

# ***REINCARNATION***

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## *THE MAJOR AND THE MINOR LAW*

The materialist beats down his soul with the asseveration that there is the law of physics and chemistry and no other. This phase of law is hard,—in itself immobile. The other law—that of the superphysical, the so-called spiritual law, he disposes of without investigation.

The religious man recognizes the spiritual law by his own inner experience. But he cannot join the two types of law because he has not the knowledge or the power to wield the forces of inner nature.

But there is the possibility of such a demonstration and it has been used many times. The material law has its counterpart in the higher realms of nature.

There is, furthermore, a phase of the Law that lies still higher. It is the Law of Grace. Karma is enclosed within that Law. When that Grace is applied, karma dwindles and shrivels into mere symbolism. Those who by sacrifice and service have earned the right to contact that Grace are freed from the powers of the minor law of karma and themselves gain the power to control the minor law.

Even in the highest realms of nature the rule holds good that above a binding limitation there is always the relative freedom of a larger Law.

W. V-H.



### *TOLSTOY'S EXPERIENCE*

Miss G. Hilda Pagan, of Edinburgh, sends the following note about Count Leo Tolstoy:

It is strange that such a profound thinker, who gave years of his life to the study of religion, never seems to have accepted the idea of reincarnation, or even of individual existence after death, with any certainty at least; especially since the theory could suddenly occur to him as

a child by intuition, in the way he describes in the following extract taken from *Boyhood*, one of his very earliest works, a short 'novel,' largely autobiographical, written before he was twenty-five years of age:

"I can scarcely believe what were the favourite and most constant subjects of my meditations during my boyhood—they were so incompatible with my age and position. . . . Once . . . while standing before the blackboard, engaged in drawing various figures upon it with chalk, I was suddenly struck by the thought: Why is symmetry pleasing to the eye? What is symmetry?

"It is an inborn feeling, I answered myself. But on what is it founded? Is there symmetry in everything in life? On the contrary, here is life. And I drew an oval figure on the blackboard. After life the soul passes into eternity. And from one side of the oval I drew a line which extended to the very edge of the board. Why not a similar line from the other side? Yes, and, as a matter of fact, what kind of eternity is that which is on one side only?, for we certainly have existed before this life, although we have lost the memory of it.

"This reasoning, which appeared to me extremely novel and lucid, and whose thread I can now only catch with difficulty, pleased me excessively, and I took a sheet of paper with the idea of committing it to writing; but, in the process, such a mass of thoughts suddenly entered my mind that I was obliged to rise and walk about the room. When I approached the window my attention turned on the water-carrier horse, which the coachman was harnessing at the moment; and all my thoughts were concentrated upon the solution of the question:—Into what animal or man will the soul of that horse migrate when it is set free? At that moment Volodya (his elder brother, aged sixteen) was passing through the room, and smiled, perceiving that I was meditating something; and that smile was sufficient to make me comprehend that all I had been thinking about was the most frightful nonsense."



*A REINCARNATION JEREMIAD*

The following strong verses from the sacred writings of Jainism will surely be very interesting to students of reincarnation and the laws of the spiritual life. The difficulty which confronted the author is one with which most of us at some time have to deal. It is lack of the power of applying the will, caused karmically by careless habits and easy-going indulgence in the life of the desires belonging to the lower personality.

1. May He ever be victorious Who is the blessed pleasure house of spiritual wealth before whose lotus feet prostrate even the lords of gods and men, Who is omniscient, Who is best because of His superhuman qualities and Who is the store-house of knowledge and art.

2. Oh Thou, Who art a support of the three worlds, Mercy incarnate, Physician to remove the malady of worldly existence, not easy to be surmounted, free from all attachment, all-knowing Lord, I, with child-like simplicity, beg to lay the following before you:—

3. Does not a child, impelled by his child-nature, prattle something before his father without any previous thought? In the same way, Oh Lord! I, full of repentance, truly put my thoughts before you.

4. No charity is done by me, no good life has been led by me, no chastity has been observed by me, no austerity has been performed by me, no good thoughts have been thought by me, in this life. Oh Lord! fruitless has been my journey in this life.

5. I am burned by fire of anger, stung by a wicked snake of avarice, swallowed by a cobra of pride, and bound by a snare of deceit. How can I worship these?

6. Oh Lord of the world! Oh best of Jinās! No good deeds have been performed by me in previous lives, and I find no happiness in this life. Persons like me are born simply to add up the number of lives.

7. Oh Lord of amiable conduct! I feel my heart to be harder than a stone, because it was not moved with



feelings of deep bliss, even though it had the good fortune to see your moon-like face.

8. Oh Lord! after wandering in many lives I obtained through you the three jewels, difficult to obtain even with great pains and even those jewels I lost through sleep of carelessness. Before whom should I purify myself, O Lord?

9. I liked asceticism simply to deceive others, I preached religion simply to please the people; I acquired knowledge to combat with others. Oh Lord! how much should I describe of my ridiculous life?

10. I have sullied my mouth by slandering others, my eyes by looking on wives of others, and my mind by contemplating harm to others. Oh Lord, what shall be my fate?

11. Oh Lord, what I, being blind with passion, have endured under the influence of pain caused by the all-devouring cupid, I lay before you through shame. You, being omniscient, know all that.

12. Oh Lord, it was due to my mental delusion that I allowed Parmeshti-Mantra (obeisance to the liberated souls, Tirthankars, pontiffs, teachers and saints) to be eclipsed by other Mantras. Again, I allowed literature to be ignored by false scriptures, and I was inclined to do wrong acts under the influence of bad gods.

13. I, a fool, having left you, Who had come within the range of my eye, pondered on the amorous pastimes of beautiful women, their glances and physical qualities.

14. Oh Saviour! How is it that a particle of mental attachment that stuck to me by gazing at the faces of rolling-eyed women, is not gone, though washed in the ocean of pure sacred literature?

15. I am neither beautiful in person, nor do I possess a collection of virtues. I have no pure grace of arts. I do not possess any power of resplendent lustre, still I am troubled by egotism.

16. Life soon draws near the end, but not my inclination to sin; I grow old, but not my desire for sense-enjoyments; I made efforts for preparing medicines, but not for leading a religious life. Oh Lord, there is no limit to my self-delusion.

17. Oh Lord! fie upon me that I listened to the evil

speech of the worldly persons, that there is no soul, no karma, no future life, and no sin, though you, the sun of absolute knowledge, were shining clearly.

18. Although I have reached the human stage, my life is like crying in the wilderness, because I did not worship God, did not revere worthy persons, and I did neither observe a layman's nor an ascetic's religious duties.

19. Oh Lord of Jinas! look at my folly. I ran after imaginary things like the all-providing cow, the wish-fulfilling tree and the wish-fulfilling jewel, but did not run after the Jain religion which bestows real happiness.

20. I, a base one, always thought of pleasures of enjoying good things, but did not view them as the womb of diseases; I thought of the increasing of wealth and not that of death; I thought only of a woman, but did not consider her as the cause of bondage.

21. I could find no room in the heart of the good by pure conduct; I did not get fame by doing benevolent actions; I did not acquire religious merit by renovating the places of pilgrimage, etc. Alas! my life is really wasted.

22. No feeling of dispassion arose in me by hearing the preachings of my preceptors. I could not keep my peace by hearing the words of wicked men. Oh Lord! I have not a particle of spiritual knowledge. How can I, then, cross this ocean of worldly existence?

23. In my previous life I earned no religious merit. I shall not do it in the next life. If I am such, then, Oh Lord! all the three lives—the past, the present and the future—are ruined.

24. Oh Venerable One! Oh Lord! What is the use of narrating my life in detail before you in vain. As you know the nature of the three worlds, what is my life to you?

25. Oh Best of the Jinas! There is no leader like Thee to save the poor, and there is no man more worthy of compassion other than I among the people. Still, Oh Venerable One! I do not ask for worldly wealth, Oh Ocean of spiritual wealth! Abode of auspicious things! I pray for the jewel of true faith, that is beneficial and leading to salvation.

*From the "Jaina Gazette," of India.*



## CHINESE PHILOSOPHICAL PARABLES

*Autumn Floods*

It was the time of autumn floods. Every stream poured into the river, which swelled in its turbid course. The banks receded so far from one another that one could not tell a horse from a cow.

Then the Spirit of the River laughed for joy that all the beauty of the earth was gathered to himself. Down with the stream he journeyed east, until he reached the ocean. There, looking eastwards and seeing no limit to its waves, his joy fled. And as he gazed over the vast expanse he sighed and said to the Spirit of the Ocean: "A proverb says that he who has heard but part of the truth thinks no one equal to himself. And such am I. Had I not reached your abode, I should have been a fool among the wise."

The Spirit of the Ocean replied: "One cannot speak of the ocean to a well-frog, of ice to a summer insect, nor of TAO to a pedagogue, for their scopes are too restricted. But now that you have emerged from your narrow sphere and have seen the great ocean, you know your own insignificance, and I can tell you of great principles.

"There is no body of water beneath the canopy of heaven which is greater than the ocean. All streams pour into it without cease, yet it does not overflow. It is constantly evaporating, yet it is never empty. Spring and autumn bring no change. Floods and droughts are equally unknown. And thus it is immeasurably superior to mere rivers and brooks,—though I do not boast, for I get my shape from the universe, and my vital power from the Yin and Yang (the active and passive



principles of nature). In the universe I am but as a small stone on a great mountain.

"Of all the myriad created things, man is but one. And of all those who live on the fruit of the earth, an individual man is but one. Is he not, as compared with all creation, but as the tip of a hair on a horse's skin?"

The Spirit of the River said: "Am I then to regard the universe as great and the tip of a hair as small?"

"Not at all," was the reply. "Dimensions are limitless; time is endless. Conditions are not invariable; terms are not final. Thus the wise man looks into space, and does not regard the small as too little, nor the great as too much,—for he knows that there is not limit to dimension. He looks back into the past, and does not grieve over what is far off, nor rejoice over what is near; for he knows that time is without end. He investigates success and failure, and does not rejoice if he succeeds, nor lament if he fails, for he knows that conditions are not invariable. He who clearly apprehends the scheme of existence does not rejoice over life, nor repine at death, for he knows that terms are not final.

"What man knows is not to be compared with what he does not know. The span of his existence is not to be compared with the span of his non-existence. For the small being, to strive to exhaust the great, results necessarily in confusion, and he does not attain his object. So we can not say that the tip of a hair is small or that the universe is very great."

"Sophists of the day," said the Spirit of the River, "all say that the infinitesimally small has

no form, and that the infinitely great is beyond all measurement. Is that true?"

The Spirit of the Ocean answered: "If we regard greatness as compared with that which is small, there is no limit to it; and if we regard smallness with what is great, it eludes our sight. The infinitesimal is a subdivision of the small; the infinite is an extension of the great. In this sense the two fall into different categories.

"Both small and great things must equally have form. The mind cannot picture a thing without form, nor conceive a form of unlimited extent. The greatness of a thing may be discussed, or the smallness of a thing may be mentally realised. But that which can be neither a topic of discussion nor be mentally realised, can be neither great nor small.

"Therefore, the truly great man, although he does not injure others, does not credit himself with charity and mercy. He seeks not gain, but does not despise his followers who do. He struggles not for wealth, but does not take credit for letting it alone. He asks help from no man, but takes no credit for his self-reliance, neither does he despise those who seek preferment through friends. He acts differently from the common crowd, but takes no credit for his difference; nor because others act with the majority does he despise them as hypocrites. The ranks and emoluments of the world are to him no cause for joy; its punishments and shame no cause for disgrace. He knows that positive and negative cannot be distinguished, that great and small cannot be defined. It is said that the man of TAO has no reputation; perfect virtue acquires nothing; the



truly great man ignores self;—this is the height of self-discipline.”

“But how then are the internal and external extremes of value and worthlessness, of greatness and smallness, to be determined?” asked the Spirit of the River.

“From the point of view of the TAO” was the reply, “there are no such extremes of value or worthlessness. Men individually value themselves and hold others cheap. The world as a whole denies the individual the right to value himself.

“If we say that a thing is great or small because it is relatively great or small, then there is nothing in all creation which is not great, nothing which is not small. If we say that something exists or does not exist, in relation to the function it fulfils or does not fulfil, then there is nothing which does not exist, nothing which does exist. If we say that anything is good or evil because it is either good or evil in our eyes, then there is nothing which is not good, nothing which is not evil. Those who would have right without its opposite, wrong; or good government without its opposite, misrule,—they do not understand the great principles of the universe nor the conditions to which all creation is subject. One might as well talk of the existence of heaven without that of earth, or of the Yang without Yin, which is absurd. What is there that you could know of value and worthlessness, of great and small?”

The Spirit of the River replied: “In this case, what am I to do and what am I not to do? How am I to decide about holding on and letting go?”

“From the point of view of TAO,” said the Spirit of the Ocean, “value and worthlessness are



like slopes and plains. To consider either as as absolutely such would involve great injury to our conception of TAO. Be discriminating, as the ruler of a state whose government is impartial. Be dispassionate, as the worshipped deity whose dispensation is impartial. Be expansive, like the points of the compass, to which no bounds are set. Embrace all creation, and none shall be more sheltered than another. This is the unconditioned. And where all things are equal, how can we have the long and the short?

"TAO is without beginning and without end. Other things are born and die. They are impermanent; they are ceaselessly changing form, now for better, now for worse. Past years can not be recalled: time cannot be arrested. The succession of states is endless; and every end is followed by a new beginning. Thus it may be said that man's duty to his neighbor is embodied in the eternal principles of the universe.

"The life of man passes by like a galloping horse, changing at every turn, at every hour. What, then, should he do or not do than to let these natural changes go on?"

The Spirit of the River replied: "In this case, pray what is the value of TAO?"

The Spirit of the Ocean answered: "Those who understand TAO must necessarily apprehend the eternal principles and be clear as to their application. Consequently they do not suffer injury from without. The man of perfect virtue cannot be burnt by fire, nor drowned in water, nor hurt by frost or sun, nor torn by wild beasts. It is not that he makes light of these, but he discriminates between safety and danger. Happy under

prosperous and adverse circumstances alike, and cautious as to what he discards and what he accepts,—nothing can harm him.

“Therefore it has been said that the natural abides within, the artificial without. Virtue abides in the natural. Knowledge of the action of the natural and of the artificial has its root in the natural, its development in virtue. And thus, whether in motion or at rest, whether in expansion or in contraction, there is always a reversion to the essential and the ultimate.”

“What do you mean,” asked the Spirit of the River, “by the natural and the artificial?”

The Ocean Spirit answered, “Horses and oxen have four feet,—that is the natural. A halter on a horse’s head, a string through a bullock’s nose,—that is the artificial.

“Therefore it has been said, do not let the artificial obliterate the natural; do not let will obliterate destiny; do not let virtue be sacrificed to fame. Diligently observe these precepts without fail, and thus you will revert to the divine.”

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To travel by water and not avoid sea-serpents and dragons—this is the courage of the fisherman. To travel by land and not avoid the rhinoceros and the tiger,—this is the courage of hunters. When bright blades cross, to look on death as on life,—this is the courage of the hero. To know that failure is fate and that success is opportunity, and to remain fearless in great danger,—this is the courage of the Sage.

*Adapted from Giles’ translation of “Chuang Tzu.”*



*STUDYING OUR KARMA*

Every person has continually presented to him novel experiences, the results of his own karma, out of which he is to learn the lessons of life and the laws of life. Few people know definitely that the events that befall us have this great purpose of teaching us, and so they do not make any special efforts to learn their lessons, for the sake of knowing more about the law and how they may best live in harmony with the law. But, whether they know it or not, they are learning something anyway. Experience is a very insistent teacher. If a person does not learn consciously and eagerly, he learns unconsciously and unwillingly. Those who strive to solve the meaning of their lives have, however, a great advantage over those who learn automatically and sometimes in spite of themselves.

To the student of karma and reincarnation who continually makes a study of the hidden causes of actions, life becomes most interesting. It is wise to study our own karma and also that of others, for, in addition to what we may be able to learn of the workings of karma, the study enables us to retain a wholesome interest in life, and thus we may counterbalance that loss of personal interest in worldly things caused by our ever growing realisation of the unseen life and realities and the secondary importance of our personal interests in the larger life. We may thus be able to live apparently much as we did before we knew anything of the laws of life, taking a keen interest even in relatively unimportant matters. For, while the knowledge of



karma and man's larger evolution shows us how insignificant many things really are that the world regards as very important, it also reveals to us the wonder and majesty of the law even in matters which the world thinks trivial.

To study our own karma with profit it is very essential that we should do so from the truest possible standpoint. This means we must not take a strong personal interest in our karma, because that would color all our thoughts with personal qualities and prejudices. To see our own karma more nearly as it really is, we must see it, not from within the action itself but from the outside. In other words, we must try to be as impersonal as we can and look upon our own karma, the events of the day in our lives, without feelings, emotions and desires. For if they are present they will usually very effectually prevent us from seeing things as they really are.

This is very difficult, but the effort to succeed is well worth while. It gives us the necessary means for acquiring a very considerable control over our personality. For the effort, continually repeated, of taking an impersonal view of our karma, will result in developing in ourselves the realisation that the personality is merely our expression and not our self. When this has been accomplished it becomes very much easier to control the personality, and also to study our karma so as to understand it more thoroughly.

The methods of study may be various, but a good way is to hold the event or action in our mind as a whole, with all its details, very quietly but steadily, and try to see how the various parts are connected and interrelated. We would not

allow any of the old feelings and thoughts to become too active and strong, but would restrain them and pay no more attention to them than to the other parts. In fact we would take the attitude of studying something outside of us. Then, as we studied the whole thing, we would probably find it enlarging and new parts coming into view.

It may be that the exercise yields nothing new or of recognisable value. But we must not give up practicing, and in time we are likely to learn many interesting things. We would all along make a study of our method of study and improve it as far as possible.

Perhaps the most important part of this exercise is that we are led by it to see more and more of the secret workings of our own inner nature. We would be likely to discover motives which prompted us to action, motives so subtle that we scarcely suspected their existence. And we would judge these motives, not with the concrete mind, but with our innermost being and destroy them with a determined will, if they were unworthy or selfish. In this way we would gradually purify the well-springs of our actions.

It should be remembered that while we may look for our own motives and deal with them with stern justice, we must be very careful not to impute motives to other persons who had some share in the action or karma which we study. We have no way, while we are subject to ordinary limitations of personality, to get at the actual motives which cause other men to act. And right here lies another very important secret: As we study the part that other men have played



in the action we are likely to imagine motives for them. Now these motives which we feel tempted to impute to the others, are indications of what motives we ourselves would have been likely to have had if we had been in their place. It is this occult fact which at once makes clear to us the deep wisdom of the teaching: "Judge not, lest ye judge yourselves." For the motives which we condemn in others, are in very truth our own, for we have manufactured them in our own laboratory of consciousness, out of the workings of our own inner nature. And if their imperfection or unworthiness arouses anger or pity in us, we are only dealing ourselves a blow, and making an additional obstacle which at one time or another we must overcome.

One of the very early experiences of this practice of studying ourselves and our karma will be that we discover how difficult it is to see clearly, because of the injection of the personal element, whether it be of feelings or of thoughts. They will be, as it were, constantly talking to us and preventing us from giving our attention to the real problem. But we must learn the art of disregarding them, which amounts to putting them out of action, or not giving them any life.

In order to make this exercise of real, permanent and growing value, we should not merely do it merely occasionally, when we have 'nothing better,' to do, but we should spend some time on it every day, and at a fixed hour. It is only in this way that the efficiency of the method may be heightened and real progress made in this very important and difficult art of viewing ourselves and our actions, not as others see us and



them, but as a trained and impartial student of human nature would see us and our karma.

C. S.

### REINCARNATION\*

The question why we do not remember our past lives is a great stumbling-block for materialists when the question of reincarnation confronts them. To the explanations given in a very clear form by the Wisdom teachings we can only add the following ideas:

We know and assert that reincarnation is necessary to accomplish human evolution, in order to give to all men the opportunity for perfecting their being. We suppose, nay, we know surely, that as we enter upon a new incarnation, we do so with the consciousness, before birth, that we shall have to suffer for our misbehaviour in the past. We have ourselves brought upon us all our misery, which is the necessary consequence of our errors in the past.

Now, if men, after their birth, could easily remember all the details of past life, they would probably endure misery only for the purpose of escaping similar conditions in their future existence,—in other words, men would be virtuous only through fear. But we should not be good merely through fear, but for other reasons than through expecting punishment for our mis-

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\*Comment on the article by Mr. John Hawkes in REINCARNATION, January, 1916.

conduct and without hoping for reward for our personal goodness. Therefore we should consider the blotting out of all personal recollections of our past lives as a great mercy of our Creator, because this is the only possibility to endure all misery without mental reservation. If it were not so then we might be as merchants who would make a bargain with God.

For example, we can not consider a pupil as a good and honest one, when he conducts himself well only because he fears his teacher. Without this fear such a pupil would surely be malicious! Without remembrance of our past lives, we are able to strive to live a righteous life with the consciousness that we are a part of the whole and that what we are doing for the whole is the only thing that is of value.

In special cases, when it is useful for the evolution of the individual to know, it may be possible for him to be allowed to know something of his past lives. Similarly, in our daily life, we have sometimes an indistinct recollection of our dreams. And if we would pay more attention to our indistinct feelings during our daily life of turmoil, and study them carefully, they would become more distinct and we could sometimes make some inferences as to our past.

Finally we may say that the man who does not want to know more of this teaching of reincarnation and does not search for it, will quite naturally be unable to find any really satisfactory explanation of the meaning of life. (Read the verses: Matth. vii, 7 and Luke xi, 9.)

*Oedön Nérei.*



## REINCARNATIONS OF THE CHRIST

(Continued from page 123)

*Krishna in India*

From the *Hidden Side of Things*, by Mr. C. W. Leadbeater, we learn that the Lord Buddha, when He passed away from physical life, "definitely handed over His office of Director of Religions to His successor, whom we call the Lord Maitreya—the Great One who is honoured all through India under the name of Krishna and throughout the Christian world as Jesus the Christ. . . . Immediately upon taking over the office, the Lord Maitreya availed Himself of the extraordinarily good conditions left behind Him by the Buddha to make several simultaneous attempts to promote the religious progress of the world. He not only descended into an almost immediate incarnation Himself, but He at the same time employed a number of those who had attained the Arhat level under the Lord Buddha, and were now ready to take re-birth at once. . . Simultaneously with all these efforts the Lord Maitreya Himself incarnated as Krishna and led in India a very wonderful life, upon which is founded the devotional aspect of the religion of that country, which shows us perhaps the most fervent examples of utter devotion to be seen anywhere in the world. This great incarnation must not be confounded with that of the Krishna described in the *Mahâ-bhârata*; the latter was a warrior and a statesman, and lived some two thousand five hundred years before the time of which we are speaking. . . the Lord Maitreya (manifesting as Krishna)

provided a supreme object of devotion for those to whom that is the most direct road to the truth. But Christianity must be considered as the first effort of the new Bodhisattva to build a religion which should go abroad into new countries, for His work as Krishna had been intended especially for India."

The statement that there were two Krishnas is inherently probable because of the wide difference between the Krishna as described in the *Mahâbhârata* and the Krishna who showed himself as the Lover of men, and who is loved by nearly all India. The idea also gains support from the conflicting facts and views held by various scholars of ancient Indian scriptures. They place Krishna variously from 1180 to 1430 years B. C. Another conflict appears in that the Krishna of the *Mahâbhârata* married Rukmini, a princess; while the Krishna of the mystic religious tradition was the lover of Radha.

The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (eleventh edition) gives this information about Krishna:

In the older framework of the *Mahabharata* he (Krishna) appears as a great chieftain and ally of the Pandava brothers; and it is only in the interpolated episode of the *Bhagavat-gita* that he is identified with Vishnu and becomes the revealer of the doctrine of *bhakti* or religious devotion. Of still later date are the popular developments of the modern cult of Krishna associated with Radha, as found in the *Vishnu Purana*. Here he is represented as the son of a king saved from a slaughter of the innocents, brought up by a cowherd, sporting with the milk-maids, and performing miraculous feats in his childhood. The scene is laid in the neighbourhood of Muttra, on the right bank of the Jumna, where the whole country to the present day is holy ground. Another



place associated with incidents of his later life is Dwarka, the westernmost point in the peninsula of Kathiawar. The two most famous preachers of Krishna-worship and founders of sects in his honour were Vallabha and Chaitanya, both born towards the close of the fifteenth century. The followers of the former are now found chiefly in Rajputana and Gujarat. They are known as Vallabhacharyas, and their *gosains* or high priests as maharajas, to whom semi-divine honours are paid. . Chaitanya was the Vaishnav reformer of Bengal with his home at Nadiya. A third influential Krishna-preacher was Swami Narayan, . . Among the names of Krishna are *Gopal*, the cowherd; *Gopinath*, the lord of the milkmaids; and *Mathuranath*, the lord of Muttra. His legitimate consort was Rukmini, daughter of the king of Berar; but Radha is always associated with him in his temples.

It seems, then, that the histories of two very different beings have been blended into one. The present popular tradition, as given in *Shree Krishna*, by Bhârati, and *Great Saviors of the World*, by Abhedananda, runs in general somewhat after this fashion:

When the close of the Brazen Age was drawing near, evil began to appear among the men of the world. The wicked prince Kangsa deposed his righteous father, king Ugrasena, and usurped the throne of Mathura, the capital of ancient India. His sister, Devaki, a pure and noble princess, was given in marriage to a good man of the name of Vasudeva, also of the royal blood. Kangsa was prophetically warned by a voice that the eighth son born of this marriage would cause his death and overthrow his kingdom. He was about to kill his sister on the spot, but Vasudeva dissuaded him by promising to deliver all of Devaki's children to him, when born. Seven

baby sons were thus destroyed by the wicked king. Before the eighth son was born Vasudeva and Devaki came from their country home in Gokula to the capital city to pay their taxes to the king. The cruel tyrant imprisoned them both when he learned that Devaki was soon to give birth to a child again. But the eighth son was born before his time and was miraculously saved and exchanged with the baby daughter of the cowherd Nanda and his wife Yashoda. When the king found the baby girl he was furious and lifted her up high to dash her to the floor. But the child slipped away from him, laughed and spoke to him in a voice of thunder:

"Karma, that counteth all reckonings up, cannot be cheated by thee, O prince! 'Tis written that thou must be slain by the eighth son of thy sister, and so shall it be.

"That child am I not, O prince! But I came on earth for this hour, to show thee thy folly. Dost thou think, O fool, that by human force, by the slaying of innocence, by the destroying of hope and joy in the heart of the mother, thou canst change the Will of Him who is the Maker of all laws?"

"Thinkest thou, O man, thou canst cross swords with Him that knoweth the effect of each thought that man thinketh, even before the thinking?"

"He whom thou seekest thou shalt not find!"

When she had ceased speaking, a wonderful light enveloped her and she vanished from view. The king rushed away in madness and ordered that his sister and Vasudeva should at once be set free. And they went back to their home.



One of the many miraculous deeds said to have been performed by Krishna was the bruising of the head of the serpent Kaliya, which was living in a lake and causing it to poison the people.

He is represented as living a joyous life with the young cowherds and milkmaids, drawing forth such wonderful notes from his flute that all creatures were entranced and loved him more dearly than anything else on earth. This life was lived in the forests and meadows of Vrindavana. "In Krishna, the Youth, who played the flute in the forests by night, on the hillside by day, in Him who charmed all that was, they beheld the fulness of love."

King Kangsa heard of the wonderful deeds of Krishna and his half-brother Balarâma, and suspected that Krishna was the one who was to bring him to his end. He tried in many ways to cause his death, but all plots and plans were foiled and brought to naught. Finally he sent an envoy to bid the two brothers come to a big wrestling match, in which his strongest wrestlers were instructed to kill them. But the brothers conquered all that were sent against them: the wrestlers, elephants and guards,—and then the victorious Krishna hurled the king to the ground. He then reigned in peace and justice in the land.

The teachings and the life of Krishna, Lord of Love, have done wonderful things for India. In a land where men were given to much bitter fighting and warring between small states and petty kingdoms, into a national atmosphere permeated with thoughts of hatred and revenge, Krishna introduced the magic influence of a reli-

gion of Love. And this religion has transformed the heart of the nation and softened men's lives. One of the modern followers of Krishna writes:

Waves of conquest and religious fanaticism have come to India from the West, one after another, and have swept away by their tremendous on-rush millions and millions of lives and the most glorious spiritual monuments which that country had produced; but still the marvelous ideal and the spiritual kingdom of the sin-atoning Krishna have remained for ages firm as the unshakable Himalayas, defying their strength and destructive power. The fanatical Mahometans invaded India, holding their Scripture, the Koran, in one hand, and a sword in the other, and brought terror and havoc in the heart of Hindu communities, ruined the temples of Krishna, looted the country, massacred the innocent priests and priestesses, sages and saints, and converted many to their faith of Islam by mere brute force; notwithstanding all this, the illimitable powers of the Divine Krishna have survived the ravages of time. He still reigns over the hearts of the Hindu people and will continue to reign in time to come.

*(Great Saviors of the World, by Abhedananda.)*

The following paragraphs, taken from the book, *Shree Krishna*, by Swami Baba P. Bhârati, are given to illustrate the mystical, philosophical teachings of Krishna. They have doubtless lost something of their native wonder and charm in being translated from the exuberant and expressive Indian language into the more prosaic English, but they still breathe out the spirit of a wondrous love, a love that is all-embracing.

O my children! No heights there are that you cannot mount, no depths that you cannot sound, no boundaries that you cannot surround, if you but let the light shine in your soul—your soul that was born of light and panteth to bathe again in that light.



Love now does mould you; love does enfold you; love does behold you, and bind you, my children. I wear on my brow the great pearl of Love which no god or saint or man or worm or beast or ant can resist. Even I who am All Love do look upon the beauty of my Love and love and love.

O my children! ever outward looking, turn within your blinded eyes, and there a world all big with joy and love you will find,—a world made wise by My wisdom, a world of the Real. Then you will know what Love has made of you; what Love doth bless you with; what Love doth will that you should be.

The few who raise My gifts and make them as their own, and making them as their own thus, do give them forth to those their hungering neighbors, unto them do I scatter more than they in ease can carry, for he who giveth forth receiveth ever largely of the store I hold for them. He who hungers to feed the heart of those he meets along his way, unto him shall be given the wherewithal to satisfy their hunger.

O ye who find perplexity above your rearing head and underneath your lagging feet, at your right hand and your left hand! An enigma unto yourselves you will be until lowly and glad as a child you become. Then Me you will know, and knowing, yourselves you will know, and your worlds you will rule. And looking out from the great world within to the smaller world without, all things you will bless and find that all is well with time and you.

A chain of love around your loins I have cast; stretch not, nor pull, nor fret, nor strain, lest it hurt; but you who walk laughing in its reach, the wisdom of My every hour shall know. He who seeks Me, to him understanding I will give, that revealeth all things even unto a little child, and My wisdom and truth from his heart shall flow as strong streams of water flow from a fountain, and My hand of beauty I will register in his heart, and all who look upon his countenance shall see the glory of his coming and the joy of his awakening.

My Beloved, My son, from bondage is free. Thy heart I do clasp and breathe there a blessing. I hold thee and serve thee, My son. A little while yet and thy mission is over. Come thou to the innermost heart and list to my love.

When you do come to Me, let all your robes be white, your motives clean. When a man is blind there is a veil before his eyes. I do not mix with earth. Unless all clean and free from earth-nature, how can you understand the words that are born in My abode?

You who ask, Love is best; it is the richest of all riches; it is the gainer of all gains. Unbought, secure, once found, it never itself can lose. Who knows not love, is blind; who knows not love, is dead. Oh, you weep because of the springing flowers, yet you can not die. Look to the flower-seed, deep planted in the soil itself, but watering it takes, watering much, for it is good for you to give. So it is with Love.

Oh, seek not for happiness, nor for misery, for happiness is the seeking of that which joys the senses. When once you know Love is the source of all, from Love all things evolve, then in Love's embrace forever you are locked.

Much wisdom I give to ye, which yet is unapplied. The drums of the ear are stopped by the din of earth. Ye will not turn from the cup to drink of My Ocean of Love that is near.

O My jewels rare! Arise, survey the kingdom you may possess. Laws you may make, barriers break, tread on the stars, and the comets themselves will rush at your command. Know I have made you heir to all I have created. I, your Maker's Self, once walked a man, and as man all men I love. To know yourself, know Me. And having gained knowledge of Me, all will be revealed unto you, and the bitter waters of self-seeking shall become holy and sweet as the waters of the Ganges. And you I will clothe in My Truth sublime, My Truth that is devoid of changes of age and time. In its shadow



you will abide—My Truth that is permanent, the Root of all Eternity.

Greeting to thee, My jewel! I came to take thee on a journey. I came to take thee with Me and show thee what it is to live. Until now thou hast known but the mockery of life, the life that breathes but to live that life, but to draw breath. Now, I will take thee where life is born, where life is lived, where life is loved; not lived for the living, but lived for the loving.

Dost thou again feel the immensity of My Love that passeth all there is? Dost thou feel that this Love is too great for the world to hold, yet know that thy heart is big enough to contain it.

Hark, one and all! All careless have you been in the weeding of your gardens, for in your beds I find the thistle thriving; in your vineyards the grape I find that is hard and sour and bitter.

Oh, alas for you who cast your net for fish and bring forth the slimy reptile! Beware, my child, lest the best hopes of life cannot stir away from harmful ones. Evil stalketh idly; of nothing it is born, yet would it squirm, like the insect, and buzz its cloud about thine ear, and mote-like obscure thy sight, and throng through thy mind and heart, even leaving its imagery there.

List, My own, and abide by My song that unto thy soul I sing: Bliss is the perpetual motion of Love. As a running stream it is that cometh from an inexhaustible source, the depth of which is even unmeasurable.

*A Student.*

*(To be continued)*



## BOOK REVIEWS

*Metempsychosis*, by George Foot Moore, D.D., LL.D., Frothingham Professor of the History of Religion in Harvard University. 84 pages; price, 75 cents. Harvard University Press, 1914.

This scholarly and important review of the idea of reincarnation was delivered as the "Ingersoll Lecture on the Immortality of Man" at Harvard University, in 1914, in accordance with the provisions of the will and bequest of \$5,000 of Miss Caroline Haskell Ingersoll, of New Hampshire, in 1893, carrying out the wishes of her late father, George G. Ingersoll, and providing for annual lectures by prominent men on Immortality of Man.

Although the author has hardly presented the teaching of metempsychosis or reincarnation in its full strength and clarity, he is keenly alive to its value in explaining the conditions of life. Of reincarnation he says:

"The hypothesis offers an explanation of the inequalities among men in mental and moral capacity and predisposition, as well as in soundness and health of body and station and fortune in life. In these things there is nothing arbitrary and nothing accidental; everything is the determinate consequence of former acts, thoughts, volitions, and desires, or of the totality of character. It is a kind of a doctrine of heredity; only, a man does not inherit from his ancestors, but from himself in a former existence; to speak in a paradox, his parents are a part of his inheritance.

"If this determination of a man's lot by his deeds be regarded from the point of view of retribution, it seems to be in kind and measure more equitable than the incommensurate doctrine of endless punishment in hell for the wrong-doing of a brief human life.

"If man's earthly existence be conceived as a probation, it must be admitted that in any one life men are put upon this probation under very unequal conditions of every kind, and that the theory of a series of embodiments in which the soul is tested under various conditions accords better with our notions of justice in the order of things.

"Finally, if an end of perfection is set for the soul, metempsychosis affords the opportunity for a progressive



approach to that infinite attainment, whether the latter be a return to an initial state from which the soul in some way lapsed, or the development of the soul's latent potentialities."

Curiously enough, the author does not think that reincarnation has a reasonable scientific basis. He holds that "the genuine doctrine has never been concerned to demonstrate itself to the finite understanding; it finds its authority in revelation," which is correct, but still leaves ample scope for establishing a strong scientific foundation.

The author has given considerable attention to various extravagant and distorted forms of the teachings of metempsychosis known to history. It would seem that it would have been much more helpful to the audience and the reading public if he had devoted this important lecture more directly to the purer and more ideal presentations of the principle of reincarnation. The public is quite ready and eager to know the very best ideas.

C.S.

*Theosophy on Active Service*, by Two Subalterns. 56 pages; price, four cents, post-paid, from Field Service Secretary, Adyar, Shorncliffe Road, Folkestone, England.

This excellent booklet, written in a very readable and popular vein, summarises the principal teachings of the One Life, the spiritual nature of man and the laws of karma and reincarnation, and applies them to the life and the duties of a soldier. It is clearly shown how man's actions and his attitude make his future conditions, powers and limitations. It considers the life after death, and how the man's life determines his condition in the astral and heaven worlds, and how the experience of the life on earth is made a part of the man's assets. The use of free will is well brought out and illustrated. The meaning of the army and the army spirit is told in clear language. The little booklet is full of strong, vigorous and helpful thoughts, such as this one: "Man's destiny is to conquer and to overcome; you can't have a victory without a battle, and you can't win a good stand-up fight unless you are fit, not flabby, in mind, in body, and in soul."

C.S.

*FIELD NOTES*

A large number of membership certificates were issued in April, of which many are to go to Norway and New Zealand, and one to Ceylon.

The energetic *Legion* members in New Zealand are preparing to print and circulate various pieces of Distribution Literature of their own, and their work promises to accomplish large and lasting results.

Mrs. Magnhild Undset, of Norway, writes that the workers there have printed a large number of adhesive seals for envelopes, of seven kinds and in various colors. A large number have already been sold and the proceeds will be applied to the extension of activities. They are also looking forward to the preparation of illustrated lectures for the general public.

Mr. G. Williams, of South Africa, writes that "the work of spreading the teachings of karma and reincarnation throughout South Africa is going on in a very satisfactory manner." Local representatives in the work of distributing literature and raising funds are being appointed, and they hope to supply the entire country effectively with reincarnation and other literature.

A large number of libraries and hospitals have accepted subscriptions for REINCARNATION, and other public institutions are to be offered free subscriptions.

Wallace Group has arranged for a series of illustrated lectures, to be given at intervals. Members of this active Group are supplying subscriptions to the twenty public libraries of their state, Idaho.

An excellent illustrated lecture, *Shakespeare's "The Tempest,"* has been prepared, together with forty fine slides from pictures by Edmund Dulac. This lecture was recently given by Mrs. R. C. March in Room 819 of the Fine Arts Building, Chicago, as one of the regular Sunday lectures at eight p. m. It was then sent to the *Legion* Group in Minneapolis, and will be available for other Groups desiring it.

The lecture, *Karma, A Story of Early Buddhism,* was given in a home in North Chicago by Mrs. Clara Jerome Kochersperger, Sunday evening, May 21.



Mrs. Clara Jerome Kochersperger, 7212 Coles Avenue, Chicaga, Ill., with others interested in *Legion* work, is endeavoring to supply some of the American hospitals with single copies of REINCARNATION or, where it can be arranged, with a year's subscription. Those interested may communicate with her.

Mrs. Kochersperger would be glad to know of available articles, lectures or other matter dealing with *karma and reincarnation* printed in Braille type for the blind. Matter in the French language is especially desired.

A limited number of complete sets of REINCARNATION for the years 1915 and 1916 are shortly to be bound in neat volumes. Many of our readers will doubtless want to have these in handy book form for reference and reading. These books will do most valuable service if presented to public libraries, where they would be catalogued under the title "Reincarnation." Any person looking through the card files for books on reincarnation would thus be placed in touch with the *Legion* as an active organisation, and he could learn more about the subject by inquiring. It will be particularly desirable to place these books in the larger public libraries where a great many readers can thereby be given access to them. When presenting the volumes to the library the donor would do well to request that they be catalogued under the title "Karma," as well as "Reincarnation," since a large part of the reading matter deals with karma.

Further announcements will be made later as to prices and other details. In the meantime contributions to the fund for supplying libraries with bound volumes may be sent in to the *Legion* Headquarters.

Persons having one or more extra copies of February, 1915, issue of REINCARNATION, are offered any two copies of the year 1916 for each copy in good condition sent in.

References to reincarnation and karma are becoming increasingly frequent in newspapers, magazines and the books of the day. The notions conveyed are, however, often far from being in accordance with truth. *Legion* members have the great opportunity of spreading exact knowledge of these laws of life, and they should take advantage of the present receptive attitude of the people.

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