have learned to do many things that we could not do as well if we, as personalities, had to do them all over again. Yet we, as egos, have gained the powers which we, or the life which later became human, have practiced for such long times in the far distant

ages of the past. The proof of this is indicated by the fact that when we come to be born into earth-life we re-establish the automatisms of our former bodies,—breathing, digesting, walking, talking, etc.,—in a comparatively short time. In this we are aided very materially by the physical matter which makes up our bodies and which has been given long training, and therefore needs very little effort to cause it to do its part in the particular organ of our body in which it happens to be a part.

When we have learned to act rightly without conscious effort, we have transcended karma.

How are these automatisms established? By earnest effort and constant practice until they are thoroughly learned.

No doubt the question arises in the reader's mind: "How can I ever learn to do all things automatically if I have to practice every one?" The answer is: "You have all the time you need, and as many lives in bodies as are needed. But most important of all, you do not actually have to master all the details of all possible actions, but you will learn certain general principles of action, which will completely govern all the innumerable masses of actions of human life." It is very much the same sort of thing as confronts the young pupil in arithmetic. He has to master all possible problems, but he does not actually solve every conceivable arithmetical problem. What he does is to learn and master a small number of principles and modes of operating with numbers, which will enable him easily to deal with any problem that may come up.

C. S.

PERSONALITY AND IMPERSONALITY

For us who are students of reincarnation the word "personality" has a very definite meaning. It includes those of man's bodies which are only temporary, that is, those which are renewed for every life that the man lives on earth. But, more than that, it also includes that part of the true man, the ego, which has entered into the limitations of life in those bodies. In a loose way this might correspond to what many religionists understand by the soul of the personality. This part of the personality is also a part of the ego, and thus it forms the connecting link between the ego and his expression, the personality, in the more material worlds. And it is this part which survives the periodic deaths of the bodies of the personality,—the physical, the emotional and the mental.

Through the personality the ego, or individual, gains experiences in the worlds which are too material for him to live in as he is. Out of these experiences he gains wisdom and faculties, and he is able to organise his higher bodies more and more perfectly. We can understand this when we remember that all of man's bodies are material and have developed more or less structure and organisation. Now, to obtain a true structure in refined matter, it is usually necessary to make a framework or "skeleton" structure with denser material. Thus any architectural building is first erected in skeleton form, then the other materials are built into this mold, until the finer parts are completed. Frequently the materials of the skeleton, or some of them, are

not wanted permanently and are removed when they are no longer necessary.

Similarly it is with our life in bodies. Each body serves chiefly to help form and build the higher body which is next in refinement. It gives a strong material foundation for the more subtle material to rest upon or against, while it is being trained and shaped into another body, and in this way the more refined body is organised and built according to definite plans. It is the physical human body which first attains a high degree of perfection. Man's emotional, or astral, body is somewhat slower in developing, since it is dependent for its organisation to a large extent on what is first accomplished in the physical evolution. Unless the emotional body of a man is fairly well developed, little progress in the mind or mental body can be expected.

Impersonality is that attitude of the real man, or that quality of his life, which maintains the freedom of the ego, although he may be partly limited by his personal bodies and the lower, material worlds. The impersonal man acts as though he were free, even though he must work as though imprisoned in the body. That is to say, the impersonal man recognises that in his real egoic being he is really an immortal soul, and is not the physical body or the other bodies of the personality. Impersonality means that the man acts, not from the personality as a center, but from the ego. He works through the bodies of the personality, but he does so in such a way that he shows that he does not allow himself to be deluded into the common error that he *is* the personality. To him the bodies are merely his

instruments or machines with which he works, while he knows or regards himself as superior to these instruments and independent of them. The impersonal man works as though he were the ego, from the standpoint of the egoic consciousness as a center; the personal man works as though his personality were the center of his world and the most important thing for him.

What is the importance of living and working impersonally? It is this: the man who lives wholly in his personality and identifies himself with it, is subject to the illusions which belong to the worlds of the personality,—the physical, emotional and mental,—and also the illusions which are caused by his own karma. He will be unable to see the wiser course of conduct in times of doubt and uncertainty, and he will have to experience the full force of the karmic reactions which his own mistaken actions of the past have stored up for him. But the impersonal man is able to see the complicated problems of life from a vastly higher standpoint, and he will be able to do much more nearly what is most in harmony with the larger evolution. He sees the illusions of life more nearly as they really are, and his own personal karma is not able to blind him to its real meaning.

And what is the value of impersonal work? It not only helps the evolution of the man himself, but it helps the whole world. The man's usefulness is greatly increased and sometimes it is multiplied manifold. He is able to avoid making many grave errors and he knows how to submit gracefully to that which is inevitable. He becomes the master of his personality, not its

deluded and ignorant slave, For the impersonal man life is seen as opportunity for growth and service, not as something to be desired for its own sake or because it gives opportunity for the man to gratify his desires and ambition.

How is impersonality to be cultivated and developed? This is indeed difficult, but perseverance and a steady will directed with knowledge will do wonders in changing our old characters. We must know clearly what is the ideal at which we aim and hold it ever before our mind's eye. We must try to maintain our consciousness at a high level, not allowing it to sink into the realm of selfishness and desire and ambition. We must control our thoughts as much as possible, not allowing our mind to wander in its own automatic way in fields that are familiar and agreeable to it. In short, the whole life of the personality must be regulated and kept under the control of the true man, the ego. Then, and only then, will the personality become a most useful tool, a necessary instrument which the man may use to the best advantage.

Does the impersonal life mean that the personality is to be crushed and humiliated? Is the impersonal life painful? By no means. If the personality is perfectly submissive to the will of its lord and higher self, then it can enter into and share the consciousness of perfect peace and bliss which belongs to the free life of the ego. The lower nature is to yield obedient service to the higher, and it thereby is "saved" from the darkness and despair and the temptations of the personal life which is not under a higher guidance and control. The higher protects the lower.

It is true that there will be some pain and suffering and even apparent humiliation for the personality, as long as it allows itself to be deluded at times into working from its own center and for personal gain or pleasure. At times the lower centers of consciousness may be so strongly activated by the forces of nature that the ego, or higher self, loses, for the time, control of his personality. This leads to that kind of suffering which is purifying in its nature. It is knowledge of this fact that enables us to bear this pain with fortitude and without resentment.

How long will it take us to bring about the complete harmonising of the lower consciousness to the will of the ego, which is true impersonality? That is impossible to say, for different men have different karmas to work out, in part, before the state of impersonal consciousness may be successfully maintained in a permanent way. But this we know: whatever obstacle must be overcome will yield finally to persistent effort. We may not achieve impersonality in this lifetime, but that should not delay our starting on the work. Whatever we accomplish now will place us that much nearer our goal and make the work in future lives just that much easier to do. To recognise this fact is itself an indication of our preparedness to begin to try to live the life which is impersonal and selfless.

C. S.



LEAGUE TO ENFORCE PEACE

Those who recognize the necessity of establishing the unity of the world's nations on a basis of international law, enforced by some kind of common power, must see the value of "The League To Enforce Peace." While this may not be the organization which will actually project into existence a union of nations to the end that small squabbles may be avoided, yet its influence will be a potent one in the leading up to the great ideal of a Federation Of The World.

The following are the League's proposals:

First: All justiciable questions arising between the signatory powers, not settled by negotiation, shall, subject to the limitations of treaties, be submitted to a judicial tribunal for hearing and judgment, both upon the merits and upon any issue as to its jurisdiction of the question.

Second: All other questions arising between the signatories and not settled by negotiation, shall be submitted to a council of conciliation for hearing, consideration and recommendation.

Third: The signatory powers shall jointly use forthwith both their economic and military forces against any one of their number that goes to war, or commits acts of hostility, against another of the signatories before any question arising shall be submitted as provided in the foregoing.

Fourth: Conferences between the signatory powers shall be held from time to time to formulate and codify rules of international law, which, unless some signatory shall signify its dissent within a stated period, shall thereafter govern in the decisions of the Judicial Tribunal mentioned in Article One.

If you are in sympathy with the work, sign and send the following form, with or without a contribution:

LEAGUE TO ENFORCE PEACE,
Hon. William Howard Taft, Pres.,
507 Fifth Avenue, New York.

Gentlemen:—

I am in sympathy with the purpose and the proposals of the League to Enforce Peace, organized in Independence Hall, Philadelphia, June 17th, 1915, and wish to be enrolled as an adherent.

FIELD WORK

A Group of the *Legion* has been formed in Hudson, Wisconsin, with Miss Signe Lagerstrom as the leader. The preparatory work for this result was carried on for two years by Miss Serena Flattume, one of the very earnest members of the *Legion*. Miss Flattume expects to extend her work into North Dakota.

Mr. E. B. Hill, formerly of British Columbia, is now representing the interests of the work at Fort McCoy, Fla.

One of the members of the *Legion* has just made to it a donation of a considerable number of fine books.

Our illustrated lectures are again circulating among various groups. Tacoma, Washington and Reading, Pennsylvania will have series of these lectures throughout the winter, and other groups may arrange to deliver lectures. Write to the Secretary of the *Legion*.

Following the Greek Delphic injunction, "Know Thyself," there are being prepared a number of illustrated lectures on the physical evolution of organisms. One of these, *Wonders of Nature: The Living Cell*, was given by Akbar Group, in Chicago. One of our members is at work on a lecture dealing with the American poet-naturalist Thoreau and his philosophy of life. *Karma and Reincarnation in Browning* is another lecture nearly completed. Shakespeare's fine occult comedy-drama, *The Tempest*, will also be ready as an illustrated lecture, in the near future, with an excellent series of slides.

The *Legion* would be very glad to hear from any one who has material for lectures with suitable illustrations. Any suggestions will be welcomed. The *Legion* has need of more people who will work up good lecture subjects.

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