

REINCARNATION

VOL. II

CHICAGO, MARCH, 1915

No. 3

WAR-MADE KARMA

It is to be hoped that the most advanced of the belligerent nations will not at this critical moment for the history of international law permit passion to do injury to the fair growing thought structure of that ideal which all consider so important for the future of the world.

The threat of one nation to make breach of generous international customs should never be used to excuse or disregard an equal but not the same custom or usage.

Of all nations the old and leading British realm must now most maintain her poise. What other peoples do must not be allowed to disturb her majestic *noblesse oblige*. Her power, her patience and self-knowledge must carry her on her way above petty artifice and the low serving of the passing hour.

Do not the grown up nations recognize Providence, the truth of responsibility and, in a way, the Great Law of Karma, the reverberation of

evil Causes till they are exhausted in a wise denial?

The months are near in which the huge contest will be waged ever more hotly till the crisis comes or till hunger or the flow of blood compels a moaning cry, "Enough." Now is the very hour for self-restraint, the hour in which to remember the future and the return in it of the forces of justice, of humanitarianism and of the rights and privileges as well as the obligations of the Elder Brother's birth-right.

W. V-H.

DE PROFUNDIS

Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
 Where all that was to be, in all that was,
 Whirled for a million æons thro' the vast
 Waste dawn of multitudinous-eddy light—
 Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
 Thro' all this changing world of changeless law,
 And every phase of ever-heightening life,
 And nine long months of ante-natal gloom,
 With this last moon, this crescent—her dark orb
 Touched with earth's light—thou comest, dar-
 ling boy.

* * * * *

Live thou! and of the grain and husk and grape
 And ivy-berry, choose: and still depart
 From death to death through life and life and find
 Nearer and ever nearer Him, who wrought
 Not Matter nor the finite-infinite,
 But this main miracle, that thou art thou,
 With power on thine own act and on the world.

Tennyson.

THE UNEXPECTED

How flat, stale and unprofitable would life be if the futurities of its path were too clearly known; and how remorseful if the events of its path were too well remembered. The zest of travel and the wonderment of learning would vanish if to-morrow's journey were wholly like to-day's. As an artist paints his porcelain vessels, yet cannot tell what the effects will be until heat has passed its judgment upon them, so when the dawn opens for each of us the kiln of time we find how our efforts of yesterday have resulted. For the law of karma—of cause and effect—is no less relentless than full of encouragement. Many of our cups and pots will have sadly warped in the firing; some, lacking strength, will have fused; in some the patterns were untrue and when thus tested betrayed the careless work; with some few pieces haply all is well—brilliant in colour, graceful in shape, keen in line, they are things worthy of love and capable of service, and therefore joys for ever. Ah! the opening of to-morrow's kiln will be full of lessons.

In that much used adage, "It is the unexpected which always happens," there lurks an affectation of surprise, almost of protest, at that which should be recognized as one of the greatest and most beneficent of the laws of life. Our careers would be monotonous indeed if we encountered only the expected; if our ingoings and outgoings were rigidly ordered; if Nature in her living loveliness were fixed like a photographer's negative; and if each hour brought with it merely the foreseen and inevitable limitations of that space of

time—like the tooth of a cog-wheel moving with mathematical precision to its destined notch. With what dread of the morrow we should go forward, or await with hopeless submission its shadows—forgetful of the aiding sunlight whereby the shadows fall—if volition were non-existent, and fate, not effort, our watchword!

Happily our lot is otherwise. It is the unexpected which makes life worth while. Each day hath its new lessons and new opportunities tending to the building up of character, of knowledge, and of that grace which passeth present understanding. Every step reveals the scene around us from fresh angles; every moment the changing clouds above us paint new skies of gladness or warn the timid and unprotected to seek shelter from the coming storm; every turn discloses those features of the road which yield adventure to the brave and endow existence with interest; and everywhere we meet or are overtaken by those who, when yet afar off, are as strangers but who, drawing nigh, greet us with those smiles of friendship which give to life its fulness.

Therefore to look forward gladly and serenely to the morrow must be better than to greet it with doubt. In all probability it will bring fair and gracious happenings, but even if it bodes for us some rough places in the path or stormy weather, we will do what travelling we can, knowing that each step forward is in brave conquest of these passing ills.

And the too frequently expressed wish to look backwards into the past were surely as unwise as to distrust the future. It is something, though never sufficient, to have climbed thus far; and

the past is full of lingerings and mistakes. There is a Greek story which relates that a certain king of Attica would never consent to remove his helmet even in the presence of his wife. At length, after much persuasion he confided in her that the reason for his thus doing was that his ears were shaped like those of an ass; but he bound her by a sacred oath never to divulge this secret to the world. For many days she bore this secret in her bosom but at last, unable to withstand the burning wish to confide her knowledge to others, she went down to the river and whispered to the reeds at its marge, "Croesus has asses' ears." And for ever the reeds by the side of all rivers in the world are whispering the dread secret, "Croesus has asses' ears." This Grecian explanation of the sighing of the reeds is not without its suggestion that if we insist too much on knowing the secrets of the past we might realize too clearly how prone to errors we were in our climb through many lives to this.

J. B. Lindon.

A MYSTERY

A presence, strange at once and known,
Walked with me as my guide;
The skirts of some forgotten life
Trailed noiseless at my side.

Was it a dim-remembered dream?
Or glimpse through æons old?
The secret which the mountain kept
The river never told.

John Greenleaf Whittier.

THE SUFI POET JELALU-'D-DIN RUMI

Sufism is the mystical philosophy which starts from the Mohammedan religion and proceeds on its way to the Supreme Being by the path of love and devotion. It holds that all life is from God, and that it will eventually find its way back to its Source. What the human soul really seeks on earth is its greater Self, or God. It is held to be possible for the soul to be closely united to God in consciousness, even in the physical life.

The greatest mystical poet and philosopher of all historical times was Jelalu-'d-din, born at Balkh, Persia, in 1207 A. D. He was taught by a remarkable personage, Shemsu-'d-din of Tabriz, and was the founder of the famous Dervish Order called the Mevleves, or Dancing Dervishes.

Jelalu-'d-din wrote the great mystic poem *The Masnavi*, used as a text-book by Sufis in several countries. He also wrote the *Divan*, a collection of lyrical odes. He died at Konieh in 1273 A. D.

Spiritual evolution and reincarnation are very clearly taught in the writings of this wonderful poet-philosopher. He writes almost constantly in an impersonal, selfless universality of soul-being. We give a few extracts below:

The BELOVED is all in all, the lover only veils Him;
 The BELOVED is all that lives, the lover a dead thing.
 When the lover feels no longer LOVE'S quickening,
 He becomes like a bird who has lost its wings.

Alas!

How can I retain my senses about me,
 When the BELOVED shows not the light of His
 countenance?

LOVE desires that this secret should be revealed,
For if a mirror reflects not, of what use is it?
Knowest thou why thy mirror reflects not?
Because the rust has not been scoured from its
face.

If it were purified from all rust and defilement,
It would reflect the shining of the SUN of GOD.
In Love to be wide awake is treason.
The more a man is awake, the more he sleeps;
His wakefulness is worse than slumbering.
Then our souls are a prey to divers whims,
Thoughts of loss and gain and fears of misery.
They retain not purity, nor dignity, nor lustre,
Nor aspiration to soar heavenward.

* * * * *

The ambassador said, "O Commander of the
faithful,

How comes the soul down from above to earth?
How can so noble a bird be confined in a cage?"

He said, "God speaks words of power to souls,—
To things of naught, without eyes or ears,
And at these words they all spring into motion;
At His words of power these nothings arise
quickly,

And strong impulse urges them into existence.
Again, He speaks other spells to these creatures,
And swiftly drives them back again into not-being.
He speaks to the rose's ear, and causes it to bloom,
He speaks to the tulip, and makes it blossom.
He speaks a spell to body, and it becomes a soul;
He speaks to the sun, and it becomes a fount of
light.

Again, in its ear He whispers a word of power,
And its face is darkened as by a hundred eclipses.

A wakil of the prince of Bokhara, fearing to be punished for some offence which he had committed, fled and concealed himself for ten years. Absence from his lord and home was such a torment to him that he finally decided to return and throw himself at the feet of his lord. His friends tried to dissuade him, saying that the prince was still wrathful, and that he would be severely punished, if not put to death. The wakil answers them in a long speech, in which the following lines occur :

“I died as a mineral and arose a plant,
 I died as a plant and rose again an animal.
 I died as an animal and arose a man.
 Why then should I fear to become less by dying?
 I shall die once again as a man
 To rise an angel perfect from head to foot!
 Again when I suffer dissolution as an angel,
 I shall become what passes the conception of man!
 Let me then become non-existent, for non-
 existence

Sings to me in organ tones, ‘To Him shall we
 return.’

Know death to be the gathering together of the
 people,

The water of life is hidden in the land of darkness.
 Like a water-lily seek life there!

Yea, like that drawer of water, at the risk of life,
 Water will be his death, yet he still seeks water,
 And still drinks on,- and God knows what is right.

O lover, cold-hearted and void of loyalty,
 Who from fear for your life shun the Beloved!

O base one, behold a hundred thousand souls

Dancing toward the deadly sword of his love:

Behold water in a pitcher; pour it out;
Will that water run away from the stream?
When that water joins the water of the stream
It is lost therein, and becomes itself the stream.
Its individuality is lost, but its essence remains,
And hereby it becomes not less nor inferior.
I will hang myself upon my lord's palm tree
In excuse for having fled away from him!"

Even as a ball rolling along, on head and face,
He fell at the feet of the prince with streaming
eyes.

'The people were all on the alert, expecting
That the prince would burn him or hang him,
Saying, "Moth-like he has seen the blaze of the
light,

And fool-like has plunged therein and lost his life."
But the torch of love is not like that torch,
'Tis light, light in the midst of light,
'Tis the reverse of torches of fire,
It appears to be fire, but is all sweetness.
That Bokharian then cast himself into the flame,
But his love made the pain endurable;
And as his burning sighs ascended to heaven,
The love of the prince was kindled toward him.

* * *

The story of the vakil is simply another one
of the many beautiful Prodigal Son parables.
He addresses the prince in tender accents:

"A thousand times, O prince incomparable,
Has my reason taken flight in desire to see thee,
And to hear thee and to listen to thy words,
And to behold thy life-giving smiles.
Thy inclining thine ear to my supplications
Is as a caress to my misguided soul.

The baseness of my heart's coin is known to thee,
 But thou hast accepted it as genuine coin.
 Thou art proud toward the arrogant and proud;
 All clemencies are as naught to thy clemency.

* * * * *

Earth says to the earth of the body, "Come away,
 Quit the soul and come to me as dust.

Thou art of my *genus*, and wilt be better with me,
 Thou hadst better quit the soul and fly to me!"

Body replies, "True, but my feet are fast bound,
 Though like thee I suffer from separation."

Water calls out to the moisture of the body,
 "O moisture, return to me from your foreign
 abode!"

Fire also calls out to the heart of the body,
 "Thou art of fire; return to thy root!"

The repulsion of each of these principles and causes
 Inflicts every moment a fresh pang on our bodies.
 That it may dissolve these composite bodies of ours,
 The bird of each part tries to fly away to its
 origin;

But the wisdom of God prevents this speedy end,
 And preserves their union till the appointed day.
 He says, "O parts, the appointed time is not yet;
 It is useless for you to take wing before that day.

But as each part desires reunion with its original,
 How is it with the soul who is a stranger in exile?
 It says, "O parts of my habitation here below,
 My absence is sadder than yours, as I am heaven-
 born.

The body loves green pastures and running water,
 For this cause that its origin is from them.

The love of the soul is for life and the living one,
 Because its origin is the Soul not bound to place.

The love of the soul is for wisdom and knowledge,
That of the body for houses, gardens and vine-
yards;

The love of the soul is for things exalted on high,
That of the body for acquisition of goods and food.
The love too of Him on high is directed to the soul:
Know this for 'He loves them that love Him.' ”
The sum is this, that whoso seeks another,
The soul of that other who is sought inclines to him.

God's wisdom in His eternal foreknowledge
and decree

Made us to be lovers one of the other.

The following shows sublime universality:

Lo, for I to myself am unknown, now in God's
name what must I do?

I adore not the Cross nor the Crescent, I am
not a Giaour nor a Jew.

East nor West land nor sea is my home, I have
kin nor with angels nor gnome,

I am wrought not of fire nor of foam, I am shaped
not of dust nor of dew.

I was born not in China afar, not in Saqsin and
not in Bulghar;

Not in India, where five rivers are, nor 'Iraq nor
Khorassan I grew.

Not in this world nor that world I dwell, not
in Paradise, neither in Hell;

Not from Eden and Rizwan I fell, not from Adam
my lineage I drew.

In a place beyond uttermost Place, in a tract
without shadow of trace,

Soul and body transcending, I live in the soul of
my Loved One anew!

*HISTORY IN THE LIGHT
OF REINCARNATION*

From Mrs. Besant's daily paper *New India* we reproduce the following abstract of a lecture by Mr. C. Jinarajadasa, given in Adyar, Madras, at the Theosophical Conference of December, 1914.

History is more than a mere series of events in a mechanical order of nature. From the theosophist's standpoint history is the working out of a great Divine plan that affects the life of individuals and nations. Nations exist only in order that such culture as they possess might give appropriate experiences to souls sent there in the process of reincarnation, and the duration of a nation is only so long as it can fulfil the spiritual need for the egos sent to be born in it. Thus some nations, like ancient Egypt and India, have a national history covering over ten thousand or more years, while other nations last only a few centuries; this happens because certain civilisations are planned by the invisible guides of humanity to last for ages, in order that their culture may give the proper spiritual experiences for the millions of egos who are born in them throughout the centuries.

The history of nations is an example of the history of groups of men coming together again in reincarnation. The Greek sculptors in the time of the great culture of Greece were re-born some fifteen hundred years later in the painters of Italy, and also some of the great poets and dramatists were scattered among European nations, bringing about in England the Elizabethan age; in Germany the love of Greek culture was fostered

by Goethe, Schiller, Lessing and other enthusiasts of Greece. The modern French nation showed many of the striking characteristics of the later Greeks, and the modern French and other Romance nations showed in a striking fashion the Greek receptivity to ideas, and especially the Greek devotion to form in every department of literature. It is well known in France that "if it is not clear it is not French," and that in writing and in oratory the first criterion is always beauty of form.

The ideals of ancient Rome and the Roman temperament are paralleled by those of the modern English. The high conception of law and order, the dislike of abstract ideas as such, and the instinctive testing of an idea by its practicability in human reform, that are characteristic of the English nation to-day, were specially noteworthy in the Roman temperament. The ancient Roman Empire is reborn to-day as the British Empire; the ownership of land by the King, the collection of taxes as in India to-day, the non-interference with religion, were all very prominent in Roman administration; even the transition from numbers of small farms into large estates for grazing and preserving that marks English economic history, is a repetition of what took place in Rome.

When we compare present political, economic and social conditions of the world to those of the past, it is seen that every crisis brought a great leader who ushered in a new condition of things. Thus it was with the transition of the Roman Republic into the Roman Empire which was brought about by Caesar, and the founding of

modern Italy by Garibaldi and of the United States by Washington. All historical analogy warrant the supposition that we are on the eve of the appearance of some great leader, who will take up the present forces of unrest and weld them into the basis of a new civilisation. Looking into the future the lecturer pointed to the building of a new race type and temperament in the United States of America and in Australia. These new peoples, it is evident, would be free from the conventional ways of thought of the old world, and would develop an intuitive conception of life, and in many ways bring back the Greek joy of life.

In the light of reincarnation all men are history-makers life after life, and the study of history becomes a revelation of a Divine plan for the growth of humanity.

LURIA

Whose life re-teaches us what life should be,
What faith is, loyalty and simpleness,
All once revealed, but taught us so long since
That, having mere tradition of the fact—
Truth copied falteringly from copies faint,
The early trails all dropped away, we said
On sight of faith like yours, "So looks not faith
We understand, describe, and praise before."
But still the feat was dared, and though at first
It suffered from our haste, yet trace by trace,
Old memories re-appear, old truths return,
Our slow thought does its work, and
All's re-known.

Robert Browning.

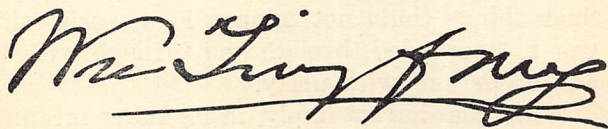
A LETTER FROM WU TINGFANG

[A number of months ago the *Editor of Reincarnation* wrote to a friend in China asking for information about the knowledge of reincarnation among Chinese Buddhists. He made inquiry of the celebrated Chinese patriot and diplomat, Wu Tingfang, whose life in America is so well known.

We have permission to publish a part of his reply. *Ed.*]

With regard to the subject treated in the letter of Mr. Van Hook to you I have been thinking over the matter and I have made some enquiries of some Buddhists. Although they believe in re-incarnation yet their belief is rather vague and indefinite and I could not get any real facts concerning re-incarnation and Karma so believed in by them. There is a saying amongst the Buddhists that "Fa," which may include re-incarnation and Karma, are like a revolving wheel. I do not find that any of my books on Buddhism treat the subject of re-incarnation in a precise manner so I am unable to give you much information which can help your correspondent. I return you his letter, as to the pamphlets sent to you by him would you allow me to keep them a few days longer as I am reading them just now, when I have finished them I will return them to you.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wu Tingfang', written in a cursive style. The signature is underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

WHAT KARMA IMPLIES

When men work with physical objects they have full confidence that what they do will bring about definite physical results. The farmer who plows his land and plants seeds expects that he will, under ordinarily favorable conditions, be able to harvest in due time a goodly yield of grain or other products, according to what kind of seeds he planted. In other words, the farmer trusts in the law of cause and effect in physical nature.

Similar statements may be made with regard to all other physical occupations. By long experience men have learned that when they work to prepare the right conditions they may confidently expect to obtain definite results. Thus men often plan their work for a long time ahead, and in general their expectations are sufficiently nearly realized to justify their efforts. In many cases men even work away with confidence, relying on laws of nature whose outer workings they have learned but of whose inner nature they are entirely ignorant. Electrical engineering experts design a whole system of intricate machinery, without even seeing the materials out of which it is to be built. Other men manufacture the various parts, still other men build up the electrical plant, and yet its actual performance comes within a few per cent of the calculated values of the designer. Such things could not happen in a world which was not pervaded through and through with law and order and with unity.

What does karma imply, in its fuller meaning? It means that man need not limit his confidence in the law of cause and effect to the things of

the physical world. This is only the visible part of nature; it is only one of several worlds in which men live, which they can affect and by which they are affected in their turn. In fact these higher, superphysical worlds are the seats of the hidden causes of the actions which take place in the physical world, and are themselves controlled by spiritual worlds of being and consciousness unknown to most men. Karma implies that there is a definite order in the events of the moral world and the mental world,—in short, that feelings and thoughts are subject to the law of cause and effect, as they are merely actions and transformations of energy in finer states of matter than the physical world contains. But this is not the whole story, and the remaining part is, for human beings, of the highest importance.

Many men will admit the existence of superphysical realities,—the facts of our emotional and mental consciousness are too obvious and cannot be adequately explained in terms of physical matter. Our modern materialists indeed try to do so but can only make any satisfactory progress at all by endowing their physical atoms with all kinds of wonderful properties. They must put into their atom that which will account for feeling and thinking consciousness. They wish to avoid making assumptions about things that are not subject to physical investigation, but they simply deceive themselves when they think that life and consciousness have their origin in physical matter. And when they practically endow their atom with *life* in order to explain life, they thereby step outside of the world of things which may be brought under physical scientific research. For

life has its own secrets and laws and its own nature apart from the physical world, no matter how closely interwoven with matter it may sometimes appear to be.

Karma implies not only an orderly sequence of events known as cause and effect, but it also embraces the continuous re-adjusting of disturbed conditions. A thing done can not be undone, but it can be neutralized or balanced with appropriate actions. And this is what Nature must do in order to preserve herself from disruption, and this is what actually happens and is included in the conception of karma. Nature works within certain limits and restrictions which it is man's duty and privilege to investigate and determine. When actions are pushed to extremes they will always encounter an increasing resistance. There may be introduced temporary distortions or so-called strains into the machinery of Nature, but these will carry with them their own corrective tendencies, and sometimes through some violent catastrophic action the disturbed equilibrium is again secured or approached.

Some people say that when a man persists in wrong actions his karma is simply that he becomes wicked and loses the purity and strength of his character. But this is not all. A man—body, soul and spirit—is a small universe or nature in himself. He also has his limitations and bounds. For him also, as well as for nature at large, it must be true that he can not go on and do certain actions continuously or indefinitely. Such actions somehow threaten his relations with the rest of the universe or even his own existence as an individual,—they and their results are well

known through the long experience of the human race, and men roughly call them immoral. Having by continued immoral actions disturbed his own world and strained its machinery, the man must sometime experience a return towards equilibrium which may be quite catastrophic in character. This must follow from the law of cause and effect, or karma in its aspect of necessary readjusting.

But all of the man's actions are not balanced, as a rule, during his life-time, yet they must be balanced in his little universe and by means of his own material being. They are therefore held in abeyance while he passes through the various after-death states of consciousness, until he is once more re-born. Then the conditions are prepared which will allow of the release of the strain which the man has created in his own former world, which has lain dormant or latent for a time, but has re-awakened in the new bodies which the real man, the spirit, has attracted round his own center of being. And, at the proper time, when the man's karma is said to be "ripe," this strain is undone and the evil stored-up energies flow back and discharge themselves upon him, perhaps violently. The same process applies to the man's good actions: they can not help causing their appropriate reactions at the proper time. We deal here with laws of nature as rigid and exact as those which govern the planting of seeds, the growth of the plants, and their fruitage.

It is true that a man distorts his character and becomes wicked by a course of continual evil-doing. It is true that when a spring is bent it is in an unnatural condition. It is true that when water is forced into an elevated tank it is in an

abnormal position. But to say that the debasing of the man's character by himself represents the whole of his evil karma, is as untrue as to say that the bending of the spring and the pumping of the water into the tank represent completed actions. For every one of these cases there must sometime come a discharge of the energies involved, a releasing of the strain in some way or another. And wise is the man who learns what he can about the workings of karma, so that if possible he may relieve his karmic pressure gradually, as the bent spring may be released gently to assume its unstrained condition.

We may look at man's life in another way. It is well known that almost every man experiences sudden changes and catastrophes in his own small world, for which he can not account. They seem to be uncaused; in reality they are not so. If there exists a true law of causation, there must have been a time when the man created the strained condition which in his present incarnation he finds discharging energies upon him. Only such an explanation is rational and can justify the eternal order of the universe.

Karma, therefore, implies the existence of higher or superphysical worlds; it includes a proper sequence of all actions, feelings and thoughts, as causes and effects; and it also involves the constant tendency for all disturbed conditions to be righted, or to right themselves.

C. S.



BEING RE-BORN

So many people say, on first hearing of reincarnation, "What! come back to this world and live again? No, indeed; once is enough for me!" Or, "I will not listen to such teachings. This continual coming back is too saddening to think of. I want to find rest and peace. This reincarnation does not get you anywhere. It is the most wearisome thing even to think of."

Now, as someone sagely observes, these poor people do not seem to realise that what they think pleasant or desirable for themselves does not influence the eternal Truth in the slightest degree. We are quite prepared to admit that the orthodox church-member who aspires to sit on a golden throne, wear a shining crown of jewels and play on a heavenly harp, may have full opportunity to do so after he has left the earth-life and his body has been properly interred. We even believe that he will realise his heart's desires to the fullest extent possible for him. He will probably have all the rest he wants.

But we also know that the secret desires of man are very powerful and real. And we understand that these desires are forces that tend always to bring about their own fulfilment, that only in fulfilling themselves can they disappear and act no more. And furthermore we know that every man,—or had we better say, all but one in a million?—goes through life with many unfulfilled longings and desires, with many of his works uncompleted, and with many of his ambitions still to be realised. And so we can not help but con-

clude that after a good, long, hearty rest the man will come back to earth again.

He will come back when he wants to come back. As long as he can find attractions in the higher emotional after-death life with which he can busy himself, he will stay right there. If while on earth he had desires for an automobile, he will probably have several in the lower heaven. In fact, we confidently expect that the desire-heavens for some time to come will be increasingly crowded with horseless carriages, much to the detriment of music and the articles before-mentioned.

We do not wish to be light-minded, however, and so we return to the problem of the man who likes not the idea of coming back. Can his automobiles and other amusements keep him at peace and rest in the heaven-world? We are quite willing to wager that they will not do so forever. It does not seem likely that the man can use up an unlimited amount of desire-energy in his heavenly amusements. Having used up what he had generated on earth, and thereby used up what he was entitled to in the astral world, he will be compelled to let himself be swept up in consciousness into the real heaven-world, where thoughts are like living objects. And there he will review his experiences of the earth-life, and in so doing he will extract from them their true essence and with that he will strengthen his individuality, or body of character. And having completed the process of assimilating all the energies which are of this subtle nature,—what happens?

He can not rise higher in consciousness, for he has not as yet learned to hold himself together without the help of a body, above that of his mind.

There is nothing more to do in heaven for him. His inner being craves for more experience. His old tendencies are stirring into life. Unconsciously he sinks into the lower worlds and attracts around his inner center the materials out of which his next mental and desire bodies will be organised. And, meanwhile, there is being prepared for him on earth, a baby body in the family with whose members he has some ancient ties of love, or may-be of hate,—some karmic obligations to be righted and settled.

His desires draw him back into earth-life. He is not a completed, perfect being,—therefore he can not remain at peace in inaction always. His nature is to grow, to obtain experience of life, to gather together the materials which will make him more complete. For in his inmost being he seeks ever for completeness and perfection; he will have no rest as long as he is but a fragment.

And why should he dread re-birth? Nature builds him new bodies of the personality,—all fresh and bright and not weighted down with memories of old troubles and failures. He makes a fresh start at the point where he left off before, without being conscious of his karmic debts of the past. He does not even believe he has any to be paid, and so meets them one by one when he is really ready to meet them. He is also prepared to meet new difficulties, and to exercise his inner qualities and powers in new ways. He is able to draw on all or much of his strength of character to meet the difficulties which remained over as well as those new ones which he will make for himself in the new life as he goes along.

No man would want to be limited to wearing only one suit of clothes throughout his life; no manufacturer would want to be restrained from renewing his machinery when it wears out and becomes unfit for use. Similarly no man, if he understood the plan of human evolution through reincarnation, would want to be restricted to only one physical body. He will gladly lay down his body when it has become old and feeble and unfit, trusting to the karma of his good works and efforts to earn for him an improved body in his next life on earth. The periodic re-making of bodies for the man is one of his greatest blessings. He must live in bodies until he has become a perfected man, and while he uses bodies as the physical body uses suits of clothes, he will be grateful for these changes which will allow him to express himself through better physical bodies, the instruments with which he contacts the world of physical things.

X.

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The Buddha, addressing his disciples at Bhandagâma:

"It is through not understanding and grasping four things, O Brethren, that we have had to run so long, to wander so long, in this weary path of individuality, both you and I.

"And what are these four?

"The noble conduct of life, the noble earnestness in meditation, the noble kind of wisdom, and the noble salvation of freedom. But when the noble kind of conduct of life, of earnestness in meditation, of wisdom, and of salvation by freedom, are seen face to face, and are comprehended, then is the craving for existence rooted out, that which leads to renewed existence is destroyed, and there is no more birth."

Book of the Great Decease (iv. 2, 3) : tr. by Rhys Davids

IN THE GARDEN HOUSE

Evening Fourteenth

Inquirer: Have you ever used any special methods for training the mind and developing thought power? Are they advisable to try?

Student: I have used very few. Many should be carefully avoided, especially if there are any selfish reasons involved. However, I have worked steadily towards clearer thinking and more useful thinking and greater control of my thinking, and I try always to improve the quality of my thoughts. One should make this a work which never ends. At any rate we may be sure that we shall grow in the power of thought for a great many of our lives to come.

Inq.: How would a beginner set about to train his mind definitely? What are the first steps?

St.: He should do two things at the same time: first, make a study of the nature of the mind and thought; and second, practice careful and accurate thinking. These things should be persevered in throughout the whole life-time; for it is a mistake to suppose that a safe stopping-place can be found.

He should first realise that the mind is merely an instrument which he uses, and not really himself in any sense. He must learn to consider himself, in his will-nature, to be something higher than the mind. Then he can look at his mind and study its workings and control it, causing it to concentrate its energies upon the one point which he wants to think about.

Inq.: Do most men think they are the mind?

St.: Most men probably do not think about

their nature at all, except on rare occasions, and then only very loosely. But they are all very likely to enter into the life and activities of their various bodies and identify themselves with them unconsciously. The savage is most likely to regard the physical body as himself; at a more advanced stage he would live mostly in his emotions, which is even now characteristic of the Latin and Celtic races; and such races as are chiefly engaged in intellectual pursuits would come to regard their minds as most intimately themselves.

The fact is that all the life activities are only expressions or manifestations of the real man.

The man himself can not easily be defined; he is called the "I." The very language men use shows that they place themselves unconsciously above their activities. They say, "I walk," "I feel," "I think," and "I will."

Inq.: What should the beginner do in practice?

St.: He should firmly will that he controls his thought and that he will think only what is worth while. In speech it is well to say only such words as are at the same time true, useful and kind. We should impose the same conditions on our thinking. And when we do think, we should think clearly and strongly, not confusedly and vaguely. Loose thinking is just like shooting promiscuously, without having any definite purpose in mind and nothing to aim at.

Inq.: What is the effect of thinking untruly?

St.: True thoughts are those that are in harmony with the onward streaming current of evolution; they make the world better, purer and happier. To think untruly would be to think of something which should not be,—this act of the

mind adds some life-energy to the thing and makes it stronger and of greater power to harm.

The harm done by false thinking is very great, being so general. It will always make it more difficult for the thinker to perfect himself in his own evolution, for sometime, somewhere, somehow, he must make good his errors and undo the wrongs he has done. It will make it more difficult for the world to evolve as it should, for the false thing has been given strength and energy and is that much more difficult to overcome and set aside. It will even make such an impress on the matter which was used in the thinking, as will favor the tendency for it to repeat the undesirable vibrations and motions, for matter is subject to "habit" and does most easily what it has done often before.

Inq.: Your definition of true thought seems to be quite different from what is usually accepted by men. It would actually in many cases be opposed to what is called fact.

St.: I admit that, but that does not change the truth that so-called facts are often wholly untrue. Truth is certainly that which is lasting and harmonious, not what is temporary and inharmonious. Many facts which may be undeniable in the physical world are veritable perversions and distortions in the higher, invisible worlds where the true fundamental truths are to be found, the well-known archetypal ideas that Plato spoke of.

Inq.: But must I not see evil facts as they are, in order that I may correct them and make them correspond more closely to the truth?

St.: Yes, you must indeed. But look at them rather lightly, and do not throw life and energy

into them with thoughts that copy them too realistically. Think rather of what the facts should change into than of what they are at the moment. Thought is creative in power, and sustaining, through its own life-energy. Thus it is very true that if we think evil of other persons we help to increase that evil, or to cause it to appear in the persons, even if they are quite free from the evil we impute to them. On the other hand, if we think most about how the evil things, even if they are called facts, will change for the better, we thereby make it easier for the change to come about. We may actually help something imperfect to grow into a more perfect and better thing.

Inq.: Is that what Christian Science teaches?

St.: Very likely that is the truth which underlies their great successes. However, we must remain balanced in our thought and not work in ways which are contrary to the laws of nature, or unscientific. Our creative power is a fact, but it is very limited and must be used with care and discrimination, otherwise we may merely deceive ourselves into believing what is untrue and what will not help us or our fellow-beings.

Inq.: Facts are not rigid and unalterable, then?

St.: By no means. Yet they are perfectly definite at any one moment. A fact is not only a physical thing, but has some existence in the astral and mental worlds as well. It must be conceived of as the product of thought: for all matter was originally created, or rather formed, by the action of Divine Thought. Then human thought, intelligently guiding the energies of nature, shapes this matter more nearly into the forms which men desire. There results then a

physical representation of a fact. But all the desires and thoughts regarding this fact are also a part of it; they may accumulate as time goes on, and often they very considerably change the original emotional and mental values of the fact. They will also tend constantly to modify the physical expression of the fact, in addition to the general change which is produced by the ever-acting energies of nature. Thus most facts are constantly and rapidly changing. There is much that might be said on this subject of facts, but we must postpone further discussion to another time.

C. S.



JUST ONE MOMENT OF TIME

I speak to my friend, and all is changed for him, in one moment of time. I speak to my enemy, and all *may* be changed for us,—in one moment of time.

Great hopes, great fears may be realized,—in one moment of time. And all the world may be helped, when in one moment of time, I turn to the dear Lord Christ, in anguish, and cry: "Help me to bear this, too; if so it must be!"

And the answer falls soft and low,—in just one moment of time.

Ella L. Cutler

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

We shall from time to time propound questions which may profitably be studied for future discussion in Group meetings. Members are invited to send us their answers, briefly and to the point. We also welcome questions from our readers.

1. What is the relation between karma, fate and destiny?

2. What, in your opinion, is the greatest good that man may derive from the knowledge of the law of karma?

3. What attitude should we take as to karma which we generated in the past, which is still unexhausted?

4. Is it well to think much of our karma? What effect would this have on us?

5. Should we try to free ourselves from our karma? What would be the best motive?

6. What are the best methods for becoming free of our unexhausted karma?

7. Is it ever advisable to desire anything?

8. What attitude should we hold as to what other people should do?

9. What is the result of our criticising the actions of other people? What does this practice indicate in our own character?

10. What does it mean for us to see evil in other people?

11. Does karmic law always right injustice?

12. What do you understand by a "decree of karma"? Is it always quite inevitable?

13. How is a decree of karma carried out?

14. Do men help to execute karmic law?

15. What attitude should we take in cases where we are compelled to visit karma upon others? What would it mean if we punished or pained others with a feeling of satisfaction?

16. What is the karma of a sheriff who hangs a murderer condemned by law?

17. Is it right for legal justice to condemn a man to death?

18. Does the guilt or innocence of the executed man make a difference in this karma?

19. Who will make good the injustice of legally depriving a man of his body?

20. Is most of a man's karma in the present life-time caused by his actions in previous lives or by his actions in the present life?

21. How would you determine whether any particular happening was due to past karma or to present karma?

22. Can the karma of an undesirable act ever be done away with before its outworking?

23. Should we ever grieve over our faults or the misdeeds which are past recall?

24. What is the effect of sorrow over our own imperfection and shortcomings?

25. What are the effects of sorrowing for our departed relatives and friends?

26. Why is withdrawal from the world's activities not likely to help us in our evolution?

27. Under what circumstances is it well to live exclusively the life of meditation and thought on spiritual topics?

28. Can you draw an analogy between the life of the personality and that of the individuality?

29. What should be the attitude of students of karma and reincarnation toward old age?

FIELD NOTES

The work of the *Legion* is steadily progressing, even in foreign lands, in spite of the difficulties of the year. A strong Group has been chartered in The Hague in the Netherlands, and several in the United States.

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Several of the Groups have been giving illustrated *Legion* lectures with good success. The lecture *Karma, A Story of Early Buddhism* has been used in six states and in Canada. Several others are now in active service. *The Dervishes, Mysticism and Reincarnation* has been completed. *Problems in Eugenics* will soon be available for circulation among the Groups. These lectures are designed to please and instruct the general public, at the same time giving sufficient reference to karma and reincarnation to make people acquainted with these teachings.

For information as to the use of these lectures write to the secretary of the *Legion*.

BOOK NOTICES

Year Book of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, for 1913-1914. 203 pages.

Limitation of Armament on the Great Lakes. 57 pp.

Signatures, Ratifications, Adhesions and Reservations to the Conventions and Declarations of the First and Second Hague Peace Conferences. 32 pp.

Arbitration and Diplomatic Settlements of the United States. 21 pp.

These books and pamphlets have been received from the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Those of our members who are interested in the work of this institution will do well to write to its secretary at 2 Jackson Place, Washington D. C.

We have also received the following booklets:

The Temperaments, by M. Tope, Bowerston, Ohio. 56 pp.

Planetary Daily Guide for All, 1915, by Llewellyn George, Portland, Ore., 116 pp., price fifty cents.

The Horoscope of 1915, by Llewellyn George, 20 pp.