

# ***REINCARNATION***

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## *THE DEPORTATIONS FROM BELGIUM*

Within recent weeks many reports by various routes have brought the news that civilian Belgians by thousands have been torn from their homes and friends by the German conquerors, to be removed to Teutonic soil.

The Belgian government has protested to neutral powers with the formality that comports with diplomatic usage. The Roman Catholic cardinal of Belgium has similarly voiced his objection to this high-handed procedure, in international appeal. And Holland, a neutral country, has sent out to her fellow non-participants in the war a strong endorsement of Belgium's protest.

The most hopeful suggestion pertaining to this new insult to civilization and to the principle of universal brotherhood hints that the act presages evacuation by the Teutons. While their withdrawal under pressure of the Allies is to

be hoped for by all impartial lovers of the oppressed one may be sure that it would not restore the men so ruthlessly torn away from their land.

If the Belgians were removed in order that they should be generously cared for in internment centers our indignation might be somewhat assuaged. But it seems beyond reasonable doubt that at least a part of the German intention includes the forcing of the Belgians to labor in field and factory in order that Germans may be set free to fight—perhaps against the brothers of the outraged Belgians.

To view this blow to the spirit of civilisation as an isolated act would be to fail in observing the true genius of Germany's imperialistic ambitions.

It is not too much to say that philosophically-minded Americans have viewed with amazement the revelation of Germany's view-point and intent. Her evident inner design was—not merely to hold or to expand her boundaries—but to snatch from Great Britain her dominion of the seas and her primacy among nations.

Americans have had occasion, in the last quarter of the eighteenth century and in the first quarter of the nineteenth, to contend with England for the rights of man. And Providence gave success to our infant republic. So Americans can see and estimate the faults of the British world regime. But we can also see that no other power has earned the right of leadership among nations to-day; that England's generosity with other nations is the logical sequel to her centuries of striving for liberty within her own boundaries. And we would look with horror upon the dis-



placement of England by Germany in world-leadership since the Teutons have plainly shown themselves capable of the most dastardly crimes against the fundamental decencies of civilization.

One wonders how many deported Belgians will live through the coming months or years of slavery to reach their homes by the sea! And we wonder if some sparks of the fires of liberty are not even yet to be roused to flames in the hearts of wise and kindly Germans to oppose the demands of materialistic imperialism?

*W. V-H.*

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Now, man in the past has had many wars, and each war was to some extent to break the bonds of the inner life struggling for higher realisation; but man did not understand this, he always thought that wars were necessary for the life of the individual, not understanding that the individual was a spirit; so man identified himself with the mere brute side of warfare, not recognising that wars happen only when things are evil in civilisation, and the World Spirit is confined and limited. We say that war produces suffering; but it is not so; it is suffering that produces war. A crippling of the human spirit produces degradation, and wars then become absolutely inevitable; so when nations live side by side, and, all unheeded by their rulers, poverty begins, ignorance flourishes, and misery is rife, then statesmen begin to be confused as to their policies, and wars are the result. But war comes only because there is a larger life within a people, a mysterious World-Spirit that wills to come to greater realisation, even if it has to destroy the whole social structure, if that will not adapt itself. Always wars, but with them always an advancement, a going forward, step by step, toward the fuller realisation of the possibilities of the Spirit, for man must ever be engaged in a warfare with matter.

*C. Jinarajadasa..*

## KARMA

"The same fire gives hardness to clay and softness to wax, though it be no constant cause either of hardness or softness."

This statement from Bacon's *Novum Organum*, taken as a text, may lead one to many conclusions as to the absolutely impersonal and unfeeling nature of the law of karma, the operations of which lead us many times to the idea of personal punishment or reward, to a sort of dread of a "discharge of karma,"—of this idea it seems we should rid ourselves.

What is one earth-life but the field for the application of the law of karma? This law is certainly not to be dreaded, but our knowledge of it is to be used for the development of greater powers, through which we may be more useful in helping evolution. Certain it is that when one has fairly well learned how to overcome one set of difficulties, another set will be presented to him, which may arise from what we call good karma; that is, one may have more leisure, more time to spend as one chooses, an easing of financial strain,—enlarged opportunity in a word,—all this perhaps more subtle in its difficulties than the hardness of life. But karma, the law of reaction to action, brings hardness or softness to personalities, yet karma is "no constant cause either of hardness or softness."

Ella L. Cutler.



## WAGNER'S 'RHINEGOLD' AND 'VALKYRIE'

Students of the deeper truths of human existence and its meaning find a wonderful store of occult knowledge, expressed with consummate skill, in the music-dramas of Richard Wagner. Especially is this true in the case of the marvelous creation of the four operas which are collectively known as *The Ring of the Nibelung*. They consist of the introductory opera called *The Rhinegold* and the trilogy of *The Valkyrie*, *Siegfried* and *The Dusk of the Gods*.

Richard Wagner was a mighty genius in music. His music is different from that of other composers: it is at once colossal and universal. Less great musicians must observe the laws of harmony in their compositions, or at least they must show that they are conscious of those laws. Wagner, however, soars away into higher realms where the ordinary laws no longer limit his art, and there he produces with his marvelous successions of discords a higher harmony, before unknown, which far transcends the lower harmonies that make other musical works graceful and beautiful.

It has become a well-recognised principle that men often express more of truth in music, art and literature than they are conscious of at the time of their production of the work. This may happen because the man is not wholly limited to his feelings and his mind; he has his immortal phases of being and these may influence the man in the personality so that something of higher truth may enter into the man's work. A true genius is one whose ordinary self is fairly easily influenced or controlled by his real self, the ego.

In other words, he has, perhaps in other lives, striven so earnestly to make use of his higher powers that he has partly succeeded in breaking down the barriers of nature which are placed between the personality of the man and his higher self, or individuality. Then the more god-like powers of the ego may act upon and through the lower man and express themselves more or less clearly through him. This is true inspiration.

Wagner was not only a genius in this sense, so that he could express himself in music from his higher nature, but he was also well acquainted with the laws of being and of human evolution. He was a great student and admirer of the great philosopher Schopenhauer and the Buddhist philosophy of life and therefore not only conversant with the laws of karma and reincarnation but actually a believer in them. In many cases we be able to find wonderful interpretations of some artistic or literary masterpiece, and we are quite justified in making these interpretations and in holding them as true and valuable, even when we do not know that the author of the work put them in consciously and intentionally. But in the case of *The Ring of the Nibelung* we are not only able to find wonderful hidden meanings in the dramas but we know that at least some of them were definitely put there by Wagner with knowledge and intent. The interpretations to be given below are, however, those of the writer, and represent his views as to the hidden meanings.

Briefly said, the story of *The Ring* summarises the evolution of man. It starts from the time of the individualisation of the man, or formation of the immortal ego, and tells of the troubles and



difficulties of the personality until it gains full wisdom and is redeemed by Divine Love, when even the relatively permanent body of the ego is destroyed, because it is no longer necessary.

*Summary of "The Rhinegold"*

The first scene shows the bottom of the River Rhine. Three Rhine-nymphs are guarding a treasure of gold, given into their charge by their father, the god of the River Rhine. Alberich, chief of the gnomes, or Nibelungs, dwelling in the interior of the earth, is attracted by the innocent play and singing of the nymphs. He fails in his designs of lust, but learns the secret of the treasure through the foolish babbling of the nymphs. Renouncing all love, he is enabled to wrest away the gold and forge from it the magic Ring, the ring which gives measureless power to its possessor.

In the second scene are shown mountain heights. Wotan, chief of the gods, and his wife Fricka, goddess of marriage, awake from their sleep at the dawn of day, and behold on the highest summit, the wondrous shining castle, Valhalla, which the two chief giants, Fafner and Fasolt, have built for them. The gods have promised to give them Freya, goddess of youth and beauty. But when the giants come to claim their reward, they are persuaded to accept instead the treasure which Alberich has stolen and enlarged by the labors of the Nibelungs, over whom he tyrannises with the power of the Ring.

The third scene shows the subterranean cavity, deep down in the bowels of the earth, to which Wotan and Loge, god of fire, have descended in order to obtain the treasure. By a stratagem they are able to bind Alberich hand and foot, and they take him up to the heights.

Lastly are shown again the mountain heights. Alberich, in order to regain his freedom, is forced to give up the treasure, including the Ring and the magic helmet which enables its wearer to become invisible, to change his form at will and to appear at any desired place. In his rage, Alberich curses the Ring: it shall bring death to all its possessors and cause envy to others. This causes the giant Fafner to slay his brother Fasolt and

to carry away the gold, Ring, helmet and all. The gods enter Valhalla over the rainbow bridge, while from far below them is heard the lamenting of the Rhine nymphs.

*Interpretation of "The Rhinegold"*

No mortal men appeared in this drama which describes cosmic conditions just before man came into earth-life as a human personality.

The Rhine typifies the astral, or emotional, world; the earth represents the physical world. Fire indicates the world of mind; the air, home of the gods, means the higher spiritual worlds. The Rhinegold means energy. This was at first in the astral world, and then passed over into the physical world, where it reached its greatest limitation and power (symbolised by the Ring). Then it comes into possession of the rude and unintelligent forces of physical nature (the two giants, Fafner and Fasolt). The curse simply means that whoever enters limitation (possesses the Ring) must also leave that limitation, which is always a death, as shown in the drama.

The gods represent the various phases of man's immortal nature. For instance, Wotan is the divine will; Fricka, divine reason and love. Together they form the higher self of man, or ego. Valhalla, the shining castle of the gods, is the causal body of the ego. When this has once been formed, man is ready to appear on earth as a mortal being, the personality.

The rainbow bridge, over which the gods pass to enter Valhalla, is the golden thread which links the causal body to the divine monad, the "spark of the divine flame."

Loge is not one of the family of gods. He is mental energy in nature. He is crafty and clever.



*Summary of "The Valkyrie"*

In the first act the fugitive Siegmund, exhausted and weaponless, comes to the rude forest home of Hunding and is cared for by Sieglinde, mistress of the house. Hunding returns from the chase, asks the stranger to eat with them and tell his story. He recognises Siegmund as an enemy and tells him he may remain for the night, but must fight for his life in the morning. Hunding then retires with his wife. During the night Sieglinde comes into the room where Siegmund sits brooding over his misfortunes. They learn that they are twins, long-separated, children of Wälse (Wotan). Sieglinde hails her brother as her deliverer and shows him the magic sword which Wälse has thrust into the ash-tree around which Hunding's house is built. This he did for the time of his son's greatest need. Siegmund now draws it forth in triumph and claims Sieglinde as his willing bride.

The second act shows Wotan on a mountain plain, instructing his favorite Valkyrie daughter, Brünnhilde, to give victory to Siegmund in the coming battle. But Fricka comes to demand that the violation of Hunding's marriage rights be avenged, and eventually compels the god to yield. Brünnhilde appears before Siegmund in his flight, supporting his fainting bride on his lap, and announces his coming death and choosing for Valhalla. Siegmund will not go, because his bride can not be with him in Valhalla; rather than yield her again to Hunding he is about to slay Sieglinde. Touched with sympathy at the power of human love and knowing that Wotan loves his Wälsung race, the Valkyrie now promises to give Siegmund the victory. Hunding comes upon the scene and the men fight. Brünnhilde is seen in the air over Siegmund, helping him, when suddenly Wotan appears and Siegmund's sword Nothung breaks in two as it strikes Wotan's extended spear. Hunding thrusts his sword into Siegmund. Brünnhilde flees with Sieglinde and the two pieces of the broken sword. Hunding falls dead when Wotan angrily tells him to go to Fricka and announce that her demand has been accomplished.

In the wonderful third act, the nine Valkyries are shown gathering together on the mountain top, each one

bringing on her horse a slain warrior for Valhalla's hosts. Brünnhilde comes last, fleeing from Wotan's wrath, and carrying Sieglinde behind her. The sisters refuse to help Brünnhilde to save Sieglinde, as they are not able to disobey their father. Sieglinde wishes to die, but flees alone, when told by Brünnhilde that she must live for the sake of the hero who is to be born. She makes her way to the forest where Fafner is sleepily guarding his treasure, having changed himself into the form of a dragon, by means of the magic helmet.

A storm is approaching: it is Wotan, pursuing his rebel daughter. He calls forth Brünnhilde from the group which the sisters have formed around her and tells her that she must lose her divinity and become a mortal woman. He will put her to sleep and leave her on the mountain top, so that the first man who finds and awakens her shall be her husband and lord. The eight sisters cry out in horror, but Wotan orders them away. The Valkyrie now asks whether she has merited such terrible punishment. Wotan replies that it is not punishment, but the inevitable result of her own actions. She asks as a final boon: let there be placed a wall of fire around the rock, so that none but a hero who knows no fear, will pass through. Wotan gladly assents, recognising his own proud spirit in that of his daughter. After a long and tender farewell he kisses her on the eyes and she falls into her long sleep, surrounded by flames of fire.

### *Interpretation of "The Valkyrie"*

The drama shows how man fares in his early stages of human evolution. The three mortals, Hunding, Sieglinde and Siegmund, correspond exactly with man's three natures, or bodies of the personality: the physical, emotional and the mental. The rough and brutal Hunding stands for the physical body; Sieglinde, tender and sympathetic, represents the emotional or astral nature; and Siegmund, brave and noble, symbolises the lower mind, or mental body. Sieglinde



has been given by traders to Hunding, and has had a very unhappy life. This means that in the earlier earth-lives of man, the physical body dominates and shapes the desires and feelings according to its own instincts. Siegmund's long wanderings and misfortunes mean the difficulties experienced by the slowly growing mental nature. Finally he finds Sieglinde and the sword and delivers her from bondage. This means that after many efforts the lower mind is able to make use of the power of will (the sword), and then the emotional nature recognises the mind as its own beloved lord. The marriage of Siegmund and Sieglinde, twins that they are, has nothing in it that can shock the moral sense, when explained in this way, for it means merely a change in the mutual relations of man's bodies or natures.

The second act, however, shows how this new relation of the lower bodies meets with disaster. Wotan, the progressive, active spiritual nature of man, supports it; Fricka, the stable, conservative spiritual nature, strongly opposes it, and finally forces Wotan to yield. Thus is brought about a conflict which ultimately results in the complete destruction of the personality. But the seeds for a new order of things are already in evidence, in the shape of the unborn hero and Brünnhilde, that part of the immortal man which has through sympathy linked itself inevitably to the further fate of the Wälsung race, which is none other than the human race. The Valkyries are warrior-maidens, daughters of Wotan and Erda, the mother spirit of the earth. They are immortal and represent a lower stage of the pure will, or faculties of will-power. They act in the

intuitional world, hence they are feminine; but as they still represent the will, they are brave and warlike, carrying lances and clad in full armor. The great lesson of this drama and perhaps of the whole series of *The Ring of the Nibelung*, is revealed in the wonderful third act. Brünnhilde's fate, the necessity for her to become a mortal (to act only as a mortal nature), means that a part of the higher self of man is to enter the difficult limitations of life in the personality, to become a helper and guide to the lower man. We know that it is desire which draws the ego back to re-birth; so here it is Brünnhilde's desire to protect the race of Wälsungs and her awakened interest in the life on earth, which causes her to become untrue to the laws of her divine nature and to follow a lower set of laws,—that of life in the three lower worlds. Wotan, in parting with his best-beloved Valkyrie, loses a part of himself, for Brünnhilde is intimately part of him. Wotan experiences the pain of separation, but he feels also that his great purpose of forging ahead in the evolution of man is being carried out and that all is well. The falling asleep of Brünnhilde means her losing consciousness of her divine state. She will awake in a narrower world of life, without the divine, intuitive knowledge that was her possession as Valkyrie. This sacrifice of the immortal man for the sake of the personal man, makes *The Valkyrie* to be what it is,—a divine tragedy, full of wondrous beauty and sweet pathos and power of inspiration.

C. Shuddemagen.



*PURITY AND PROGRESS*

Nature's wonderful processes are cyclic, self-preserving, self-renewing and also self-purifying. Consider the water of the sea. The sun's rays cause some of the water at the surface of the sea to become water vapor. It is lighter than the air and rises higher and higher in the atmosphere until the cooler regions are reached. There it is condensed into very small droplets and forms clouds. When the particles reach a certain size they can no longer float in the air but fall to the earth in the form of rain.

While in the clouds, all water droplets are pure and clean. But as they fall upon the thirsty soil, they become contaminated with the impurities of the lower atmosphere and the earth. The water collecting in pools soon becomes stagnant, becoming the home for countless myriads of tiny animal organisms and vegetative growths, whose decaying products soon make the water impure.

But it is not often that such pools remain permanent. Usually the water sinks into the soil, enriching it with its impurities, and dissolving instead some of the mineral substances of the lower-lying rocks and earths. Then the water may collect in large underground reservoirs, feeding many springs of the lower valleys and at last finding its way back into the free ocean-depths. And then, after a time, the same cyclic processes are repeated.

The life and consciousness of man are somewhat like the water of the sea. Were they for a long time to remain imprisoned in the coarse material bodies of the personality, they would

become contaminated and coarsened by the lower vibrations that belong to the materials of these lower bodies. The life tends easily to regard itself as the body in which it is confined and to attribute the nature of the body to itself.

But the Powers that guide all evolution have devised various ways to neutralise and overcome this tendency for consciousness to become impure. There is the great change, called death, which separates the consciousness from the body, followed by further changes which carry it into very high states of purity. Then there occur at the time of sleep the more frequent daily separations of the astral from the physical body, giving to both bodies a chance to live for a time without the influence of the other. And the very necessities of the life of the world force man at times to exercise his consciousness in the mental world.

Progress in spiritual evolution is attained by continuous effort to reach a higher state of purity. Man can co-operate with nature in the periodic uplifting of his inner consciousness, and he can do even more. He can, by his powers of thought, desire and will, concentrate his consciousness upon high and lofty contemplation of spiritual truths.

Just as standing water soon becomes impure, so man would do well to realise that knowledge of the higher life, the water of spiritual progress, must be as freely given to others as it has been received. The man who does not put to some wise use the spiritual energies which he receives, will be very likely to find that they become mixed with his selfish desires and are made impure in the limitations of his lower personality.

C. S.



## THE COMING SUB-RACE

(Concluded from page 345)

In his final Australian lecture, Mr. Leadbeater deals with education, particularly with reference to the training of the children of the new race:

There has been a vast amount of misunderstanding as to what education really is. For many centuries, and especially during the last century, it would appear that the whole idea of education has not been at all comprehended. The real signification of the word is perfectly clear. *Duco* means "I lead" and *e* means "out," so that "Education" means "drawing out." The true intent is therefore to *draw out* the best that is in the child in every way. . . .

It is a waste of time to make each child a walking encyclopædia. What you want is to make him a healthy, hearty, honorable citizen, who will do his work well and understand his duty to his country, to his fellows and to himself. None of those things are to be attained by cramming people with facts, but they are to be drawn out of the child by a proper and rational method of education. This is beginning to be a little realised by the few, but it is by no means the general plan at present adopted.

Then another and even worse feature of the utter uselessness of education has been the plan of trying to drive and frighten the children into learning. Now, this is an absolutely wicked thing. That seems to you a strong statement, but just think of it. They actually beat these unfortunate children for all sorts of infractions of their rules, apparently not understanding that to give inten-

tional pain is itself a sin of the first magnitude. It is the act of a devil, and not of a human being.

. . . Remember, it always means incompetence when a man resorts to force. An incompetent teacher pretends that he injures a child to correct his faults. If he knew anything whatever of the facts of the case he would see that the effect of such injury is in every case far worse than the fault. He would realise that such action causes a vast mass of fear, sorrow, pain and deceit. . .

Education is dual—a matter of reciprocal action. The child must learn and you must teach. If any sort of transaction is to take place between two parties, surely the natural way to manage is to have some sort of co-operation between the two, so that things may go more smoothly. . .

Certainly your business as well as your interest, with regard to the children, is to keep them happy all the time. You will say perhaps that fewer facts will then be acquired. I would say, "What then? Are facts the most important things that should be acquired?" You want healthy, virtuous, happy, high-minded citizens. . .

This idea of education is very different from that commonly held in the outside world. You will understand how every word is literally, absolutely true. You can see that when an ego entrusts himself to the care of certain parents, there is a tremendous responsibility thrown upon them. It is a most sacred work they have to do for him. It is the same for the teacher who has charge of these children. If he be the right sort of man—if he evoke in them the love which he should be able to evoke, he can make them almost what he will. Of course, each ego has



his own capabilities. The question is, . . . which of these sets of qualities shall be first evoked. It lies in the hands of the parents and the teachers. If they, on their part, are careful to evoke the good, then when the evil qualities come to the surface and try to assert themselves, they will be thrown aside, and the will of the child will be called into activity on the side of the good; whereas if you let the evil qualities be first developed, you will find but little response to your later efforts for good.

You can always count absolutely on the help of the ego, for the evil qualities are never his qualities. When you see evil manifest itself in any man down here, it means only that the soul has not yet developed the opposite good quality. There is no evil in the soul. He cannot store up evil, but his vehicles (bodies) may or may not be properly developed; and when they are not, there may be a lack of the power to check them, and so these vehicles run away with the man. The matter in the astral and mental bodies of every man is on the downward arc of evolution; and therefore the life of these vehicles is always pressing downward. You must not suppose that it is a tempting demon. It is simply following up its own line of evolution, without any knowledge of you or of your development. It knows nothing about you. It goes its own way. And so to you it seems a tempter trying to drag you down, whilst it is only doing what is necessary for its own development or evolution. But what lies behind the so-called evil nature in man? It is an uncontrolled fragment of one of his vehicles—not himself at all. The man himself desires

nothing but progress, nothing but good; and so you can always depend upon it that the true ego of the child will be absolutely on your side in your endeavor to help him.

There is another question which is of great importance. Remember that the body is the shrine of the mind. Your child can go on learning all his life, if he is wise enough to wish to do so. I can learn at the age of nearly seventy, but the child can build his physical body only during the first eighteen years or thereabouts, and then he has to inhabit it for the rest of his life. Therefore during that period of growth the physical body is much the most important thing. You talk about cramming into him vast amounts of information; what is the use of that if it is at the cost of ruined eyesight, of rounded shoulders, of a narrow chest? The thing of paramount importance during these early years is to make a fine, strong, healthy body for the future life. You are building your own house, and then you have to live in it. Therefore, the first thing you must see to is that the physical health is not in any way interfered with by these modern demands of education. You are fortunate here, in Australia, in having a climate that lends itself to physical development quite remarkably. You are able to live out in the open air much more readily than we can in England.

Be sure then to give your children plenty of air, plenty of exercise and good food. You should cultivate, as much as may be, the taste of the child for nutritious foods. It is almost a commonplace to say that anything that is good for you is usually nasty; but that should not be so.



Those nutritious foods can be made tasty at the expense of a little knowledge and a little trouble; and it should always be done. You can have the best sort of body only if you build it of the best food and drink. What that is to be you must discover for yourself. I must tell you that all clairvoyants agree that all should avoid the eating of flesh and the drinking of alcohol. I know the arguments brought forward in favor of these things, but you can find plenty of publications to study on the subject; and I tell you again that all who can see agree in recommending complete abstinence from these two things. . .

As an occultist I say that the drinking of alcohol and the eating of meat produce serious impurities in the higher vehicles as well as in the physical. All through history, those who have taken up the spiritual life have always abstained from these things, because they cast unnecessary stumbling blocks in the way of spiritual progress. It is hard for men to go in the right direction. Why should a man put additional obstacles in his path? And that is what a man does who so unnecessarily adopts this method of living. The man who can manage without flesh and alcohol is in a much better position for progress of all sorts. That is one thing that we can do for our children whose bodies are not yet developed; we can avoid accustoming them to these things which are certainly evil for them. It is not only what you give the children—it is the influence with which you are surrounding them. If you yourselves are feeding upon these horrors you are sending out their degrading influences, and the children will inevitably absorb them. . . .

Another serious drawback against which we ought to make a determined stand is the almost universal tobacco habit. Its evil effect is obvious in the physical, the astral and the mental bodies. It permeates the man with exceedingly impure particles, causing emanations so material that they are frequently perceptible to the sense of smell. Astrally, it not only introduces impurity, but it also tends to deaden the vibrations, and it is for this reason that it is found to "soothe the nerves," as it is said. Clearly, in the new sub-race men will not want their vibrations deadened, nor their astral bodies weighed down with foul and poisonous particles. They will need the capacity of answering instantly to all possible vibrations, and yet at the same time they must have perfect control, so that their desires shall be as horses guided by the intelligent mind to draw them where they will—not to run away with them wildly, and carry them into situations where the higher nature knows that they ought never to be found. Therefore, if we are really anxious to help the incoming souls to develop their various vehicles, tobacco is undoubtedly one of the things which we must eschew. . . .

It is not only the parents of the children, though theirs is the greatest responsibility. We all of us help to make the atmosphere of this new sub-race which is coming among us, and we must see to it that we develop in ourselves the qualities—the love, the purity, the unselfishness, the devotion to country, the highest thought, the noblest ideals—that we should like to see in the new race that is to be. The responsibility lies upon us to make ourselves all these things, so



that they will be the mould into which the souls will flow. The influence of environment can hardly be exaggerated. A strong and soaring soul may rise above his environment, but the vast majority of the souls are still but partially awakened, and they are still greatly the creatures of their surroundings.

Every child is inherently good, and each one has a divine spark within him; but it largely depends upon the environment whether he develops quickly and easily, or whether he has to fight his way to the front under great difficulties and much suffering. . . . Remember, as *we* live, so do we influence *them*. This is your opportunity; see to it, all you who love your country, that you take it to the full.

*From "The Herald of the Star."*

### CYCLIC PROCESSES

By definition the word 'karma' means the law of action in the three lower worlds, the worlds in which the personality lives. These are the physical, emotional and mental worlds. In each of them man has a body, or apparatus of consciousness, and through each body he can act upon the world which corresponds to it, and also through that body he can be acted upon by the world. When we think of interactions as taking place between the man and all outside him, we

often use the word 'action' to denote what the man does; and we use 'reaction' to apply to that which is done by the outside world to the man.

The law of karma is the law which regulates the conditions of all changes or movements in matter of the three lower worlds. Karma does not prescribe what must take place and what must not, but it requires perfect continuity and regular transition from any condition to any other condition in which the same matter is concerned. This means that there must be that orderly arrangement of changes which gives to men the idea of cause and effect. Furthermore, karma requires that changes shall only take place within limits, and not to excess. In other words, no change can go on so as to carry matter or energy always in one direction. In the long run there must be a perfect balance. If a change proceeded always in one direction, it would mean that there could be no universe; or the universe would be disrupted. A bullet can not always rise above the earth's surface,—there must come a time when it must fall back.

When these principles are correctly understood they can be used in endless ways and in a countless number of cases to help us know what is taking place in life and what all this changing life means. Therefore the knowledge of karma gives us the means of harmonising ourselves with the universe and making our actions such as will most help on the evolution of all beings, and will increase the universal harmony.

From the general law of karma we can see that all processes must be, and are, either cyclic or parts of cyclic processes. A complete process



passes over a cycle; that is, the changes in the process bring about the original condition. Illustrations are easily given: the cycle of day and night, of the seasons, of movements of various parts of machines, the ebb and flow of the tides, and finally the cycle of human incarnation and the cycle of manifestation and dissolution of the whole universe.

To be sure, most changes which we see are only fragmentary and incomplete, merely parts of cyclic processes. But it is our work to learn to recognise them as cyclic, and to know something of what the unseen parts of the cycle must be. Such knowledge would enable us to refrain from doing many things whose cyclic completion must necessarily lead us and perhaps others into trouble and suffering. The untrue word which we speak to-day will bring about an unhappy return. The necessary work which we neglect to-day will complete the cycle by placing us in needy circumstances. Thus, even 'things undone' are active in producing other things undone.

The nation which persists in doing injustice for the sake of obtaining selfish results, will live to see those results vanish away, and the sting of injustice turned upon itself. "Those that draw the sword shall perish by the sword," is an old proverb which expresses this cyclic working of karma. The nation which generously offers help and protection to others in the time of their need, will find in its own time of distress that help and relief will be forthcoming.

How true it is that when we do something to the outside world, we are really doing the same thing to ourselves! For the action which we

direct outwards, becomes in good time a reaction which returns and discharges itself upon us, thus completing the cycle which karma makes inevitable. Therefore "cast your bread upon the waters and it will return to you after many days."

How true it is that we judge ourselves when we judge others! For the judgment which we apply to others is only a fragment of a complete cycle, and what we do not see at the time of our judging is that the same judgment will return to us, with the same intensity with which we have sent it forth against others.

We are constantly building ourselves, whether we know it or not, whether we work directly upon ourselves or upon the world. The feelings of doubt and despair which we allow ourselves to indulge in, come back to strengthen our unfortunate failing and weakness. If we strive against our weaker nature, then the world will strive against it also; if we yield supinely, then the world will push us down also. And it is only ourselves who can either hurt or help ourselves. The world merely takes the part of a transmitting agent, completing the cycle of our action.

Many days make a year; many smaller cycles make up larger ones. What the year-cycle is to the personality, that are the cycles of earth-lives to the individuality. The smaller wheels turn the larger ones quite as much as the larger do the smaller. Action is equal to reaction. Therefore, whatever the size of the wheels that we can turn, we may turn them with confidence, for all have their place, geared into the larger scheme of things.

C. S.



## REINCARNATION LITERATURE

(Concluded from page 243)

In the latter part of his book, *The Transmigration of Souls*, Professor Bertholet gives fair presentations of what some of the modern writers and thinkers have said as to reincarnation. His conclusions are usually that the writers quoted did not take the subject as seriously as their words would seem to indicate. Lessing and the great Goethe can hardly be explained away, when we consider their sayings as to reincarnation. Schopenhauer's views are sufficiently clear and do not differ greatly from our views, with the ego once definitely recognised as the permanent being in whom the "will to live" inheres.

In 1783 Johann Georg Schlosser, Goethe's brother-in-law, wrote two dialogues upon the same subject. In the same year appeared the posthumous dissertation of the English philosopher David Hume upon "The Immortality of the Soul," in which he declares that metempsychosis is the only theory of the kind seriously deserving the attention of philosophy. But the most important work upon the subject belongs to the year 1780, when no less a writer than Lessing came forward to defend the theory. Some two years previously (in his posthumous observations upon Campe's philosophical dialogues) he had indicated his opinion in the words: "Is it after all so certain that my soul has only once inhabited the form of man? Is it after all so unreasonable to suppose that my soul, upon its journey to perfection, should have been forced to wear this fleshly veil more than once? Possibly this migration of the soul through several human bodies was based on a new system of thought. Possibly this new system was merely the oldest of all. . . ."

Lessing refers to the theory of metempsychosis as nothing more than a "hypothesis," and even at times as a "freak of imagination." But in § 95 of his work, the "Education of the Human Race," he says: "Is this

hypothesis ridiculous merely because it is the oldest, because it is adopted without demur, before men's minds had been distracted and weakened by the sophistry of the schools?" "On the contrary," says Lessing, in a fragment, "the first and earliest opinion in matters of speculation is invariably the most probable, because it was immediately accepted by the sound understanding of mankind." Hence attempts have been made to use the doctrine of metempsychosis as a key to explain the whole of Lessing's treatise. This, however, is a mistake: he merely uses the doctrine upon a special occasion as a means to justify the action of God against the argument that His scheme for the education of the human race excludes a number of individuals from His blessings. "This is not so," says Lessing; on the contrary, "the path by which the race is to arrive at perfection must be trodden by every individual man (early and late). But can he be supposed to have traversed this path in one and the same life? Can a man be both a sensual Jew and a spiritual Christian in one and the same life? Can he surpass both of these in one and the same life? Surely not: but why should not every individual have lived more than one life in this world?" (§§ 93, 94). Then, in high enthusiasm, Lessing pours forth the eloquent passage which forms the famous conclusion of his "Education of the Human Race," his "religious Testament" as it has been called (§§ 96-100).

"Why should I not at one time have taken those steps toward perfection which can bring but temporal rewards and punishments to men? Why, again, should I not have made at another time that progress to which our vision of eternal reward is so great a help? Why should I not return as often as I am capable of acquiring fresh knowledge and further power? Do I achieve so much in one sojourning as to make it not worth my while to return? Never! Or, is it that I forget my former sojourn? Well for me that I forget. The recollection of my former state would enable me to turn my present condition to but poor account. And have I forgotten for ever what I must forget for the time being? Or is it that I should lose so much time? Lose time! What need have I for haste? Is not the whole of eternity mine?"



The whole of eternity belongs to the individual, and he may use it to rise upon the long ascent of self-development. Such is the idea of Lessing, which is found more philosophically expressed in a fragment belonging to the year 1777, "that man may have more than five senses." The essential points of the fragment are as follows: the soul is a simple form of existence, capable of an infinite number of impressions. But it is also a finite being. Hence these infinite impressions are only experienced gradually in an infinite course of time. The order and proportion in which these impressions are slowly acquired are due to the senses. But the five senses which we at present use are not primordial. Nature never progresses by leaps and bounds; therefore the soul must have passed through all the stages inferior to that on which it now finds itself. It is therefore probable that man passed through a former life with fewer senses, and that he has traversed stages of existence marked by varying combinations of senses. This idea is combined with the further idea that every particle of matter can be useful to the soul in the development of a sense, and Lessing is thus led to assume that *additional senses* must be possible: as, for instance, the sense of sight responds to light, so special senses could and certainly will respond to electrical and magnetic stimulus, and will inform us directly whether bodies are electrified or magnetised, which information can now be gained only by means of special research. A new world of the most marvellous phenomena will then be open to us, of which we can now conceive no more than early opticians knew of light and colour.

As Lessing tells us, his theory of metempsychosis was based upon the ideas of Charles Bonnet, a physicist of Geneva, who wrote a treatise in French in 1769 upon philosophical palingenesis (rebirth), giving many so-called proofs to show how from the original matter of the brain all created beings were transformed from corporeal to ethereal natures. Bonnet's ideas seem to have fallen upon fruitful soil elsewhere. In 1770 Lavater translated his treatise into German with annotations, and his social environment also shows how the belief in soul-transmigration haunted the minds of that age. But not

always were the best minds attracted, and as the doctrine gained adherents it lost seriousness, for which reason it probably became once more unfashionable and discredited. Light is thrown upon this downward course by manuscript entries in the diary of a woman of Zürich, who may be quoted as an eye-witness of that interesting period. She says: "The friends of Lavater at Copenhagen believe in a transmigration of the soul. They believe that several of Jesus' apostles live again on earth, without any recollection of their former lives as apostles. Prince Karl of Hesse was the apostle Peter, and the Danish minister of state, Andreas of Bernsdorf, was Thomas. Lavater was once King Josiah of Judah; then he became Joseph of Arimathea, and then the reformer Ulrich Zwingli. The apostle John is still alive, as Jesus foretold, knows who he is, and can remember his life with Jesus. He travels much in the world, and can assume different forms in order to avoid recognition. He is a freemason, and first visited Prince Karl of Hesse to ask his help as a brother mason. Prince Karl gave him some help and then dismissed him without paying any attention to him or realising with whom he was talking. Shortly afterwards the Prince received a letter from another mason, reproaching him for his neglect of this important traveller, and telling him that the man was St. John, who would visit him again. John did, in fact, return and made himself known to Peter, whose attention was now aroused. . . ." Such is the account given by the lady of Zürich. The fact that this royal Peter failed to understand the real character of his saintly mendicant brother was due to the strange illusions of suggestion: from this point of view the story will appear to be correctly placed in the book from which I have quoted it (Otto Stoll, *Suggestion and Hypnotism in Racial Psychology*).

Schopenhauer makes a definite distinction between metempsychosis, "the transference of the so-called soul in its totality to another body," and the theory which he supports, palingenesis or rebirth, "the decomposition and reconstruction of a personality, in which process the will alone persists, assumes the form of a new organism, and receives a new intellect."



The theory of metempsychosis proper may be found in modern dramatic literature. A case in point is Ibsen's *Caesar and Galilean*, in which the mysterious Mephistopheles-figure of Maximus says to the Emperor Julian: "One there is who ever returns to the life of the human race within a certain space of time. He is like a rider attempting to break a wild horse in the riding school. Time after time the horse throws him. But a while and he is in the saddle again, a little more firmly seated and with more experience: and yet fall he must in his various forms even to this day. He was doomed to fall as the man divinely wrought in the Garden of Eden: he was doomed to fall as the founder of a world-wide empire, or as the prince of the kingdom of God. Who knows how many times he has been among us unrecognised? Knowest thou, Julian, that thou wast not in him whom now thou persecutest?" (that is, the "Galilean," Christ). Julian himself, in the first part of the play, gives utterance to a similar thought. "In each of the changing generations was one soul, in which Adam rose again in purity: he was mighty in Moses the lawgiver: he had strength to subdue the world in Alexander of Macedon: he was almost perfect (Julian, the 'apostate,' is speaking) in Jesus of Nazareth."

This thought of Ibsen seems to confuse two different ideas,—that of reincarnation and that of the unity of soul-life, the latter somewhat incorrectly stated. The matter is not as clearly defined as one would like to have it. This is very frequently the case with our somewhat intuitive authors who are not so fortunate as to have had clear teachings on reincarnation and the evolution of the soul under the law of karma.

A Student.



## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS\*

17) *If everybody can become a world savior, why is it that we know only one, the Christ?*

Theoretically there is nothing to hinder one from becoming a savior, but practically men choose various work. Every man will evolve into a perfect man in the course of time. Some will become founders of religions and do the work of world saviors. But there are many other lines of work for the perfected man: some still connected with humanity; others entirely different.

There were many other great religious teachers besides the Christ. Almost every great nation or race has had its great teachers. Many taught in India: such as the warrior Krishna, the teacher Krishna and the Lord Buddha. In ancient Persia there was a long succession of teachers, each taking the name of Zoroaster.

No teacher "saves" the world by his teachings alone. Religions help men to evolve, and to "save" themselves.

18) *Why must we attain perfection on this earth; why is it necessary to incarnate over and over again on this earth; why not on other planets?*

We do not have to attain perfection on this earth. But it will be much easier to evolve toward perfection, than against it. Our earth will not see the perfection of all human beings. There are other planets which will become the training school of our humanity.

We have lived for many lives on this earth and have become adjusted to the conditions found on our planet. Were we suddenly changed over to some other planet, it would take many lives to become again quite at home there. Nature economises; men are caused to live many times on one planet, so that nearly all its lessons are learned. Then a change to quite different conditions on another planet is in order.

Much of our character has been developed to correspond with life on our planet. Our faculties of thought, feeling and action have been slowly built up for use on earth. They would not be able to serve us if we were put in an entirely new set of conditions of life,

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\*Questions from Holland; answers by C.S.



## FIELD NOTES

*Letter from Holland*

Our activities for the coming winter were begun last month. Some groups have opened their work with a public lecture, and others will follow soon. We hope this plan will bring us some new members.

I myself have delivered two lectures: one at den Helder on October 5; the title of the lecture was, "Karma and Reincarnation," and the number in the audience was about eighty. After the lecture we had a fine discussion and many questions were answered, apparently satisfactorily, because we got nine new members. One of these is a sailor living at Flushing; he promised to try to establish a group there.

On October 11, I lectured at Hellevaetshus, a seaport. I took the same subject and had an audience of about a hundred persons, nearly all sailors. They were also very much interested in the subject. Here, too, I had to answer many questions. We have two members there and they will try to build up a group.

On October 12, there was a public lecture given at Utrecht, under the auspices of the *Legion*. The speaker was Mr. J. H. Kengen, and the title of the lecture was, "A Coherent Consideration of Life." About sixty persons listened to his very sympathetic words. Four persons joined the Utrecht Group that evening.

Lectures are to be given October 18, at Hilversum, and October 19, at The Hague. I will report about them in my next letter.

Herewith I have the pleasure of sending you some twenty-four applications for membership in the *Legion*.

In a few months I hope we shall possess our own little organ of the *Legion*. We have still to face some difficulties. We thought it would be advisable to begin modestly, with six numbers in the year; afterward we can extend it.

*Louise van der Hell.*

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