

REINCARNATION

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No. 1

MAN ENMESHED IN KARMA

What a creature of freedom and of fixity is man! Now he may act, in small ways, without interference—as the bird flies; again he must halt and labor or suffer long and grievously, creeping like the snail. He is bound by The Law.

We see this all about us; see how men are tied to the soil or to the sea, to this environment or the other. Most men die as they began in life's activity, without much change or marked advance. It is the slow wandering of the herd over the broad landscape.

What makes this fixity so hard a fact? It is the grooving of the tablets of The Law by the finger of each man. Until the Law is seen—that Law that we make our own fate in the oft-recurring lives—we must delve in partial darkness with the light of duty, of philosophy or of religion. It is sunshine that floods us when we see the fact of persisting life, when we recognize that our lives are not separate from the Great Life and that that Life is more ourselves than is our daily breathing, eating, working!

Men ignorant of the Law are enmeshed in karma as in adamant. Men who begin to see may begin to widen life about them—may begin to hew away the rock and clay in which they are entombed.

To see the great purpose and the plan of our evolving, as spirits and not as mere bodies, is to enquire more accurately the way, to find guidance at the hands of those who know.

The loosening of the karmic hooks that hold us is accomplished by acting for the good of the universal Life, working for the Principle of Evolution.

To help Evolution—that is the thing! Let us study The Plan of God—the way *He* wants things done! When we are working near the heart of His Plan we are near the point from which flows the power of loosing from the bonds of karma.

W. V-H.



Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.
Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

Tennyson.

THE KAISER AND THE WORLD'S KARMA

The following question was recently received by a member of the *Karma and Reincarnation Legion*, and we are enabled to append a copy of the answer given.

Question: Current astrological literature indicates that the majority of astrologers concur that it is written in the stars that the emperor of Germany is doomed to defeat in the war now raging. What is the astrological reason that so many of the world's splendid type of men, and suffering women and children have been sacrificed in order that "but only one man" may fulfill his destiny? Does "the divinity that doth hedge a king" demand such an appalling sacrifice of human life and happiness? Are the lives and destinies of millions of men, drawn from the four quarters of the globe into the war zone, interwoven with the life of the Kaiser that they are impelled by some subtle planetary force to share the cataclysm?

Answer: Before offering any solution to your problem permit me to express my appreciation of the kind phrases in your letter, and my gladness in learning that I succeed in any degree in lifting the view-point of those who study astrology from halting spots to loftier altitudes. Most people are wishful to hitch their wagon to a star, but, alas!, so many are prone to think mainly of their wagon and to consider the star only in its service as a hitching-post!

In the same sense it would be, to my mind, unwise to seek an answer to the problem submitted merely in the grammar of astrology. Your question is so full of thought and sympathy that its answering requires not only the white light of the stars but those many-hued rays which shine into our minds through philosophy.

It is true that if we take a horoscope cast for the hour of birth of Kaiser Wilhelm II. of Germany and compare its aspects with those in the horoscope of his empire, and other necessary figures, we shall inevitably find that the destiny of this able but mistaken ruler is one of ultimate sorrow and utter disappointment, both to him and his country. Long ago I published a reading of the emperor's horoscope indicating the disasters which will assuredly overtake him and his empire through this dire war.

Astrologically we might also associate the universal grief, the ruin of countless homes, the terror and anguish of stricken hearts, and the wounding and death of many good men on both sides of the far-flung battle line, with certain indications very clearly written in mundane figures. The catastrophes which overtake numbers of men and women, may, as you know, be as distinctly read as those which affect the individual and are suggested by the aspects of the chart cast for the nation or the individual.

But to duly answer your question we must go further afield than astrology. We must ask the purpose of life and death and find the solution in the teachings of the great religions of the past and present and especially in theosophy and the ancient philosophies of Asia. As taught therein, men do not live one life but many. This is the meaning of Christ's answer to his disciples concerning John the Baptist, "I say unto you that Elias has come already and ye knew him not." The journey of evolution, through reincarnation, is long but ever upwards, and men learn from life to life until they attain to the image of God.

It would be an unworthy salvation which could be earned in the inadequate space of one life, nor could the finite errors of ignorance in that brief space justify the forfeiture of the divine fulfillment of life's purpose. The path is long but sure.

That which rules the environment, the condition, and the ending of one incarnation is the Law of Karma. Obviously in so pregnant an event as the present war amongst the nations millions of individualities are freeing themselves from the burden of some portion of their karma, by their actions, thoughts, sufferings or deaths. They are sharers in the harvest of the threshing-floor; and each is making new karma of various types and service. Death and suffering cannot be a loss under such circumstances but must be promotion. To onlookers this maelstrom seems to yield only sorrow; but in thinking thus we should do wrong to those who thus die. Let us seek rather that our hearts should be as springs from which well forth clear streams of aidful thought-forms to one and all, no matter how or where or upon which side the man or tear may fall.

Possibly under the laws of karma, no less than under the laws of astrology, (which after all is but one of the books in God's library of Truth which some day all of us will fully understand) the emperor of Germany is merely a means to great and beneficent ends. Unquestionably he is, and has been throughout his reign, the too willing leader of certain military ambitions which for two hundred years have brought a desolate land, largely consisting of marshes and fens, to wit Prussia, into prominence as the head of a great

Teutonic Federation. A famous minister once said, "The industry of Prussia is War"; and it is this industry which to-day has encountered the armed protest of the remainder of the world.

Yet, in the harsh results of this protest I cannot think that the many suffer through or for the ambitions of the one. Rather ought we to view the Kaiser, as the Causer of ultimate and gracious effects; the Saturnine "bridge" by which men may pass to nobler days; the Opener of the gateway through which so many have gone forward upon the road of duty faithfully done.

Nor must we forget that the law of karma applies to nations as well as to men; and that all the nations involved are clearing debts, and perchance making others of more aidful kind.

Then, too, there are the myriad subtle ties of karma and association which bind men to men, and are being interwoven in this great theater of activity in wondrous patterns of good and evil which time shall mellow into softness and beauty. These activities are effected in the case of each individual by the esoteric resultants of past lives, bringing over astrological and other influences into this life, and interweaving the complex planetary tendencies of the many actors in the so-called "catastrophe of the moment."

Ah! Friend, your question is the question of life itself. If we think only as men, its answer might trouble our souls to their depths and fill our hearts with pity. But need God think thus? Our tears are always as the tears of children—and His smile as the love of Him who "saw that it was good."

Maud Lindon.

REINCARNATION IN TIBET

Let us now look at the manner in which the new re-embodiments or re-births of the hierarchs are discovered. On the death of a re-incarnate Lâma his spirit is believed to flit into the soul of some unknown infant who is born a few days after the death of the Lâma. The mode of determining the child who has been so favoured is based upon the practice followed in regard to the Grand Lâma of Lhâsa, which we will now describe.

Sometimes the pontiff, before he dies, indicates the particular place and even the family in which he will be re-born but the usual practice is to ascertain the names of all the likely male infants who have been born under miraculous portents just after the death of the deceased Lâma, and with prayer and worship to ballot a selected list of names, which are written by a committee of Lâmas on slips of paper, and put into a golden jug, and then amid constant prayer, usually by 117 selected pure Lâmas, to draw by lot in relays, and extending over 31 to 71 days, one of these, which is the name of the new incarnation. As, however, the Pekin court is believed to influence the selection under such circumstances, the state oracle of Nâch'un has latterly superseded the old practice, and the present Grand Lâma was selected by this oracle. Lâma Ugyen Gya-tsho relates that the present Nâch'un oracle prophesied disaster in the shape of a monster appearing as the Dalai Lâma, if the old practice were continued. On the other hand he foretold that the present Dalai would be found by a pious monk in person, and that his discovery would be accompanied with

“horse neighings.” The “pious monk” proved to be the head Lâma of Gâh-Idan monastery, who was sent by the oracle to Chukorgye, where he dreamed that he was to look in the lake called Lhamoi-lamtsho for the future Dalai. He looked, and it is said that, pictured in the bosom of the lake, he saw the infant Dalai Lâma and his parents, with the house where he was born, and that at that instant his horse neighed. Then the monk went in search of the real child, and found him in Kongtoi, in the house of poor but respectable people, and recognized him as the child seen in the lake. After the boy (then a year old) had passed the usual ordeal required of infants to test their power to recognize the property of the previous Dalai Lâma, he was elected as spiritual head of Tibet.

These infant candidates, who, on account of their remarkable intelligence, or certain miraculous signs, have been selected from among the many applicants put forward by parents for this, the highest position in the land, may be born anywhere in Tibet. They are subjected to a solemn test by a court composed by the chief Tibetan re-incarnate Lâmas, the great lay officers of state, and the Chinese minister or Amban. The infants are confronted with a duplicate collection of rosaries, dorje, etc., and that one particular child who recognizes the properties of the deceased Lâma is believed to be the real re-embodiment.

To ensure accuracy the names are written as aforesaid, and each slip encased in a roll of paste and put in a vase, and, after prayer, they are formally drawn by lot in front of the image of the emperor of China, and the Chinese minister,

the Amban, unrolls the paste and reads out the name of the elect, who is then hailed, as the great God Avalokita incarnate, hence to rule over Tibet. An intimation of the event is sent to the emperor, and it is duly acknowledged by him with much formality, and the enthronement and ordination are all duly recorded in like manner.

The infant is taken to Lhâsa at such an early age that his mother, who may belong to the poorest peasant class, necessarily accompanies him in order to suckle him, but being debarred from the sacred precincts of Potala on account of her sex, she is lodged in the lay town in the vicinity, and her son temporarily at the monastic palace of Ri-gyal Phodan, where she is permitted to visit her son only between the hours of 9 a.m and 4 p.m. She, together with her husband, is given an official residence for life in a palace about a mile to the west of Potala and on the way to Depung, and the father usually receives the rank of *Kung*, said to be the highest of the five ranks of Chinese nobility.

A most peculiar application of the dice is for determining the successive regions and grades of one's future re-births. Fifty-six or more squares of about two inches wide are painted side by side in contrasted colours on a large sheet of cloth, thus giving a chequered area like an ordinary draught or chess-board. Each square represents a certain phase of existence in one or other of the six regions of re-birth, and on it is graphically depicted a figure or scene expressive of the particular state of existence in the world of man,

or beast, or god, or in hell, etc., and it bears in its centre the name of its particular form of existence, and it also contains the names of six other possible states of re-birth which ensue from this particular existence, these names being preceded by one or other of the following six letters: A, S, R, G, D, Y, which are also borne on the six faces of the wooden cube which forms the solitary dice for this divination.

Starting from the world of human existence, the dice is thrown, and the letter which turns up determines the region of the next re-birth. Then proceeding from it the dice is again thrown and the letter turned up indicates the next state of re-birth from this new existence, and so on from square to square *ad infinitum*.

Thus for the Lâmaist laymen there appear only six states of re-birth ordinarily possible, namely:—

A. The path of the sorcerer; S. Many days' journey; R. The "bent goers," *i.e.*, the beasts; G. The Unorthodox, *i.e.*, a follower of the Bön or pre-Lâmaist form of religion in Tibet; D. an Indian heretic; Y. a ghostly state in Limbo.

But in addition to the ordinary six states of possible re-birth are the extraordinary states of re-birth to be obtained by the *grand coup* of turning up the letter A five times in succession or the letter S thirteen times in succession. The former event means direct re-birth in the paradise of St. Padma and his mythical primordial god, Samantabhadra, while the latter event is re-birth immediately into the grander paradise of the coming Buddha, Maitreya.

Extracts from Waddell's "The Buddhism of Tibet."

RHEIMS CATHEDRAL

A Morn in Spring;
Lifting the mists of sleep from silent towers
Where Clovis, grim, implacable, was crowned
King of the Franks. Its young light showers
A rain of golden beams on littered ground,
On arch uncarved, on column rising high
To swelling roof where master-masons' cry
Commands to busy builders; and the place
Echoes Christ's creed
And labour's need
"Into Thy hands, O God! so may our work find grace."

A Summer's Noon,
Paints with its glowing brush embattled Rheims;
Gilding the armèd hosts, whose banners proud
Herald the Maid of Arc. Her spirit seems
To fall in sunlight o'er the acclaiming crowd
Bordering her path to where, on either hand,
The Chivalry and Church of France now stand,
Tend'ring to Charles a crown; to God a race;
While choristers intone
"Not us; To Thee alone;
"Into Thy hands, O God! so may our land find grace."

An Eve in Autumn,
Sets with crimson stains on clouding sky,
Cast not by sun but fires which tell
The wrath and wrack of men. Wild lightnings fly,
Bringing their thunders in the bursting shell,
Which scatter death; e'en to the wounded 'mid the straw
Spread in God's sanctuary—ruined, resonant with war,
Its altars desolate, save where, with lifted face,
One to death near
Murmurs in prayer,
"Into Thy hands, O God! so may our souls find grace."

J. B. Lindon.

IS KARMA "THE SPIRIT OF EVIL"?

Most religions recognise an evil principle in Nature which is opposed to the will of the Supreme Being, and which works in ways which make evolution difficult and tend to inharmony and destruction. Often this evil principle is personified as an astral being, endowed with intelligence and purpose. Thus the Muhammedan and Christian religions have their "devil" and the Zoroastrians of Persia have their Ahriman, who oppose everywhere the Will of Ahura Mazda.

The man who believes the teachings of karma and reincarnation in their clear modern presentation, admits no such personal evil deity. Yet he believes in the eternal justice working in Nature; he believes that men will suffer the results of their own mistaken actions, that they must be purified with more or less suffering in the intermediate world after the death of the physical body, before they can enter upon the bliss of the heaven life. Furthermore this heaven life is not eternal but lasts for a long period, measured by many centuries, and after the experiences of the preceding earth-life have been assimilated by the real man, the ego, he or rather a part of him, must again enter the limitations of the lower worlds and be reborn and have visited upon him such old, unexhausted karma of his own past lives as may be suitably experienced in that life on earth. He believes that karma can not be evaded but must be outworn and made good; right knowledge alone can guide him safely through life and enable him ultimately to free himself from his old karma, and to avoid

making fresh karma of hindrances for himself.

Is it not true, then, that for the man who believes in karma and reincarnation, there is still a Spirit of Evil, abstract perhaps, but just as active if not more so than the "devil" of popular religions? Is this man's belief not simply like that of other men, except for a little more refining, abstracting from and covering up of plain facts with strange names and difficult conceptions?

The reincarnationist emphatically and correctly answers, "No!" Even if he believed in the reality of evil and sin in the same way as does the religionist, there would still be a vast difference between karma, the principle of justice and of righting wrongs, and that of a malevolent entity, such as the "devil," who is supposed to delight in tempting people into wickedness and wrong-doing. Let us prove this statement and afterwards show that the reincarnationist has a far truer and nobler conception of evil than have the religionists.

Assuming, then, for the moment, that evil and sin are just what the old-fashioned theologians conceived them to be,—heinous, soul-destroying, leading to hopeless damnation,—let us compare the work of the "devil" with that of karma. The "devil" is a being who is outside of the will of God and perhaps even beyond the control of God. He is able to tempt ignorant men and lead them into sin and destruction,—unless they do what the theologians prescribe, all of which is doubtless very helpful for those who really and sincerely believe their religion. Nothing can give to man immunity from the "Spirit of Evil" except an utter devotion to their religion and an unquestion-

ing faith in its creed and teachings, and even these may fail on occasion. The "devil" and his work are outside of the orderly workings of nature, his machinations are irregular and unexpected; they can not be calculated or foreseen, there is no way of dealing with them in a scientific manner, to try to offset their evil effects.

Karma, however, is just the very opposite. It means that there is no being having material bodies who is not a part of nature and subject to orderly law. There is no arbitrary or violent interference in nature: every action has its own logical and necessary part in the ordered relation of things, in the endless chain of cause and effect. Whatever comes to us is the result of our own doing somewhere in the past; whatever we do now will bring to us its exact effect at some time in the future. The law of karma is so exact that one who knew it perfectly would be able to calculate the results of all actions. If karma tempts us now to do something we should not do, it is because we have somewhere in the past sent out the very energies and forces which formed the present temptation. In other words, if there is a "devil," he is ourselves. It is we who tempt ourselves to sin. Only the tempting is not done outside the law, but is a part of it.

But karma has another very wonderful teaching. There is sin and evil in the world, but it is not what most religious people believe it to be. There are the things which oppose right action and favor wrong-doing, but they have their own necessary place in the evolution of life. Evil is only a relative term; in truth, nothing is absolutely evil; everything has its place and purpose

in the Divine Plan which leads all life to higher perfection. What we call evil to-day we very likely called good in the distant past, and what we now call good will sometime become evil, or a hindrance in our growth as immortal egos.

And it is not true that this view leads to laxness in our struggling against "evil"; rather is it true that we realise that we *must* struggle against those tendencies which would drag us down. Our evolution requires that we shall learn to overcome all bonds which would limit us to the things of the lower world, and to break all attachments, one by one. We help ourselves to do this by forming higher attachments, and then drawing ourselves away from the lower, but the time will come when the things which are higher will also stand in our way and must be left behind. This is the progression of man from "evil" to "good"; it can never be stationary for a long time, for evolution means a climbing upward constantly.

C. S.

* * *

I am: how little more I know!
Whence came I? Whither do I go?
A centered self, which feels and is;
A cry between the silences;
A shadow-birth of clouds at strife
With sunshine on the hills of life;
A shaft from Nature's quiver cast
Into the Future from the Past;
Between the cradle and the shroud,
A meteor's flight from cloud to cloud.

John Greenleaf Whittier.

THE PRISONER'S NEW CHANCE

A Reincarnation and Karma lecturer was giving a series of lectures in a Western city, one of which was on the subject of "The Forgiveness of Sins," and just as he was beginning to speak, two young men walked into the lecture hall and at the close of the address they were the first to walk out.

The lecturer told of the forgiveness of sin in a way that opened up new light on that interesting subject; he told of a Law above the laws of men, a Law that governed not only the movements of the stars, the changing of the shores of continents, the coming and going of the seasons of the year, the law that makes for growth in the different kingdoms of nature, but also of a law that governed men and the lives of men.

He said, and strange it sounds, yet true, that this Law was not made to punish or to make hard the ways of justice, but to teach, hence it is called by those who understand, the Good Law.

If a man misuses his opportunities and misdirects the divine life entrusted to him, this waste of opportunity and of life is charged to his account much as a merchant charges an item in a ledger. The ledger in divine things is the Memory of Nature, the bookkeeper is a Great Angel called by the Hindus a Lord of Karma. It is the duty of the Angel to balance accounts, hence a Great Teacher once said, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

This fact in nature explains why so many are born with limitations of environment, of opportunity and capacity. In past lives these people

have misused their opportunities and in this life they are limited and find it harder to do the things they wish to do; but out of their struggles against Fate, as it appears to them, they learn the lesson of patience, and the realization of the value of better opportunity and environment.

Now it is true they do not remember the experiences of past lives but the memory of the lesson learned is built into the inner consciousness or soul memory, as it is sometimes called. What men call faculty, capacity or genius is but memory of the knowledge attained in the man's many past lives.

When a man uses his opportunities well and directs aright the divine life entrusted to him, he becomes a co-worker with God; for God and His Work are ever constructive in Nature, and the Divine Bookkeeper, who is most accurate, credits the man with the right use of his opportunities. Hence such a man comes into new life with little or no limitations of environment and with enlarged capacity and powers to perform.

The lecturer went on to say that the forgiveness of sins comes when the lesson is learned, that most Christians think that to have one's sins forgiven is to have the penalty remitted, but this is not so. A drunkard may repent of his over-indulgence but he has to pay for it with a worn-out body. A man's sins are forgiven when the lesson is learned, and as there are many sins to be forgiven, there is no limit to forgiveness, hence Christ said a man may be forgiven seventy times seven, meaning times without number.

What a joy to know that the Good Law rules over our destiny and not a god of man's concep-

tion who gets angry and demands pain and suffering everlasting as a payment for wrong committed, but instead, man suffers only through ignorance and as soon as he learns his lessons in repeated lives on earth, so soon are his sins forgiven and he is washed clean.

Such is the Law which moves to righteousness,
Which none at last can turn aside or stay;
The heart of it is Love, the end of it
Is Peace and Consummation sweet. Obey.

The lecturer concluded his remarks by saying that every man would have a new chance to make good, even a criminal who may have done a very wicked thing would by repentance be forgiven when he had learned the full meaning of the wrong committed and he would have a new chance in a new body, with a new name, amid new environment and in the dispensation of the Good Law he would not even be reminded of the wrong he had done in the past, and man's hand would not be against him; thus the Good Law works out justice tempered with mercy and love.

When the lecturer had concluded, the two men who came in as he began speaking, hastened out, but later one of them handed him a letter in which he asked the speaker to send copies of the lecture given that night to the inmates of a certain penitentiary; the letter was signed "by an ex-inmate."

Evidently the men were impressed with the thought that a man could have a new chance, a new body and a new name and they wanted their former fellow-prisoners to know this. How very thoughtful in these men to ask that the message

be sent to others; this act of itself shows the hidden Christ-life within their hearts.

Surely we should be glad of the Good Law which tells us of the wonderful new Life, the new Hope, the achievement of our longings and the realization of our holiest dreams.

David S. M. Unger.



REMINISCENCE

Though I am native to this frozen zone
That half the twelvemonth torpid lies or dead;
Though the cold azure arching overhead
And the Atlantic's never-ending moan
Are mine by heritage, I must have known
Life elsewhere in epochs long since fled;
For in my veins some Orient blood is red,
And through my thought are lotus blossoms blown.
I do remember— it was just at dusk,
Near a walled garden, at the river's turn
(A thousand summers seem but yesterday!)
A Nubian girl, more sweet than Koorja musk,
Came to the water-tank to fill her urn,
And, with the urn, she bore my heart away!

Thomas Bailey Aldrich.

VIBRATIONS

In modern science the word "vibration" has come to be extensively used, and its meaning is very general, yet precise and definite. Literature of the New Thought, or advanced thought has also made much of this word,—unfortunately not always in a clear and exact way. To be sure, it can not be expected of all persons that they should use words in their technical meanings as is done in science, nor that they should be used exactly. But if writers persist in using their words loosely and vaguely, it means that their work will not and can not be so helpful as it should be. The present age of civilisation demands above all that thinking and writing be precise and accurate.

What is a vibration? It is a regular, recurrent motion of some particle or object over a definite path, in which the same journey is repeated over and over again. Examples are: the motion of a violin string; the swinging of the clock pendulum; the to and fro movement of an atom in a solid body; and even the yearly course of the earth around the sun. The cycle of the vibration means its course from any point on until this point is reached again in the motion.

Every such vibration has certain characteristics which describe the motion fully. They are: 1) the frequency, or the number of times the particle traverses its cyclic course in one second of time; 2) the amplitude, or the extreme distance from the point of equilibrium which is reached by the particle; and 3) the intensity of the vibration, depending on the amount of energy involved in the cyclic motion. For instance, in

the clock pendulum motion the frequency is equal to one-half the number of ticks per second, since there are two ticks for a complete cycle; the amplitude is the distance from the position of the bob when it hangs at rest, to the extreme position on either side; the energy involved is measured by the work which must be done in lifting the bob from its lowest position into the extreme position, or it is equal to the kinetic energy or energy of motion at the moment of passing by the point at which it would hang at rest.

There are several important facts on which rests the whole meaning and usefulness of the subject of vibrations: 1) the object or body which vibrates has a certain amount of energy; 2) this energy may sometimes remain permanently associated with the moving body, in which case there is a certain permanence or immortality of the vibration; 3) more usually the energy comes to the moving body from some source and a part of it is transformed during the cycle, or handed on to another body or medium. Thus in violin playing the energy is given to the vibrating string by the musician by means of his bowing of the string, then the vibrations transmit energy to the air in the form of sound energy,— this energy increases the life of the atoms and molecules of the air, and after many transformations, transmigrations, the energy is stored up as food and comes back, let us say, to the musician.

Karma, or action, is the history of what becomes of the energy of vibrations, and it teaches that all energies which men use pass through their own peculiar cycles and finally return to their sources, over and over again. C. S.

NOTHING IS EVER LOST

To the man who regards his present life-time as the only one which he spends on earth, it must be a matter of profound regret, if not of sadness, that so many of his efforts are failing to accomplish the desired results. When measured by modern standards of efficiency, his work often makes but a very weak showing. He strives and exerts himself to the uttermost but circumstances over which he has no control or which he could not foresee and make allowances for, frequently bring his plans crashing to the ground.

Purblind man looks too much on material gain and results accomplished as the things that are the indications of his measure of success. And when the material results are weak or wholly wanting, he either calls himself a failure or he curses fate. He allows himself, an immortal being, to be cast down in spirit by material adversity, and to be elated and exalted by material success. Is that the way to overcome matter?

Nothing is ever lost in our universe. Nothing *can* ever be lost, for all things belong to the universe and can not leave it. The successes and riches of the material world, what are they? Merely experiences for the evolving units of consciousness; simply lessons which must be learned and left behind us as we grow in the wisdom which belongs to the things that are eternal and undying. Though apparently solid and enduring, the realities of the physical world are but the fleeting shadows which stand out sharply for a moment, then swiftly disappear from consciousness in the dissolving past.

The things which appear so lasting are but forms of thought, filled with the wealth of Mother Nature,—with energy, indestructible and eternal. But the forms are only fields of exercise for living energy or consciousness, and consciousness demands a constant changing. The forms we see about us are but the outer garbs or dresses of life and energy within.

What is it, then, that lasts throughout all time? It is life, or living energy. What is the reality which alone is worth our seeking and our efforts? It is wisdom, the refinement of the living energy which constitutes our active being. We can not hold the forms of energy, but we can gain the power to respond in consciousness to many ranges of vibrations of living energy. This ability to respond is the inner, spiritual understanding which is wisdom.

We live a long succession of lives in physical bodies. We have many opportunities to learn the lessons of life, which together make up the Law, or the Life. We may spend our energies on forms, material objects, or we may spend them in acquiring wisdom, and in helping our fellow-beings to grow in their evolution. The energies we use for selfish purposes are bonds of attachment which tie us, through karma, to the wheel of births and deaths. The energies which we use wisely, without thought of personal gain, are wings to carry us on, through karma, away from karma, the law of necessity, to the life and the will that are free.

L. B.

IN THE GARDEN HOUSE

Evening Twelfth

Inquirer: The more I study karma, the more I realise what a wonderful power is contained in thought. I believe that it is literally true that "That on which the mind is continually dwelling will inevitably be that which the man shall become."

Student: I am glad you believe it. That will enable you in the course of time to find so many verifications of that statement that belief will become knowledge. Our thought is creative, and by means of thought we build our character for all the future. Right thought is even more important than right feeling and right action: it is the most powerful of the three, and it controls the other two. Action is the result of thought always, and feeling is that which is guided by thought and helps to bring about action. Thought is the engineer, while feeling is the living relation between the parts of the engine that gives action.

Inq.: I find feeling hard to understand. Would you please explain this a little more fully?

St.: I will try, though it is really difficult. It seems to me that feeling depends on the mutual relation of the parts of one's being. In particular, for any man, it depends on the inter-relation of the mental body and the physical body. If this relation is fairly exact and appropriate, a sense of harmony results and the man feels well. If the mental and physical bodies are not in good adjustment with each other, then there is inharmony and the man feels ill or uncomfortable. Now, the astral body is actually the relation be-

tween the mental and physical bodies and it is in the astral body that the consciousness of feeling has been developed and specialised.

Inq.: Then you might say that the astral body is an indicator of the harmony or inharmony between the other two bodies?

St.: Exactly so. At least this is true for our present stage of human evolution. The astral body might be said to *serve* as an indicator of the harmony or inharmony of the relation between the mental and physical bodies. Later on in evolution it will become an independent instrument of action which may be used for work in the astral world just as the physical body is used to move about and act on physical matter.

Inq.: In what way does thought control feeling, or the astral body?

St.: It does this by truthful or correct thinking. That is to say, if the man thinks in accordance with the truth, there will be established the most harmonious relation between the lower bodies, and the astral body will be healthy and normal. The man will then feel well; he will hardly be aware of his astral body.

On the other hand, if the man thinks falsely or untruthfully, there will not be a perfect relation between the bodies, and this may be so great an inharmony that pain will result. Incorrect thinking will tend to weaken the relation between the bodies, and will bring about lack of control of the astral body, as is the case, in exaggerated form, for lunatics.

Inq.: Pain is not always caused by thought, however, is it?

St.: Oh, no. There may be some imperfection

or disturbance in the physical body which will mean an imperfect relation between that body and the higher ones. Or the astral body may be itself harmfully affected. That also means a lack of harmony and adjustment between the mental and physical bodies. But the most acute pain for sensitive people is that which comes from mental disturbances, that is from false thinking, either actively or passively, that is to say, receiving and accepting false thoughts of the outside world, thoughts of other people.

Inq.: A feeling of harmony and well-being is not always desirable, is it?

St.: It is desirable to maintain as much as possible the sense of well-being. But feelings of pleasure may not always be desirable to have. Pleasure means an increase of life, but it may be felt in connection with acts and thoughts that are actually harmful to the real man, the ego.

The feeling of harmony may not at all be an indication of a desirable condition. Harmony may exist when there is not much complexity in the different bodies, when there are not many parts of the human machinery to be geared together. Such a harmony is merely lack of development. The feeling of well-being in a savage may mean merely that he has had a good meal.

The man who wishes to hasten his own evolution so that he may be a more useful member of the human family must not mind pain and lack of perfect relation between his bodies. That is, he must not be at all discouraged by them, while doing what he can to improve the relation, always. Evolution means growth and greater complexity of bodies and greater refinement in their inter-

relations. While this growth is going on, and especially if it is rapid, there will be "growing pains"; there will be much work in bringing new parts of the bodies into relation with all the other parts; and there will be more or less discomfort. Of course, as long as there is pain and discomfort, there is not a complete harmony of the human machinery with the great Truth, with the facts of the higher worlds or all the worlds; and our evolution consists in gaining the power to harmonise more and more of our relation with Truth, to be able to contact more and more of the Truth, to be of greater service to all beings.

Inq.: Then it is really true that those who try very hard and earnestly to improve their character and live a life of service are likely to encounter more difficulties and even more suffering than those who live more selfishly?

St.: Yes, it is true. But for those who give themselves in service to "try to lift a little of the heavy karma of the world," as *Light on the Path* so beautifully puts it, it is true that these difficulties will be fully compensated by an ever-increasing joy and peace and well-being.

C. S.



COLORS OF THOUGHT-FORMS

Question: Do those who see thought-forms see the color of their own thoughts, or the colors of the other persons' thoughts?

Answer: Both, more or less closely interblended, so that only a highly trained and gifted clairvoyant can tell the difference. This needs to be explained in greater detail. It involves a discussion of what colors really are.

This question is of the very greatest importance, as it involves the mechanics and physics of the super-physical worlds of matter: the astral, or emotional, world and the mental, or thought, world. It is also of the greatest importance in the ordinary study of psychology in the problems of perception and the association of the elements which enter into our thoughts and feelings.

We must first consider briefly what happens when we have a simple perception. Suppose the perception is "a green tree." The object, a green tree, has received everywhere upon its surface more or less diffused light which came from the sun, and is nearly pure white in color. The leaves of the tree absorb a large part of this light-energy, using it in those chemical transformations which yield nourishment to the tree, enriching its sap with such chemical substances as the tree needs for its growth. A part of the light is reflected at the surface of the leaves, and in this light that particular kind predominates which gives rise to the color-sensation "green." This reflected light is sent out in all directions and a very little enters the eye of the man who has the perception, or "sees" the tree.

What happens? The light causes certain changes in the delicate mechanism of the eye. These changes may be partly chemical, but are mostly of electro-magnetic character. These changes affect the sensory nerves which run like telegraph lines to the brain-centers. There the energy transmitted is communicated in part to the finer material of the astral body and the mental body. The consciousness of the man may thus be affected or drawn into the disturbance, and so the result is that he "feels" in the vibrations of the astral body and "thinks" in those

of the mental body. In the etheric matter of the brain, however, the vibrations set up by the incoming energy form a reproduction or image of the object from which the light-energy came. This image is three-dimensional, like the physical tree.

Now, the man really does not see the object itself, but he sees this image which forms in his mind. What is color? It is simply a quality of vibration, due to the frequency or rate of vibration; it is a mode of consciousness. The energy in which the vibrations occur has come originally from the sun, has been modified by the tree, so as to emphasize the quality "green," and lastly a part of this has entered the eye of the observer and caused similar vibrations in the etheric matter of the brain. Is the reproduction perfect? Evidently this will depend on the man's instrument of sense-perception, the physical body. If the body is well developed, highly sensitive and equipped with the right etheric material, it will allow a fairly correct image to be formed, that is, one which fairly represents the object which gave rise to it. Evidently this is hardly possible, for the physical body is but an imperfect and undeveloped instrument.

But this does not yet mean that the man will see the "color" correctly. He has had many previous perceptions, and these have modified his inner organs of perception. The effect produced by the image of vibrating matter upon the subtler bodies of the man depend very much upon the previous experience of the man, his habits, his prejudices, sensibilities and idiosyncrasies. The actual perception, then, is modified by the man's bodies and by his fund of experiences which are stimulated in memory and aroused again into vibration,—what is called association. These elements mix with the incoming vibrations and give rise to what is called apperception. This really means that we can ordinarily never have true, simple perceptions, but always apperceptions, or mixed perceptions. Color is a quality of vibration, due to the rate of vibration. There is no color sent from the green tree to the man, but energy is sent to him,—energy of certain rates of vibration. A very little of this energy reaches his consciousness, after having passed over a complicated course, with many changes and transformations.

Now as to clairvoyance. Here the man does not receive the energy from an outside object through the medium of his physical body, but more directly through his astral body. This allows a much nearer approach to a true perception of an astral thought-form. But although the imperfections of the physical body are eliminated, there is still a good deal of possible interference with the incoming energy and its final reception in the consciousness of the man. What the clairvoyant would see would depend on the development and refinement of his astral body, and again on his previous experience—astral association of ideas. The image formed would be in his astral body and would be a four-dimensional object.

It should be emphasized that the thought-forms seen by a trained clairvoyant, one who has learned to control his astral and mental bodies so that they do not interfere with the exact reproduction of the images, are just as real as, if not more real than, the forms of physical objects seen by ordinary vision. Yet they are all within the man's consciousness, and it is only by much experience that the man learns to project them out into space, and identify them with the outer objects.

We see only mental images in our own minds, and we feel only the vibrations of the astral energy in our own astral bodies, and yet we may, by careful self-training and discrimination, learn to distinguish between vibrations which come to us from the outside and those which arise within our own bodies. Many people would think that their thoughts were their own, yet they are frequently entirely from the outside world,—thoughts which were sent out as vibrating energy from other people, and which have caused reproductions in our own minds. Our mind is simply a very delicate instrument which can shape energies into forms and send them out, or act equally well as a receiver of outside energies and thought-forms, which it reproduces more or less perfectly in its own subtle matter. The image which we perceive in our brain-consciousness is merely a three-dimensional symbol of the true mental thought-form, which itself is probably only a symbol or partial manifestation of the true reality which caused it, spiritual energy.

C. S.

BOOK REVIEWS, ETC.

As If—A Philosophical Phantasy, by Cora Lenore Williams, M.S. Publishers: Paul Elder & Co., San Francisco.

The story tells how Diocles and his wife Agnesi, living in a ten-dimensional world, find themselves forced by the mysterious law of evolution to live in a world of three dimensions, in which, however, the growth of a fourth dimension is just beginning. Their very interesting difficulties are vividly described. There are many comments on the peculiarities of these three-dimensional people, who cling to what they call "facts," which are constantly in process of changing, and who struggle blindly against the intuitive recognition of the higher realities. In the end it appears that the two visitors, who have evidently reincarnated on Earth, after many attempts to communicate, each with the lost companion, recognize each other, even in spite of the limitations of personality,—and all is well,—as far as it can be in this three-dimensional world.

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The Spirit of the Conqueror, a five part moving picture play; released by Sawyer Film Co.

The first scene shows the spirits of Lincoln, Grant, Lee, Washington and others in the ethereal world, deploring the labor troubles on Earth. Napoleon is taken from purgatory and sent back to Earth to be reborn as the son of a capitalist, a representative of wealth. As he grows up he becomes the champion and organiser of the laboring classes and leads a general strike, after having failed to persuade his father that the laborers' cause is just. The strain of the conflict and his arduous efforts destroy the health of Napoleon and soon he is forced to work while confined to bed in the home of an inventor whom his own father has defrauded out of his invention. Finally his spirit is seen departing for the higher worlds just as his capitalist father agrees to the terms of the workingmen. Having been successful in his mission on earth, Napoleon is allowed to enter paradise.

The newspaper account of the play regrets that it bears the earmarks of a novice writer, and that the staging, costuming, acting and photography are bad.

Karma, A Story of Early Buddhism, by Dr. Paul Carus.
Published by Open Court Publ. Co., Chicago.

This book, exquisitely bound in Japanese paper and illustrated by a Japanese artist, contains a very beautiful story, which gives the Buddhist teaching of karma and reincarnation, in their practical application to problems of everyday life. The book is the basis of the stereopticon lecture of the *Legion*, bearing the same title.

This excellent book may be ordered through the *Legion*, price fifty cents. It should be in the possession of every Group, and our members will find it a classic in our work.

FIELD NOTES

Several stereopticon lectures are now doing service for various *Legion* Groups. Others are being completed as rapidly as possible. We hope to build up this very important method of spreading the teachings of karma and reincarnation through popular entertainments. Groups and members interested may write for further information to the Stereopticon Department of the *Legion*

Giving simple and popular illustrated lectures to the inmates of various penal and other public institutions is a very promising field for our work. These lectures are also very easily given in private parlors to reading classes and invited friends. Will you help to form such classes?

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The *Legion* is going steadily forward. Several strong Groups have been organized in Java, Dutch East Indies. South Africa has sent in some twenty-eight names for membership, and a number of Groups are now in process of organizing. South Africa is a splendid field for work.

Two new Groups have been formed in Chicago, and one in San Francisco. We hope more will be organized.

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The last mail brings us more membership applications from South Africa. Mrs. E. C. Allsopp, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg, Natal, and Mr. M. M. Fletcher, P. O. Box 227, Bulawayo, Rhodesia, have organized Groups in these two cities. REINCARNATION subscriptions are placed in libraries.