

REINCARNATION

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IS THE HUMAN BODY SACRED?

The world contains many thousands of people who believe in no God, who see only cold known or unknown law in action and who are dwelling in the illusion that a mechanistic scheme of life, unguided by agencies less material than ourselves, can be adequate to maintain the universe as we know it. But the greater number of men think and feel that somehow there is an over-ruling providence that guides our lives and our destinies, holding us responsible, after the measure of our powers of intellect and intuition, for the use we make of life.

Is the human body sacred? Should it be treated solely as a mechanism which we are allowed to use at our own discretion, to be thrown aside as we wish? Or is it not rather to be considered as being a tiny life with which man's higher being is to be associated for a time?

We maintain quite boldly that man's life is continuous, passing, for its expression and growth, from one status and relationship with matter

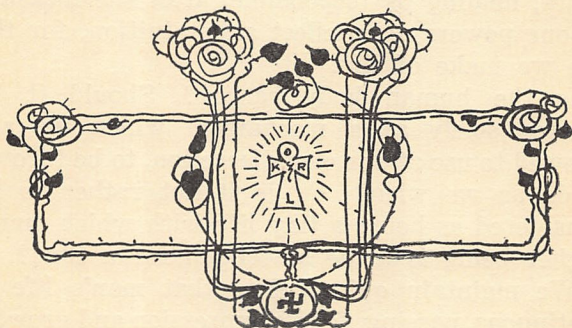
to another, and returning periodically to that association with the physical body which we call incarnation, until he has reached a certain development.

Then who gives bodies and takes them away at his caprice or will or in accordance with complicated laws? We say it is those god-like beings who are the agents of our Creator and Sustainer. And we aver that they act only in accordance with a law which is of love and mercy.

Hence it is not for the whim of medical men or of boards of arbiters to decide when or how life shall be discontinued or snatched away from human bodies. Every human body is sacred; it has a sacred origin, a sacred being and a relationship to the sacred Law.

The mutilation of human bodies by so-called sterilization and the withholding of the aid required to retain life in defective bodies do not properly belong to our determining.

W. V-H.



THE WONDERS OF WILL AND POWER

Suppose we try, not to prove, but to indicate, how useful, nay how needful, it is to realise to some extent the law of cause and effect, before one can get a realising grasp of evolution—of evolution not only in physical matter, but in all spheres of consciousness. Science tells us that this earth of ours started in some kind of a “fire-mist.” From this everything physical has evolved. But there is one thing that science does not tell us. It does not tell us what it is that made the evolution of a solid world out of an incandescent mist possible. The Great Cause, the Great Source, eludes material science, and indeed all science not profoundly occult.

Now, it should be evident that there must have been something—some principle, some energy or force, some hidden invisible power, something absolutely basic and essential—which made it possible for mountains and oceans, rivers and forests and deserts, things monstrous and things beautiful, the whole mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms, and above all man, with his cities, and railroads, his telegraphs, his ships and flying machines, and all the many inventions he has sought out and the works he has made—I say it should be evident to any thinking man that there must be some originating power behind all this, without which it cannot be accounted for at all.

Well, what is it?

My answer is that it is the Will of a Supreme Intelligence. Oh! You say that is trite, it is commonplace; it is after all only the Biblical idea that God “created” all things. Suppose it is:

what matters it? All that matters is whether it is true; that it must be true; and that there is no other hypothesis which can bear even transitory investigation.

Even in our daily life the real creator, as apart from the outward means, is thought or will. When the will to do is combined with the power and resolution to do, the thing is really done when the thought is conceived and the will resolved.

To illustrate: Take a multi-millionaire who has the power to bring about all that money will do. It is frightfully hot in New York, and the millionaire in a fit of pettishness says to himself that he will not stand the heat another season. He sends for his financial major-domo and says to him, "Build me a mansion at a good altitude in the Rocky Mountains. Use all the money and men you want, but get it done." Then straightway he forgets all about it. When the hot season is coming around again the next year, the major-domo says, "That mansion in the mountains is ready for you, sir." "What mansion? I don't remember anything about it," says the millionaire.

He had willed there should be a mansion; had even forgotten all about it, but having once willed it, and the will being backed by power, the mansion became a fact; not in one day, or in twenty; not without great labour and patience on the part of his agents and sub-agents down to the meanest hod-carrier, but it was a fact nevertheless, because he had willed that it should be so.

The illustration is imperfect; but it is sufficient to indicate how will combined with power is the real builder, and all the rest is time, labour and detail. The Will and Power which started the

world on its way was that of a Supreme Intelligence so great that it seems an impertinence for us even to inquire what IT is. The conversion of will into manifestation, of the thought of the millionaire into the mansion in the mountains, the evolution of the universe from the fire-mist,—the fire-mist which in its turn had its origin in virgin matter, virgin space, breathed upon and energized and inspired by the Will of God,—all this is but a natural corollary of will combined with power.

The millionaire builds houses on exactly the same plan as the Supreme Will builds universes. Pythagoras said: "As above, so below."

Material science will never be able to prove or contact this invisible Will which is the Great Source and Cause. This is not to be wondered at, for material science cannot even tell you what the life is that lies latent in a grain of wheat. The only possible way for the scientist to prove that any one grain of wheat has life or generating power within it, is to sow it. Material science will never be able to uncover the secret of life, for the simple reason that life is a spiritual and not a material thing. Life on this planet is the Will of God inspiring matter. The vehicle through which this life, this Will, is transmitted to earth is the sun, which is the physical and secondary source and sustainer of all physical life, and without which physical animation of any kind would be impossible. Set in motion by the Supreme Intelligence, evolution is one long chain of causes and effects which will go on lengthening till the original Will of the Great Originator has been achieved. Karma, then, the law of cause and effect, is the basic law of evolution. It traces

back to the first Great Cause, and from this First Cause proceed all causes and effects. What the First Cause is transcends human thought. I think it idle even to speculate upon it.

Let us take another analogy, necessarily imperfect, the analogy of the alphabet. Now there is nothing to the writer's mind more shadowy and unreal from a physical or a material point of view than the alphabet of a language. Let us take that of the English tongue. The only existence it really has is in people's minds. The letters themselves as we see them are merely lines drawn on a piece of paper—merely symbols. The letters themselves have no physical existence, for what we see are not the letters but merely symbols which are the outward manifestation of the real letters which have only a mental or spiritual existence. Yet from the absolutely invisible twenty-six letters, existing in the human brain, through the action of thought and will, untold myriads of books, weighing thousands of tons have been produced and rivers of literature are poured out daily. The alphabet in itself is an absolutely intangible thing in the physical world. Its only expression in this world is in twenty-six little pictographs variously arranged, and the invisible vibrations which constitute speech.

Years ago some scientist said that the beating of a butterfly's wing is a law in the farthest world. This, unintentionally enough, no doubt, is a picturesque and most striking expression of the karmic law,—that no cause, however trivial, can be, without having its effect on the energetic content of the whole universe. We are apt to apply the karmic law simply to our own personal

experience. It should be remembered that if it is a law influencing our own happiness, misery and development, it is also the foundation law upon which the universe exists and functions; it is the law which keeps the stars in their courses, and as eternal law has its roots in eternal love, it is a law that will bring us, and all of us, to our "Father's house" at last.

John Hawkes.

THE LORD JESUS AND THE PINE TREE

There is a pretty story about the Lord Jesus and the pine tree, which for centuries past the little children in Italy have heard from the lips of mothers and dear old grandmothers.

It seems that the Lord Jesus was quite alone one day in a forest on the mountain side. He had lost his way and was foot-sore, weary and very desolate. A great storm arose, the rain fell in torrents, the wind tore and bent the branches of the trees in a terrible and ruthless fashion and the Lord Jesus could not find shelter anywhere.

Drenched and cold, he besought each tree and shrub to give him protection, and some did make an effort to hold out their branches; but they soon lost courage and drooped beneath the fury of the storm, while others utterly refused to try at all, and this made the Lord Jesus very sad.

Finally He came to the pine tree and asked it for shelter and the pine tree made a great effort and spread itself out like a huge umbrella, holding out its branches with all its mighty

strength and will, so that not one drop of rain should fall upon the head of the Master, and all the night long it shielded Him as He slept.

When the morning came, the storm was over, the sun shone bright and warm and birds were singing. Then the tree dropped a great pine cone at the feet of the Lord Jesus and under each leaf of the cone there was a nut, sweet like the pistachio, and He ate the nuts and was greatly refreshed.

And when He was about to depart, He blessed the pine tree and gave it the sign and seal of brotherhood, which it keeps to this day. If one will carefully divide a pine nut into halves, he will find there two hands, firmly clasping each other, the five fingers of one hand closely interlaced with the five fingers of the other.

It is the beautiful "stone pine" which abounds on the shores of the Mediterranean and which has remained umbrella-shaped ever since it sheltered the Lord Jesus. It is the tree that the great artists have loved to paint. One finds it on many a famous canvas.

But the poor lupino was one which had refused even to try to hold out its branches, and it has become a very stunted, queer-looking little shrub whose seeds are strong and bitter to the taste. But this can be removed by steeping them in hot water, and the seeds when so treated are still liked by many. It also serves as food for cattle.

And the Lord Jesus did not despise the poor little lupino because it was so timid and weak, but He allowed it to learn the lesson of brotherhood in its own slow, queer fashion.

Alice Holt Guagliata.

KNOWING THAT WE PROGRESS

How do we know that we are making progress in our true evolution, in the evolution of the ego through many lives on earth, and not only in the growth and education of the personality? This is a question which naturally comes at some time to every one who has realised the actuality of the larger evolution and the possibility of one's self taking a conscious part in helping to forward that evolution. And it is a question which should be satisfactorily settled, in order that one may feel contented and happy in the certainty of that progress which is being made and also that one may actively do such work as will surely contribute to that progress.

The first thing that we should try to do is to gain the clearest possible understanding and realisation of the Good Law, and of its utter certainty. If we are in any way doubtful about it, we should try to learn more of the truth about it, both by study and by observation of the life around us. No matter how much we may already know, we may always improve our knowledge of karma and of the Good Law which adds Mercy and Grace to the absolute Justice of karma.

We may often have a full intellectual conviction of the truth of the Good Law, but may not yet have made that truth a part of our very being, so that we would spontaneously act in harmony with It. Here comes in the value of making strong effort to establish the best habits and automatisms in our various bodies.

Having realised something of the majesty and certainty of the Law, we may trust confidently

and sweetly in Its taking care of our progress. All we need to concern ourselves with is to do that work and to live that life which we know are most truly in agreement with the Good Law, —beyond this there is nothing more that we can do, and anything else would rather hinder than help the progress we are endeavoring to make. In other words, we will do well to do just those things that we know will help us make the greatest progress, and yet we should not concern ourselves at all with our own progress. To feel much concerned about our own evolution is to strengthen the feeling and consciousness of our separateness as a living being, whereas we know well that what we need most is to cultivate the realisation of our unity with all life and the One Life. And the progress we are striving to make is not to be sought for any benefit that it may give to us, as a separate life, but because it helps the All and means progress for all beings.

How beautifully our best method of progress is indicated in *Light on the Path*: “Grow as the flower grows, unconsciously, but eagerly anxious to open its soul to the air. So must you press forward to open your soul to the Eternal. But it must be the Eternal that draws forth your strength and beauty, not desire of growth. For, in the one case you develop in the luxuriance of purity, in the other, you harden by the forcible passion for personal stature.”

Finally, since it is by working most truly, efficiently and strongly for the welfare of the All that we make progress and become more valuable workers for the perfecting of the world and all its living beings, it is necessary to

make some study of what lines of work we may most successfully engage in. We must try hard to find always the best thing to be done at the most favorable time. And in this we must not forget that we are no longer measuring the success of our work by the standards which the world uses, and which apply only to the personality. Often we may do work which brings no visible result but which may be of the very highest importance and value.

We do not only work along those lines in which we feel most capable, but we also try to do those things which are more difficult, things which we would very much like to become proficient in. In our daily work there should always be represented two entirely different phases. On the one side, we work at those things with which we are familiar, turning out useful work which naturally belongs to that life and environment which surrounds us, and is usually somewhat of the commonplace. But on the other hand, we do well to exert effort strongly in trying to do that work which really belongs in its perfection to our future. By strongly working at difficult tasks in fields of work that are somewhat new and unfamiliar we gain much of that power of general service, of being able to take up all kinds of work when it is necessary or desirable. Working at difficult things develops our spiritual bodies; it aids our ability and power to make use of the energies and forces of will, the most subtle, powerful and spiritual of all the energies and forces which ordinary human beings have at their disposal.

It is very essential that we keep in mind the different parts of our being, the different bodies, and endeavor each day to exercise ourselves in every one of them. It is a law of nature that use brings growth and that disuse brings atrophy. We must remember that the physical body is of the very greatest importance in our evolution, for on its health and strength and refinement of organisation depends the possibility of our progress in the higher worlds of life. So the physical body must be given the right amount of such food as agrees with it and will best serve to build up a pure, refined instrument in which the ego may live and work. Our emotions should be well controlled and allowed to have free expression in the more refined and harmonious ways. Our mind should be strongly used, for this is the period of world-evolution in which mental development is the most easy and the work of the present age. And finally those activities which belong to the true man, the ego, should be consciously taken up each day. These are abstract thinking, universal love and sympathy, and willing strongly.

A most important thing is to recognise that rapid progress for us means rapid changes. We must therefore cultivate especially a very great willingness and readiness to make changes as they become necessary in our spiritual evolution. To aspire to make progress and to cling to our old methods of life, is very much like attaching ourselves to some massive object which is steadily moving on and also to tie ourselves firmly to a post in the ground,—it means pain and suffering until we learn to let go one or the other. And

if we are wise we will let go the fixity of our nature and cling to that which moves always forward, and that is the great stream of evolution.

Whenever we earnestly strive and aspire to make progress, the result can hardly be in doubt. But when we wisely throw in all our wealth of energies in those directions which we have recognised as the most valuable and important for the general progress of all,—then we can not help making rapid progress. We are not concerned with visible results always, but as long as we know we are trying hard to do what we believe to be the very best, we shall go swiftly on, always learning where we can still further improve our methods of living and working.

C. S.

The Law of compensation works in the realm of morals just as unerringly as it does in the realm of mechanics. No man ever gives expression to a beautiful thought, or performs a service, or puts forth effort of any kind, without receiving in the reaction a full compensation for all of the thought, time and energy expended. The operation of the Law of Compensation is universal. It does not differ in essence whether in the realm of the physical, the spiritual, the intellectual or the ethical. The only variation in the operation of this inexorable law is in the element of time. It works in some relations with greater speed than in other relations, but it works with the same precision in every case. "Give and it shall be given unto you" is a statement of scientific accuracy, and is to be confirmed in the experience of every person who thinks of his experiences and traces the effects back to the causes. Nothing happens by chance and happiness now is the result of the thoughts, sentiments and actions making for happiness in the days, months and years that have gone.

Thomas M. Stewart, in "Oriental Consistory."

MEMORY OF OTHER EXPERIENCES

Ever present in the minds of men, just now, is the thought as to which nations will be victorious in the present great conflict, and even more often comes the question, Which ones shall pass from power down the ages? Will there dawn a new civilization; is this the "swan song" of the present one? Which one, of these nations, which now stands proud of its achievements, confident that it will stand throughout the ages, shall, like all the past civilizations and powers, pass away, leaving behind it, according to current thought, only the memory of its past greatness?

A recent poem in the *American Magazine*, written by Marshall South, and called "Progress," closes with these lines:

"Behold our progress and enlightenment, we are the people! We shall stand"

—and as they speak they pass."

And when they have passed—what?

As the collective experience of our great world, great lessons are learned from the records of the achievements of nations, but a review of our own lives shows us how comparatively little we learn from the experience of others. To be really learned, the experience must be our very own.

Why then, do the records of the experiences of past civilizations teach us so much, wherein is the value of history? Is it not because the past achievements, these glorious deeds of heroism, the patient researches, the wise judgments of government are more to us than a record of the deeds of other men? Why is it that the skill of a long forgotten hand in some ancient sculp-

ture, some old carved ivory thrills us? It is more than just an appreciation of the beauty of form, it is a memory of a time when we too wrought in similar fashion.

Here then is the real value of history; that it is not a record of men who wrought and passed forever from the theater of the world, but the record of our own times in other lives; the record of our own actual experiences. When we had outgrown the ideals and thoughts of a civilization, it passed and, reborn, we built the new one, keeping what was valuable, rejecting that which we had outgrown.

The scenes shift, the play goes on, with always the same dramatis personæ, and when the play is over, when the Great Director calls us before the curtain, we shall all appear to join in the great diapason of joy and praise.

Maud McDonald.



The following clipping from a Chicago daily paper is taken from an article on the war by the Countess of Warwick, being an appreciation of Sir John French. It was printed after censoring and many changes in the *London Daily Express*:

In the conventional sense he has no religion, and yet I regard him as one of the most religious men I know. His views of the hereafter are clear; he is confidently assured of the soul's survival, its reincarnation, the fulfilment of its ambitions. He is an idealist, an enthusiast, a man who could not act dishonestly if he tried, terrible in his strength, resistless in his purpose, tireless in his aims.

SELECTIONS FROM NASIR-I-KHUSRAW

A gifted poet of Mohammedan Persia was the Ismaili propagandist and traveler, Nasir-i-Khusraw. Born about 1005 A. D., he lived at first a worldly life, holding a government office in Khorassan. At forty years he gave up wine and made the pilgrimage to Mecca. He visited Egypt, admired the splendor and wise rule of the Fati-mide Caliphs, and was initiated into the secret society of the Ismailis. The laws of karma and reincarnation were well known to him.

My mind with its meditation is a fair and fruitful tree,
Which yieldeth its fruit and blossom of knowledge and chastity.
Would'st thou see me whole and completed? Then look, as besseems
the wise,

At my essence and not my seeming, with keen and discerning eyes.
This feeble frame regard not; remember rather that I
Am the author of works which outnumber and outshine the stars
in the sky.

God, to whose name be glory! me hath exempted and freed
In this troubled life of transit from the things that most men need.
I thank the Lord Almighty, who plainly for me did trace
The way to Faith and Wisdom, and opened the Door of Grace,
And who, in His boundless mercy, in this world hath made me one
Whose love for the Holy Household is clear as the noonday sun.

* * * * *

O dark and ignoble body, never on earth have I seen
A fellow-lodger so hurtful as thee, or a mate so mean!
Once on a time my lover and friend I accounted thee,
And thou wast my chosen comrade in travel by land and sea.
But fellest of foes I found thee, spreading thy deadly snare
To entrap me, whilst I of thy scheming was heedless and unaware,
Till finding me all unguarded, and free from all fear of guile,
You strove to take me captive by treachery base and vile
And surely, but for the Mercy of God and His Gracious Will,
Thy rascally schemes had wrought me a great and enduring ill.
But not the sweetest nectar could tempt me now, for I know
What to expect at the hands of so fierce and deadly a foe.
Sleep, O senseless body, and food are thy only care,
But to me than these is Wisdom better beyond compare!
'Tis the life of a brute, say the sages, to dream but water and grass,
And shall I, who am dowered with reason, live the life of a
soulless ass?

I will not dwell, O Body, with thee in this World of Sense;
 To another abode God calls me, and bids me arise from hence.
 There are talent and virtue esteemed, not food and sleep;
 Then enjoy thy food and slumber, and let me my virtue keep!
 Ere me from their earthly casings uncounted spirits have fled,
 And I, though long I linger, may be counted already dead.
 Through the lofty vault of Ether with the wings of obedience I
 One day shall soar to the heavens as the sky-lark soars to the sky.
 Fearful of God's Fore-knowledge, quaking at God's Decree,
 Is the mass of my fellow-creatures, yet these are as guides to me:
 "Speak of the first as 'Reason,' call the latter 'the Word'"—
 Such was the explanation that I from a wise man heard.
 Being myself in essence a rational, logical soul,
 Why should I fear myself? Shall the Part be in fear of the Whole?
 O man, who dost rest contented to claim the Determinist's view,
 Though you lack a brute's discernment, must I lack discernment too?

* * * * *

Though the heady wine of success should all men drug and deceive,
 Pass thou by and leave them, as the sober the drunkards leave.
 For the sake of the gaudy plumage which the flying peacocks wear,
 See how their death is compassed by many a spring and snare!

"Thy soul is a book, thy deeds are like the writing:
 Write not on thy soul aught else than a fair inscription:
 Write what is wholly good in the book, O brother,
 For the pen is in thine own hand!"

Thy body to thee is a fetter, and the world a prison-cell:
 To reckon as home this prison and chains do you deem it well?
 Thy soul is weak in wisdom, and naked of works beside:
 Seek for the strength of wisdom: thy nakedness strive to hide.

Thy words are the seed; the soul is the farmer, the world thy field:
 Let the farmer look to the sowing, that the soil may abundance yield.

Though the courts of earthly rulers have shut their doors in my face,
 Shall I grieve, while I still have access to the Court of the
 Lord of Grace.

In truth I desire no longer to deal with the mighty and proud,
 Beneath whose burden of favor my back would be bent and bowed.

To con the Holy Scriptures, to renounce, to strive, to know—
 These are the four companions who ever beside me go.

The Eye, the Heart, and the Ear through the long night-watches speak,
 And with their counsels strengthen my body so frail and weak.

"Guard me well, I pray thee, and prison me close," saith the Eye,
 "From gazing on things forbidden, and the lust that comes thereby."

"Close the road against me, and close it well," saith the Ear.
 "To every lying slander, to gossip and spiteful sneer."

What saith the Heart within me? "From Passion's curse and ban
 Keep me pure and unsullied, as befits an upright man."

Then crieth the Voice of Reason, "To me was the watch and ward
 Over the Soul and Body given by God the Lord.

THE CASE OF BABY BOLLINGER

In the city of Chicago there was born in the month of November a baby named Allan J. Bollinger, whose body was quite defective, the right ear being entirely wanting. The attending physician could perhaps have saved the life of the child by performing an operation, but on the request of both father and mother, refused to do so. At the age of five days the baby died. The case at once attained great notoriety throughout the country. The doctor has taken the stand that he had not only the moral right to withhold the operation, but that doing so was the right and proper course to pursue. He maintained that he was convinced "that this infant would have grown into a subnormal man, physically and mentally"; he declared "that he would not foist useless monsters on the state and society for abstract sentimental reasons."

A coroner's jury of six physicians of good standing investigated the case, to determine whether the doctor was guilty of manslaughter in allowing the child to die. Their verdict, after several hours of deliberation, was as follows, omitting the full description of the defects:

We find from the evidence presented and from investigation that Allan J. Bollinger died from the effects of an incomplete intestine.

We believe that a prompt operation would have prolonged and perhaps saved the life of the child.

We find no evidence from the physical defects that the child would have become mentally or morally defective.

Several of the physical defects might have been improved by plastic operations.

We believe that morally and ethically a surgeon is

fully within his rights in refusing to perform any operation which his conscience will not sanction. We find no reason to believe that the parents of Allan J. Bollinger were deprived of the privilege of consultation.

We recommend strongly that in all doubtful cases of this character a consultation of two or more surgeons of known reputation for skill, ethical standing and broad experience should decide upon the advisability or inadvisability of operative measures.

We believe that the physician's highest duty is to relieve suffering and to save or prolong life.

Thus it is clear that the jury of physicians, while holding the attending doctor legally innocent and within his rights, practically condemn his course in withholding the operation, from the viewpoint of ethics. Moreover, from their own careful postmortem investigation of the case, they found the child not nearly so defective as the doctor had supposed it to be, in fact they found and declared that there was no evidence which would warrant a belief that the child was either morally or mentally defective.

Public opinion, which at the beginning was almost won over to the doctor's views, was considerably modified or reversed after this verdict was given out. It is now seen that a child was allowed to die which might have been saved and might have become a useful member of society, in fact, for all we know, the child might have become, perhaps, a great helper of humanity.

The helpless babe has come and gone, but the question still remains: What shall we do with those children born defective, imbecile, subnormal or otherwise helpless, such as would become a burden for society to take care of? Opinions are divided: some maintain that nothing should

be left undone to prolong life and make it as comfortable as possible; others would allow to die, or even help painlessly out of existence those who were seriously defective and useless in life.

The question is of the utmost importance, and it should be most carefully considered. It involves the attitude of the people and nation as to how life and the human body should be regarded, whether from the point of view of usefulness to society, or from a larger "abstract sentiment" of divinity in humanity, or perhaps from a middle ground of human mercy and love.

If it should come to be the view of the majority that the state should kill those children who are very defective or utterly useless, and prevent by surgical means other unfortunates from the possibility of having offspring, then there would be raised the ever-present question: Where are you going to draw the line? Whom will you kill or mutilate and whom will you allow to live without harm? Are you ready to face such questions?

Even those who favor doing away with the worst cases can easily see that any such practice, when once made legal, would lead to constant difficulties. Would it not be wiser and much more humane and merciful to refrain altogether from interfering with the work of Nature, except where life may be aided and the body improved?

The student of karma and reincarnation understands that there are very definite causes which produce defective personalities: these causes represent active, living energies, and they must inevitably work themselves out at some time and somewhere. If they are checked at one point, they will re-appear elsewhere. The parents of

defective children have certain definite lessons to learn; they have, furthermore, themselves brought that undesirable result upon themselves. If they cast off the responsibility of caring for their own defective child, then this unwelcome karma will at some future time present itself to them again, perhaps in a form which can not be avoided.

To refute the argument of those who believe that the apparent usefulness of a child should determine whether it is to be allowed to live or not, it is only necessary to point out that human knowledge is not equal to the task of discriminating correctly, at least in many cases. What a loss would the world have suffered if Helen Kellar had not been allowed to live and develop!

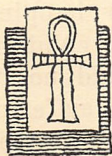
The physician's highest duty is to relieve suffering and to save or prolong life.

And the reincarnationist would add to that:

A very sacred thing in our universe is life. Man should never destroy or interfere destructively with that which he has not the power to replace, or to create in the first place.

Let us do what we can to help men to a better understanding of life and death and the wonderful law of karma, to the end that human pain and suffering may be lessened and karmic retribution avoided.

C. S.



WHAT RESPECT DO WE OWE TO LIFE?

In this age of commercialism and material progress the value of a human life seems to have almost come to be judged by standards of material usefulness alone. When a life is lost in a railway accident through the fault of railway officials or train crew, it is customary for the family of the dead person to claim from the railway a sum of money as "damages" for this loss. This money may have originally been intended to represent the earning power of the dead person, but this idea has become somewhat confused with the life itself. Yet when people stop and reason on the problem, they are usually able to see the logic of the fact that a life can not be measured in terms of material wealth,—it is a thing of a higher order of value. Money can procure many things, but no amount of wealth can cause a dead body to come to life again.

For people who do not realise the truth of the laws of karma and reincarnation, life can only be regarded as having value because of the pleasures to be obtained and the usefulness of the life to the human race. To such a man his own life is regarded as having value if he may experience joy and happiness, while all the other people of similar attitude will regard his life valuable in proportion as it is useful to humanity in producing greater happiness. It may even seem desirable that children born with very defective bodies should not be allowed to live, for this would mean suffering for these unfortunate ones and a great expenditure of energy on the part of society in caring for them.

The answer to such a position, the answer which ought to be easily grasped by all men, is that if we treat life as if it were a matter of business investment, of material gain or loss, we inevitably violate the ordinary human feelings of respect for life, and in so doing we degrade ourselves. Even though death should end all, it would still be true that a decreasing respect for life would mean a positive deterioration of the human race. There is abundant evidence to be found all throughout history to show that human civilisation has progressed hand in hand with the growing respect for life and the heightening of the tenderer qualities of human character, such as compassion, mercy and sympathy. It is only too well known how selfishness and lack of the larger ideals of life have hardened the hearts of people and kept them bound down to a low rung of the ladder of human evolution.

But is this all that can be said in favor of an increasing respect for life? Are there no other facts to be considered; is there no other point of view to be taken?

The truth is that a human earth life is but a partial expression of a permanent and larger life, —that of the true man or individual, the human ego. A single earth life, considered by itself alone, is merely an incident, a temporary appearance, and can have no real value attached to it. But if the life is considered in its relation to the permanent life, in the light of karma and reincarnation, it is immediately seen to be of the greatest value, for it helps directly in the growth and evolution of that larger life. Each incarnation of the ego in a personality gains experience

for the ego and enables him to exercise his already developed powers and faculties and bring new ones into action. And it is a beautiful truth that the ego may grow through the painful experiences and sufferings in a defective body, and not only through earth lives of beauty and happiness. Just as a man in the personal life must contact the darker side of human experience in order to develop his whole nature, with all its virtues and noble qualities, so the ego must have all kinds of experience through his many successive personalities in order that he too may grow strong and master the temptations to indulge his lower nature in the pleasures of the sense gratifications, and perhaps more important still, that he may learn the laws of nature and of evolving life. The ego is to develop an ever increasing power to use his free will and to use it in the right way, in harmony with the Divine Will. As he does that he himself develops the latent qualities of divinity within his being.

Is there anything sacred about life? Yes, and more than this, it is wholly sacred, and the only sacred things are those which relate to life and its meaning. Life as we know it, is an expression or manifestation of the One Life, the Over-Soul, the One Being who maintains separate lives that they may grow into the Divine Consciousness.

Everything about life is sacred. Even the physical body of man is symbolical of the Body of the Supreme Being. As the tiny cell-lives in a physical body are related to the one life that expresses itself as a unity through that same body, so these lives of our physical organisms are related to the Life of the Solar System, the Body

of the Over-Soul. The sacred oath of Hippocrates, the ancient physician, was: never to do any harm.

High authorities, called the Lords of Karma, have charge of the planning of human lives in bodies, so that the human egos may best learn, in orderly fashion, the lessons of living and of evolving. There is no human birth or death whose time and circumstances are not definitely planned by these authorities. Therefore birth and death are sacred ceremonies and should be thus regarded. It is the work of other beings to link egos to physical bodies and to sever this connection at the appointed times. Men have no right to take this work upon themselves; it is their duty to maintain and protect life as much as lies in their power. To inculcate generally among men the idea that they have the right to withhold life or to check the fullest development of bodily organs, would be a moral misfortune to the whole human race.

It is regarded by most men as a sad thing when a normal, healthy and promising babe dies in a beautiful home, all prepared for taking care of its growth and training into a useful member of society. But the teachings of karma indicate that there was a definite reason and a necessity for this, although the parents and friends may be entirely ignorant of the nature of the reason. Nothing ever happens without a just and sufficient cause. The parents may hold either one of two extreme attitudes toward their personal loss. They may allow themselves to be violent in their grief and lament, and bitterly resent the fate that has befallen them, and refuse to find their true relation to the event; or they may

accept the situation sweetly and graciously, and without resentment, recognising that there is a reason why they were bereaved, and determining, if it be possible, to find that reason. In the first case they refuse to acknowledge the Law; and in the other, they accept the Law and try to live in harmony with it. The first attitude will make it practically impossible for the parents, in their personalities, to learn the lesson which was presented to them; in the other, they will learn it if it is possible and desirable.

What are the general facts connected with the death of a promising child in a loving home? The parents are aroused from their happy dreamings to the stern realities of life. They are made to realise by their own experience just what it means to lose a loved one, an experience which they saw happening perhaps many times before in other families without knowing what it really meant. Through their own loss they are made to feel sympathy for others, to understand more of human nature and to cast away some of the feeling of separateness. Is not such a result worth much suffering and sense of loss? As to the ego who was linked to the baby body, he also has his lesson to learn, his karma to work out, but the loss of the infant body is but a very small loss to him, and soon he will find another embodiment in which to continue his gaining of experience and knowledge and faculties.

As to children born with great bodily defects, who will say that they ought to be prevented from living, or even that something ought to be neglected so that they may die "a natural death"? Perhaps the defective body may be the means

whereby a great genius may enrich the civilisation of the world,—such cases have happened time and again. Or even if the child did remain helpless and a burden to others all throughout its life, perhaps the ego would gain just what he needed and was entitled to have in the way of earthly experience. Were it intended by the law of karma that the child should die at any time, early or late, then no amount of care and medical skill could save it. The question of when death should take place may easily be left to the law of karma and its administrators.

Not only is life sacred and to be held sacred, but the body in which it expresses itself is to be regarded as sacred, for it belongs, for the time, to the ego and furnishes him with the means of gaining just that experience which he needs in his larger evolution. *To modify any of the organs of the body, by surgical methods or any other, in such a way that a defective or imbecile may be deprived of a natural function for the purpose of making it impossible for him to procreate and perhaps hand on his defects to his offspring, is a moral crime, and that nation which adopts or countenances such a practice invites upon itself a terrible national retribution.* Such nations as live in harmony with Nature and The Law draw to themselves a blessing and greater opportunities for rapid progress. But those ill-advised nations which violate the fundamental laws of life, are sowing the seeds of national corruption, decline and dissolution.

To kill outright or allow defectives and unfit persons to die, or to prevent their propagation by

violent and unnatural means is not a wise method of improving the human race. The safe and sound method is by improving those who are fit. It is by the vanguard of the army of humanity that great victories may be achieved, not by the elimination of the laggards and unfit camp-followers. Constructive ideals should be made use of, not methods of destruction of the weaker members of humanity, who are a part of it and the result of its own erroneous actions of the past.

Too many parents or couples who might become parents, shirk the responsibility of raising a number of children. If their motives are selfish, if they do not want to take the extra trouble of caring for the children, then they fail in the respect they owe to the sacredness of life. A nation in which very many people avoid parenthood, must surely deteriorate, not only because of "race suicide," but because there will be a karmic reaction to such an attitude, which will surely, according to the law of karma, bring very undesirable reactions to the nation.

Life, then, should be regarded as sacred and inviolate. It is a part of the Life of the Supreme Being, that part which we can observe and honor. The physical body should be regarded as the temple of the living man. It should never be interfered with or modified, except to render it more fully able to give expression to the life which dwells within the temple. Men who have not the power to create life at will, should make it their constant endeavor to improve the conditions of life, never to hinder life from expressing itself as freely as possible. By holding to the sacredness of life we may hope some day

to understand some of the inner mysteries which belong to it.

Eugenics, the science of the practical improvement of the physical and moral natures of the human race, is a very noble study. But eugenics surely does not imply that any such measures of improving the human race physically as the arbitrary elimination of the unfit and the defective members of our humanity need be adopted or countenanced under the law. There are many methods for improving physical bodies which do not contemplate any practices about which there can be any moral objections. To connect any of the destructive practices discussed above, with the spirit of true eugenics would be a thing much to be deprecated.

Let us have Life, more free and more abundant!

C. S.



A PRAYER

O Lord, teach me Knowledge born of "the Wisdom of the Ages, that I may sympathize with, and appreciate, all living things. Guide me on to the "Path of Zeal" without ambition, Hope without Fear, Strength without Pretension, Love and Serenity without Selfishness.

Make me humble in mind, meek in spirit and of heart, that I may neither be flattered by Praise, nor offended by criticism. Above all, my Lord, teach me how to live Thy universal Law of Love, that at last I may attain divine Perfection.

A LETTER FROM A GRATEFUL STUDENT

The following letter was received by a member of the *Legion*, and sent to Headquarters. It shows how very desirable it is that our public libraries throughout the country be supplied with subscriptions to this magazine. Even if the readers of the magazines may not often be so fully ready for the truths taught, they will be helped.

Your nice letter, together with the application form, has been received, and I desire to thank you for your kindness in sending it to me. I have filled it in, and forwarded it to the Secretary of the *Legion*.

I may say that the first I ever knew of Reincarnation was from what I gathered from the magazine *Reincarnation* in the Public Library in Wallace.

In looking through some papers in the Reading Room one day, whilst whiling away a few leisure hours, the word "Karma" attracted my attention, and being somewhat inquisitive, I examined the magazine, read and re-read it, and almost felt like pocketing it, and probably would have, had it been the only copy procurable in the world. I jotted down the publisher's name and address, sent along my subscription, and in due time received my magazines.

I can assure you it was the most delightful reading, and just what I had been looking for.

I am not a very good church member, very seldom attend, in fact—yet I have read the scriptures quite a lot, and secured a great deal of practical wisdom, especially from Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, but with all could not, much as I studied and tried, secure a comprehensive explanation from either book or parson as to the Object of Life, and similar problems.

I, like countless other men, am looking for Light and Truth and have always been deeply interested in anything that has for its objective the bettering of man or the tendency to inspire him to loftier resolves and higher ideals. Because I think Reincarnation the most beautiful and reasonable hypothesis so far, I shall continue to subscribe to the magazine as long as it is procurable, and I am grateful to whoever put the magazine in the Wallace Public Library.

FIELD WORK

The Dutch Representative, Mrs. Louise van der Hell, has returned to Holland, and reports great interest among the members. It is planned to expand the work greatly, and use of the illustrated lectures is much desired.

The work in Denmark is being strongly cultivated by our earnest workers, Mr. August E. Plum and Mrs. Sophie Biörnstad. Forty-three new applications for membership have been sent in to Headquarters.

It is a pleasure to report the formation of a *Legion* Group in Portland, Maine, under the able leadership of Mrs. Maude N. Couch. The work in the New England States is very important. More such Groups are needed.

Colorado Springs, Colo., is about to form a *Legion* Group, and stereopticon lectures are already scheduled.

The Groups of Reading, Pa., and Grand Rapids, Mich., are both arranging for a series of monthly lectures.

Denver Group is doing good work in weekly meetings.

Austin Group is now giving an illustrated lecture once every two weeks, and some of the members are at work preparing new lectures themselves.

A Group of the *Legion* has been formed in Wheeling, W. Va., of which Mr. Thos. G. Jenkins is secretary.

BOOK REVIEW

Health and Power Through Creation, by Paul Ellsworth. 157 pages, cloth. Price: \$1.10. The Elizabeth Towne Co., Holyoke, Mass.

The author writes with an able pen. His key-note is, "You are made for success." His cheery optimism can not do else than help those who apply his methods with strength and will. The student of karma, however, would wish to work within this law, earning his right to wield creative power as he goes from life to life.

The chapters devoted to the training of the mind and of memory are particularly well worth studying. Put energy into your thinking, think sharply and clearly, when you really want to think,—that is indeed good advice.

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THE THREE TRUTHS



HERE are THREE TRUTHS which are absolute, and which cannot be lost, but yet may remain silent for lack of Speech:

THE SOUL of MAN is Immortal and its Future is the Future of a Thing whose Growth and Splendor have no Limit.

The Principle which gives Life dwells in us, and without us, is undying and eternally beneficent, is not heard or seen or felt, but is perceived by the Man who desires Perception.

Each Man is his own absolute Lawgiver, the Dispenser of Glory or Gloom to himself; the Decreeer of his Life, his Reward, his Punishment.

These Truths, which are as great as is Life itself, are as simple as the simplest Mind of Man.

Feed the Hungry with them.

From the "Idyll of the White Lotus"