

REINCARNATION

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STEPS TOWARD NATIONAL LIBERTY

The world needs most seriously the knowledge that the nations of the world are of different ages not only as to outer organization but also as to the lapse of time which has passed since the very inception of the egos incarnated in them. Furthermore, nations themselves have reincarnations and the less developed nations are usually those which are younger, in the sense of reincarnations, than those which stand in the fullest blaze of the power which streams from on high.

If this fact were recognized it would not be difficult for the more intelligent people of lands like Egypt and India to recognize the desirability of living under the tutelage of an elder brother nation such as England. The

wise and generous guardianship of the Philippine peoples by the United States is a case in point. The public school is the mechanism used to help by the American government. Educate the people! Teach them self-control as to mind and they will long for and gain some power to hold their passional natures in check to the end that the ideals of national self-government may be served.

Liberty to govern themselves is not the lasting privilege of nations whose citizens have not self-control. There are steps upward toward national liberty. Older nations have the duty, in the Great Plan of God, to teach younger peoples and to lead them up and along these steps.

To-day Mexico is in an inchoate state—a relic of Spain's unfortunate tutelage. Each nation owes neighborly aid to the peoples of contiguous lands. This is one of God's movings in mysterious ways in His wonder-working.

Fortunately the American people have gathered from their own experience and from the teachings of Christianity the duty of helpfulness to other nations and the further duty of permitting the nations aided to try their wings of liberty when they are grown.

W. V-H.



KARMIC ILLUSIONIZING

It is really very curious how our karma is nearly always accompanied by a peculiar illusionizing which prevents us from seeing the important facts as they truly are. We watch other persons and see how they miss the one important point which was the very kernel of the karmic nut, the very heart of the lesson, for them, out of their experience. We marvel at their inability to see the thing which is so obvious to us. And then (is it not perhaps in itself a karmic reaction?) we suddenly find ourselves tangled up in a very similar experience, and we make the same mistakes and fail to see the central meaning of it all!

When any little happening hurts our feeling, our personal sensitiveness, we may be sure that we are either at fault somewhere or that there is a distinct reaction upon us of an old action in which we were at fault to some extent. Perhaps both cases may be true. In either case we have a lesson to learn.

The little hurt has a very peculiar effect. It calls our consciousness from wherever it may have been disporting itself, from the realms of thought and aspiration perhaps, with great suddenness back down into the astral body which has been painfully affected from the outside by the "bad karma." And so we are living in the injury, feeling it more intensely and thinking about it, and even indulging in more or less of pity for it!

Gone for the moment is our power of calm discrimination and impersonal judgment; we

are snatched away from the realms in which we could act and think impersonally. We are wholly enmeshed by our own karma, and this whole change is so swift and unexpected that we have not realised what has happened. We do not know that we have fallen into our own trap, nor that we have left behind us those powers which could have been of great service in solving the difficulty, or at least in seeing it in a clearer light.

Of course, while we are firmly bound in the astral body, the whole thing can only be felt and seen in a very personal way. We can not see the situation at all as an impartial observer would easily see it, in its relation to other things, but we see it only in its relation to ourselves as personalities, with separate interests.

Undoubtedly, then, some of the energy of the returning karma is utilised in making us unable to exercise our usual powers in dealing with the problem, if we allow this to happen. Let us consider what may be the prime reason for this peculiar power of illusion or glamour cast over the personality.

The old action which re-appeared in the present reaction with illusion, was done from our own personality and in a way which was erroneous, that is, not in harmony with the trend of evolution of life. The reaction, therefore, must fall back upon the personality. And as the action was sent out from the personality *as actor*, so it must be the personality *as receiver*, upon which the reaction strikes. Thus we see that it is made necessary for a proper balancing of karma that the man's consciousness should be recalled into the personality, usually the astral body. This

personality, of old, threw energy into the action in its own name, and so it is in the name of the personality that the man must receive the reaction or returning phase of karma. The personality was responsible for the error, therefore it must experience the return blow, in order that it may learn how it feels and how erroneous it is to throw such energies out upon others.

But if we are wise we need not allow our consciousness to be recalled suddenly into our feelings, when the return shock of karma strikes us forcibly. We may learn, by practice and by discipline of our personality, how to hold ourselves steadfastly outside the narrowness of the life in feelings. And this is not at all a case of cheating karma,—that is quite impossible. The return of the karmic reaction may still take place as before, but we allow the shock to strike us in our astral body without being upset by it and without allowing it to lead us into wholly unwise actions.

And if we stand, in consciousness, outside our body of feelings, we can learn the needed lesson much more easily. With our mind calm and controlled we may discriminate between conflicting emotions and put them out of our consciousness, if that is found to be desirable. When this power of self-control has been fairly well developed we find that the illusion which so frequently attends karmic reactions is no longer able to ensnare us. We have learned to live in the 'warrior' of our higher self and to let him fight in us and for us, and can remain calm and unmoved in the battles of life.

C. S.

LIFE STORIES OF PERSONALITY AND EGO

There is perhaps no subject that is more deeply interesting to the beginner in the study of the science of the soul, or karma and reincarnation, than the nature of that permanent part of man's being, the ego, who uses the lower bodies and discards them, one after another. What is the life of the ego? What does he do? How does he change with time? Such are some of the questions which are often asked.

The student who is best fitted to understand something of the ego is the one who has realised something of the insufficiency and inadequacy of the life of the personality. He is the one who has studied his own nature and has found evidence that he is something more than the physical body and emotional and mental nature. Such a student of life will be able to assimilate teachings of the real ego and his larger field of consciousness, in which he is to grow and reach his full stature.

The ego may be studied from various points of view. All of them are somewhat difficult to grasp by the ordinary mind, since the lore of the ego transcends the knowledge of the unevolved man. The life of the ego deals with universal things which have no form, which can not be pictured or represented by the concrete mind. Thus it is easily seen why the teachings of the nature of the ego are for some people very difficult to understand, while for others they are much easier. It is because some men have not trained their minds to deal with abstract thoughts.

One very helpful idea in this study of the real nature of man or of his different natures, is to

compare the life-story of the body of the personality with that of the ego. There is a very close analogy between the two, although one must be careful to remember also that no analogy between two different things can be carried too far, for there must come difference somewhere and then the analogy breaks down. In studying the personality and the ego from the standpoint of analogy it is important to hold in mind the fact that the fields in which these two natures of man grow and develop are widely different as to extent or universality. The field of the personality is that which can be perceived by the personality, while the field of the ego is of universal, abstract things and is only perceived by man in his ego-nature, in his innermost self. Furthermore the life of the personality in the physical body is only some seventy years or less, while the life of the ego is measured by many millions of years, for it may be nearly as long as the worlds of human experience last.

Let us now consider the various points in the analogy. In the first place the physical body has apparently a definite beginning at birth, but is really the result of a development from a very small egg-cell. Similarly the ego-body is formed apparently at a definite time, namely the moment of individualisation, but actually it is a sudden development from the ego-center of consciousness, which had previously lain dormant. Both bodies are, therefore, really constructed and not created, the materials being gathered together and held together by the mysterious inner centers of man, —one physical, the other of the pure mental.

The business of the physical body is to grow. So it is also for the ego-body. Only the physical body grows by assimilating a part of food, while the causal body of the ego grows by assimilating what the ego can of experience. And this growth is at first almost mechanical and not consciously carried on. The infant is fed for a long period and grows without knowing anything about it. Similarly the young ego gathers in the essences of the experiences of many successive earth-lives without knowing how this makes him to grow.

Gradually the child learns to know something of himself as a thing different from others. He develops self-consciousness out of mere vague consciousness. Similarly the young ego, enriched by the results of many lives on earth, develops consciousness and this is further evolved into self-consciousness. But this is a very slow process. In fact self-consciousness is reached in many physical bodies before the ego finally learns to become self-conscious as an ego. The child draws breath and awakes first in the physical body. The ego first reaches self-consciousness in the personality. In this respect that small part of the ego which has entered the personality has a great advantage over the free ego, who in his own world is as yet for countless years asleep and unconscious of his condition.

What are the stages of the development of the ego? They correspond with the stages in the development of the personality. The young child is almost wholly a part of nature, and is prompted to move and to act by impulses which belong to nature, and not to himself. Similarly the very young ego is a part of a more subtle and ethereal

Nature, embracing the higher worlds of human evolution, and higher influences and forces play upon and through him, stirring him into responsive action.

As the child develops, his emotional nature grows to a certain completeness and he lives a life of the emotions, intensifying from his own being the emotions which are aroused in his young astral body by the emotional impulses that come from external nature. And the ego, in his early youth, lives for a long, a very long time, in experiencing his fullest consciousness in personalities in the emotional aspect of life. In other words, although the personality may be full-grown and mature as far as the physical body is concerned, the man may live almost wholly in his astral body, not being as yet able to use his mental consciousness effectively.

The child, if of one of the advanced nations, will finally learn to live more and more in his mind and to use his intellectual powers, thinking concrete thoughts. So also the ego has his stage where he gains his richest and most extensive store of experience from personalities which are strong in intellect and live largely in the lower mind. We know many egos of this type.

The transition from a life centered in emotions to one centered in intellectual things is very important in both cases,—that of the child and that of the growing ego. It means a certain long-continued struggle. At first the child allows the emotions to overcome the conclusions reached by his thinking activities, but the mind grows more and more powerful and finally the young person learns to control his passions and desires

by the judgments of his mind. This is done by setting up opposing emotions strengthened by the power of thought, and thus overcoming the lower desires which have become automatic. As the children of cultured parents grow to young manhood and womanhood, we may observe this change to take place, from emotional to mental supremacy, and very instructive it is. But some children do not succeed in making this transition,—in fact they are not ready for it. Their evolution as egos has not yet been carried on far enough.

The personality, after many incarnations, is made very strong and self-centered by the life of the world. Such personalities are often greatly admired by the masses of men. This intense self-consciousness in the personality, however, stands in the way of the higher evolution, and hinders the man from realising his egoic life. And again, in a similar way, there is a danger that a man who has learned to regard the personality as only an expression of the ego, may still intensify the consciousness of his individuality and make for himself as ego a strong and close limitation which must at some time be done away with or broken down. To guard against this it is well to realise the truth of the universal Life, the unity which is composed of all separated consciousnesses and transcends them all. This will prevent the exaggeration of self-centeredness.

The personality lives merely for the sake of the ego. The ego lives merely for the sake of the larger and more inclusive Life. Yet both have their own separate lives to maintain and develop. Only thus can they fulfil their real purpose in the great scheme of evolution. C. S.

REINCARNATION IN "ISIS UNVEILED"

Although the teachings of reincarnation and karma were not wholly unknown in the Western world, thanks to the translation of some of the Eastern scriptures into the English, French and German languages by students of Oriental literature, it was not until the latter part of the nineteenth century that they were given out with authority and clearness. For this most important work the world of to-day is indebted to Madame H. P. Blavatsky, the famous occult teacher and author, a member of the Russian nobility, and a world-wide traveler in search of occult knowledge. Her first great work, *Isis Unveiled*, in two large volumes, was published in New York City in 1879. Much knowledge of reincarnation was given to the public in this work, scattered throughout its rather heterogeneous contents, but much more and clearer information was published in later works.

It was the mission of H. P. B., as the great personage was called by her students and friends, to attack the very foundations of materialistic philosophy and almost to destroy its paralysing influence. This great work was begun in *Isis* and ended with the production of the monumental work known as the *Secret Doctrine* in 1888. *Isis Unveiled* contains a vast amount of occult lore, comprising facts and theories of science, religion and philosophy, while the *Secret Doctrine* gives the occult Wisdom teachings of the creation of the universe, its worlds, living animals and man.

Much discussion has been carried on regarding the nature of the teachings of reincarnation that

may be found in *Isis Unveiled*. Some have contended that H. P. B. did not know the teachings of reincarnation which she finally taught, at the earlier time, but even denied them. Some even go so far as to claim that she invented them herself. Others hold that the earlier teachings do not contradict the later ones, and that she knew the truth of reincarnation all throughout her career as writer and teacher.

We now wish to give a full account of the actual teachings concerning reincarnation that are found in *Isis Unveiled*, with comments, so that this very important matter can be judged fairly and accurately. We will state here that we find no reasons for doubting the sincerity and straightforwardness of Madame Blavatsky, but regard it as most probable that she was in possession of the truth before she became author of *Isis Unveiled*. There is, however, some justification for confusion, and this is due to two causes: firstly, H. P. B., in her earlier writings, for reasons best known to herself, did not find it wise to give out the truth about reincarnation in clear and unmistakable terms; in fact at times she seems to deny reincarnation while really teaching it. Secondly, the confusion is due to the fact that she used the words 'reincarnation,' and 'metempsychosis,' at least at times, in very special and unusual ways, such are not the accepted definitions of our present literature.

We may now consider the meanings which were attached to these same words by H. P. B. in the two volumes of *Isis Unveiled*, bearing in mind the possibility of occasional departures from the usually implied definitions.

In the first volume of *Isis*, on page 351, we find this definition of 'reincarnation': "the appearance of the same individual, or rather of his astral monad, twice on the same planet." This, together with the context, plainly indicates that an immediate re-birth of the soul after death was meant; that is, a re-birth directly from the astral world, with the same astral and mental bodies as were used in the earth-life just closed. And this, H. P. B. said, is unnatural and rare.

The word 'metempsychosis' is usually the one which H. P. B. used when she meant the cyclic progress of the man's ego (soul) from one world to another. Evidently this may be taken to mean exactly what we to-day understand by reincarnation, but it may also have a more extended or general meaning, where it refers to life-energy in its long course of evolution from the lower kingdoms of life, the vegetable and animal, to the higher ones, the human and super-human. In this long evolution, of course, appear continuously repeated cycles. Or the word 'metempsychosis' may, according to this definition, be used for the 'change of the soul' from, say, the physical life into the astral life, and from the astral to the mental life. Here is the definition, as it appears in *Isis Unveiled*, Volume I, pages xxxvi-xxxvii:

METEMPSYCHOSIS.—The progress of the soul from one stage of existence to another. Symbolized and vulgarly believed to be rebirths in animal bodies. A term generally misunderstood by every class of European and American society, including many scientists. The kabalistic axiom, "A stone becomes a plant, a plant an animal, an animal a man, a man a spirit, and a spirit a god," receives an explanation in Manu's *Manava-Dharma-Sastra*, and other Brahmanical books.

Finally, the word 'transmigration' is used by H. P. B. in very much the same way as the word 'metempsychosis,' usually referring to the upward change, from the life of a lower world to one which is higher. No clear definition is given.

It thus results that H. P. B. insisted on the truth of 'metempsychosis' and 'transmigration,' and denied 'reincarnation,' while we to-day hold to reincarnation as a basic truth in nature, denying the popular conception of transmigration of the soul into animal bodies, and preferring not to use the word 'metempsychosis.' It is not to be wondered at that there should be some confusion.

The following quotation from the *Theaetetus* of Plato, (*Isis*, I, xiv), probably was used by the Greek sage as referring to reincarnation:

"The soul cannot come into the form of a man if it has never seen the truth. This is a recollection of those things which our soul formerly saw when journeying with Deity, despising the things which we now say *are*, and looking up to that which REALLY IS. Wherefore the *nous*, or spirit, of the philosopher (or student of the higher truth) alone is furnished with wings; because he, to the best of his ability, keeps these things in mind, of which the contemplation renders even Deity itself divine. By making the right use of these things remembered from the former life, by constantly perfecting himself in the perfect mysteries, a man becomes truly perfect—an initiate into the diviner wisdom."

A definition of 'Lamas' is given, (I, xxxiv), in which H. P. B. clearly says that the Grand Lama is a reincarnation of Buddha. This use of the word is exactly in accord with her own definition, given above, since we know from various sources, occult authorities and Orientalists, that the Grand Lamas of Tibet are supposed to

be reborn immediately after their physical death.

LAMAS.—Buddhist monks belonging to the Lamaic religion of Thibet, as, for instance, friars are the monks belonging to the Popish or Roman Catholic religion. Every lama is subject to the grand Taley-Lama, the Buddhist pope of Thibet, who holds his residence at Lha-ssa, and is a reincarnation of Buddha.

In the following extracts H. P. B. uses the word 'metempsychosis' clearly in the same way that we use reincarnation:

The doctrine of *Metempsychosis* has been abundantly ridiculed by men of science and rejected by theologians, yet if it had been properly understood in its application to the indestructibility of matter and the immortality of spirit, it would have been perceived that it is a sublime conception. Should we not first regard the subject from the stand-point of the ancients before venturing to disparage its teachers? The solution of the great problem of *eternity* belongs neither to religious superstition nor to gross materialism. The harmony and mathematical equiformity of the double evolution—spiritual and physical—are elucidated only in the universal numerals of Pythagoras, who built his system entirely upon the so-called "metrical speech" of the Hindu *Vedas*. . . (I, 8-9).

If the Pythagorean metempsychosis should be thoroughly explained and compared with the modern theory of evolution, it would be found to supply every "missing link" in the chain of the latter. But who of our scientists would consent to lose his precious time over the vagaries of the ancients? . . . (I, 9).

There was not a philosopher of any notoriety who did not hold to this doctrine of metempsychosis, as taught by the Brahmans, Buddhists, and later by the Pythagoreans, in its esoteric sense, whether he expressed it more or less intelligibly. Origin and Clemens Alexandrinus, Synesius and Chalcidius, all believed in it; and the Gnostics, who are unhesitatingly proclaimed by history as a body of the most refined, learned, and enlightened men, were all believers in metempsychosis.

Socrates entertained opinions identical with those of Pythagoras; and both, as the penalty of their divine philosophy, were put to a violent death. The rabble has been the same in all ages. Materialism has been, and will ever be, blind to spiritual truths. These philosophers held, with the Hindus, that God had infused into matter a portion of His own Divine Spirit, which animates and moves every particle. They taught that men have *two souls*, of separate and quite different natures: the one perishable—the Astral Soul, or the inner, fluidic body—the other incorruptible and immortal—the *Augoeides*, or portion of the Divine Spirit; that the mortal or Astral Soul perishes at each gradual change at the threshold of every new sphere, becoming with every transmigration more purified. The astral man, intangible and invisible as he might be to our mortal, earthly senses, is still constituted of matter, though sublimated. Aristotle, notwithstanding that for political reasons of his own he maintained a prudent silence as to certain esoteric matters, expressed very clearly his opinion on the subject. It was his belief that human souls are emanations of God, that are finally re-absorbed into Divinity. Zeno, the founder of the Stoics, taught that there are “two eternal qualities throughout nature: the one active; or male; the other passive, or female: that the former is pure, subtile ether, or Divine Spirit; the other entirely inert in itself till united with the active principle. That the Divine Spirit acting upon matter produced fire, water, earth, and air; and that it is the sole efficient principle by which all nature is moved. The Stoics, like the Hindu sages, believed in the final absorption. St. Justin believed in the emanation of these souls from Divinity, and Tatian, the Assyrian, his disciple, declared that “man was as immortal as God Himself.” . . . (I, 13).

For lack of comprehension of this great philosophical principle, the methods of modern science, however exact, must end in nullity. In no one branch can it demonstrate the origin and ultimate of things. Instead of tracing the effect from its primal source, its progress is the reverse. Its higher types, as it teaches, are all evolved from antecedent lower ones. It starts from the bottom of the cycle, led on step by step in the great

labyrinth of nature by a thread of matter. As soon as this breaks and the clue is lost, it recoils in affright from the Incomprehensible, and confesses itself *powerless*. Not so did Plato and his disciples. With him *the lower types were but the concrete images of the higher abstract ones*. The soul, which is immortal, has an arithmetical, as the body has a geometrical, beginning. This beginning, as the reflection of the great universal ARCHÆUS, is self-moving, and from the centre diffuses itself over the whole body of the microcosm. (I, 14).

The famous Hermetic axiom, as here quoted, clearly implies a return of life into physical form :

"As above, so it is below. That which has been, will return again. As in heaven, so on earth." (I, 35).

Among the charges against Giordano Bruno made by the inquisition, was this, (I, 95) :

"... that souls created by the operation of nature pass from one animal to another, and that as the brute animals are born of corruption, so also are men when after dissolution they come to be born again."

And H. P. B. makes this comment :

Perfidious as they are, the above words plainly indicate the belief of Bruno in the Pythagorean metempsychosis, which, misunderstood as it is, still shows a belief in the *survival* of man in one shape or another.

Bruno answered this charge at length and with great acumen, one paragraph, (I, 97), reading :

"From this spirit, then, which is called the life of the universe, I understand, in my philosophy, proceeds life and soul to everything which has life and soul, which moreover, I understand to be immortal, as also to bodies, which, as to their substance, are all immortal, there being no other death than division and congregation, which doctrine seems expressed in Ecclesiastes, where it is said that 'there is nothing new under the sun; that which is, is that which was.'"

In the following extracts, (I, 289-292), the words 'transmigration' and 'metempsychosis' are

evidently treated as equivalent, and are applied to what we would term reincarnation, since we know that the Buddhist philosophy teaches the truth of reincarnation very distinctly:

This doctrine of God being the universal mind diffused through all things, underlies all ancient philosophies. The Buddhistic tenets which can never be better comprehended than when studying the Pythagorean philosophy—its faithful reflection—are derived from this source as well as the Brahmanical religion and early Christianity. The purifying process of transmigrations—the metempsychoses—however grossly anthropomorphized at a later period, must only be regarded as a supplementary doctrine, disfigured by theological sophistry with the object of getting a firmer hold upon believers through a popular superstition. Neither Gautama Buddha nor Pythagoras intended to teach this purely-metaphysical allegory *literally*. Esoterically, it is explained in the “Mystery” of the *Kounboum*,* and relates to the purely spiritual peregrinations of the human soul. It is not in the dead letter of Buddhistical sacred literature that scholars may hope to find the true solution of its metaphysical subtleties. The latter weary the power of thought by the inconceivable profundity of its ratiocination; and the student is never farther from truth than when he believes himself nearest its discovery. The mastery of every doctrine of the perplexing Buddhist system can be attained only by proceeding strictly according to the Pythagorean and Platonic method: from universals down to particulars. The key to it lies in the refined and mystical tenets of the spiritual influx of divine life. “Whoever is unacquainted with my law,” says Buddha, and dies in that state, must return to the earth till he becomes a perfect Samanean. To achieve this object, he must destroy within himself the trinity of *Maya* (illusion). He must extinguish his passions, unite and identify himself with *the law* (the teaching of the secret doctrine), and comprehend the religion of *annihilation*.”

*The “Tree of the Ten Thousand Images,” of Tibet.

Here, annihilation refers but to *matter*, that of the visible as well as of the invisible body; for the astral soul (*perispit*) is still matter, however sublimated. The same book says what Fo (Buddha) meant to say was, that "the primitive substance is eternal and unchangeable. Its highest revelation is the pure, luminous ether, the boundless infinite space, not a void resulting from the absence of forms, but, on the contrary, *the foundation of all forms*, and anterior to them. "But the very presence of *forms* denotes it to be the creation of *Maya*, and all her works are as nothing before the *uncreated* being, SPIRIT, in whose profound and sacred repose all motion must cease forever." (I, 289)

Thus *annihilation* means, with the Buddhistical philosophy, only a dispersion of matter, in whatever form or *semblance* of form it may be; for everything that bears a shape was created, and thus must sooner or later perish, *i. e.*, change that shape; therefore, as something temporary, though seeming to be permanent, it is but an illusion, *Maya*; for, as eternity has neither beginning nor end, the more or less prolonged duration of some particular form passes, as it were, like an instantaneous flash of lightning. Before we have the time to realize that we have seen it, it is gone and passed away for ever; hence, even our astral bodies, pure ether, are but illusions of matter, so long as they retain their terrestrial outline. The latter changes, says the Buddhist, according to the merits or demerits of the person during his life-time, and this is metempsychosis. When the spiritual *entity* breaks loose for ever from every particle of matter, then only it enters upon the eternal and unchangeable Nirvana. He exists in spirit, in *nothing*; as a form, a shape, a semblance, he is completely *annihilated*, and thus will die no more, for spirit alone is no *Maya*, but the only REALITY in an illusionary universe of ever-passing forms.

It will have been noticed that this last use of the word 'metempsychosis' applies to changes of the astral body during one single life-time.

A Student.

(To be continued)

CHINESE PHILOSOPHICAL PARABLES

The Rich Man and His Servant

Mr. Yin of Chou was the owner of a large estate who harried his servants unmercifully, and gave them no rest from morning to night. There was one old servant in particular whose physical strength had quite left him, yet his master worked him all the harder. All day long he was groaning as he went about his work, and when night came he was reeling with fatigue and would sleep like a log. His spirit was then free to wander at will, and every night he dreamt that he was a king, enthroned in authority over the multitude, and controlling the affairs of the whole state. He took his pleasure in palaces and gardens, following his own fancy, and was happy beyond compare. But when he awoke, he was a servant once more. To a friend he said: "Human life may last a hundred years, and the whole of it is divided equally into nights and days. In the daytime I am only a slave, it is true, and a miserable one. But by night I am king, and happy beyond all compare. So what have I to complain about?"

Now Mr. Yin's mind was full of worldly cares, and he was always worrying about his affairs. Thus he was wearing out mind and body alike, and at night he also would fall asleep in utter exhaustion. Every night he dreamt that he was another man's servant, running about on menial business of every kind, and subjected to every possible abuse. He would mutter and groan in his sleep, and obtained no relief till morning. At last he became quite seriously ill and asked

advice of a friend, who said: "Your station in life is a distinguished one, and you have wealth and property in abundance. In these respects you are far above the average. Now if at night you dream that you are a servant and have ill treatment, that is only the proper balance in the destiny of man. What you want is that your dreams should be as pleasant as your waking moments. But that is beyond your power to bring about." On hearing what his friend said, the rich man lightened the toil of his servant and ceased from his own mental worry; and soon his illness left him.

Ignorance is not the only Bliss

Hua Tzu, of the Sung State, was afflicted in middle age by amnesia. What happened in the morning he would forget by evening. His family tried fortune-tellers, wizards and physicians, but nothing would help. At last, a learned professor from the Lu State offered his services, assuring them that he could cure the trouble. The family immediately promised him half their estate if only he would tell them how to set to work. The professor replied that this case could not be cured by auspices or incantations or drugs. He said: "What I shall try to do is to influence his mind; in that way a cure is likely to result."

So the experiment was begun. The professor exposed his patient to cold, so that he was forced to beg for clothes; subjected him to hunger, so that he had to ask for food; left him in darkness, so that he had to search for light. Soon he was able to report progress, but he requested that he

might be left alone with his patient. They let him have his way, and for seven days no one knew what happened in the patient's room. Then one fine morning the treatment came to an end, and, wonderful to relate, the disease of so many years' standing had entirely disappeared!

But no sooner had Hua Tzu regained his wit than he flew into a great rage, drove his wife out of doors, beat his sons, and pursued the professor through the town with a spear. He was forcibly stopped and asked to tell why he acted so wildly. Hua Tzu replied: "Lately, when my senses were benumbed, I was quite unconscious of the existence of the outer world. But now I have been brought suddenly to a perception of the events of half a life-time. Preservation and destruction, gain and loss, sorrow and joy, love and hate, have begun to throw out their myriad tentacles to invade my peace; and these emotions will, I fear, continue to keep my mind in the state of turmoil that I now experience. Oh! if I could but recapture a short moment of that blessed oblivion!"

[This is to say: If such are the feelings of a man with mental forgetfulness, what must be the experience of bliss when one enters TAO, the Absolute, the Nirvana of the Buddhists!]

Adapted from Lionel Giles' "Lieh Tzu."



REINCARNATION LITERATURE

The Transmigration of Souls, by Prof. D. A. Bertholet, of the University of Basle, translated by Rev. H. J. Chaytor, M. A., of Plymouth College. Harper Bros. 1909. 133 pages. Price: 75 cents.

This book belongs to the series of Harper's Library of Living Thought. The author has ably collected a large mass of facts as to beliefs and superstitions from many parts of the world, held at various times, with regard to what happens after death. The author's attitude is distinctly unfavorable to the idea of reincarnation. He seems to have failed to realise the logic and the beauty of the true teaching. Most of the book is taken up with distorted forms and perversions of the principle of reincarnation.

Professor Bertholet recognises that there is an "instinct which leads all men, whether they live under an Eastern or Western sky, directly to the conclusion that they are not 'complete': we feel that we are growing and aspiring, and that one life is not enough to enable us to reach that perfection whither we are urged by the inmost depths of our being. . . The fulfilment of this desire is shattered by the stern fact of death, and then the doctrine of metempsychosis in its noblest form comes to compensate the ever-present consciousness of human inadequacy. It is essentially the same instinct which found expression in Roman Catholicism in the conception of a purgatorial fire. Metempsychosis and purgatory are simply more or less anthropomorphic methods of expressing the same instinct. But as that instinct is true for man, so do these beliefs

undoubtedly contain a germ of truth, and on this germ they live, as all beliefs live upon the fragmentary truth which they hide within them."

Speaking of the deep-rooted belief of men that a soul exists which can leave the body, he says:

Such theories have, in some instances, led primitive tribes (e. g. the Malays) to believe that it is dangerous to wake a sleeping man; his soul might have left his body and might be unable to return immediately, in which case the body would be left "soulless." The difference is one only of degree: in sleep and dreams the soul leaves the body temporarily, while in death the separation is final, an idea expressed in the Koran and there given a wonderful religious significance: "God takes to Himself the souls of men at their death; and He takes also to Himself the souls of those who do not die, while they sleep. He keeps with Him the souls of those whose death He has ordained, but the others He sends back for a season. Truly herein lie signs for thoughtful men to ponder." (Sura xxxix).

Other psychical phenomena doubtless served to confirm this primitive theory. The word "ecstasy," for instance, "a standing outside of oneself," implies the exit of the soul from the body (cf. 2 Cor. xii, 2 f.).

These few indications may serve to prove that the belief in the possibility of a separation between soul and body was both vivid and widely spread. This belief may be regarded as the first necessary condition antecedent to the belief in metempsychosis. (pp. 8-9).

Various beliefs are cited as to immediate or nearly immediate rebirths of men in human form:

This custom is said to have existed among a tribe in Florida (North America): if a woman died in childbirth, the child was held over her face so that it might breathe in the soul as it left her lips. Among the same tribe pregnant women were accustomed to go and meet funeral processions in the hope of receiving within themselves the soul of the deceased, for the benefit of the unborn child; the Algonquin Indians used to bury

the bodies of children by the roadside that their souls might enter the bodies of passing women and so be born again. For the same reason the Calabaris, the finest and most highly civilised negroes of the slave coast, buried their dead in their houses; the soul of a dead man thus buried was thought to pass into the child that was next born in the house. The belief that the soul of a dead man reappears in a child is widely spread. . . . Among the Khonds, an aboriginal Indian tribe, a birth is celebrated seven days after its occurrence by a festival at which the priest examines the body of the child, and states which of the family ancestors has been reborn in it: the child is then named after this ancestor. The naming of children, in fact, is in many ways connected with the belief that the souls of ancestors return to life in the children. In New Zealand, for instance, the priests stand before a new-born child and repeat a long list of ancestral names until the child sneezes or cries out at one of them: the ancestor is thus found whose soul is reincarnated in the child and after whom the child is then named. A very similar custom exists in Little Popo in colonial West Africa: when a child is born the parents consult the oracle by means of sixteen date-stones, in order to discover whether a soul from the mother's or father's side of the family is reincarnate in the child, and which soul it is. The reply of the oracle determines the name of the child, who thus receives the name of the ancestor whose soul is supposed to have returned again to earth. Not until their conversion to Christianity do we find that the ancient Germans gave a child the name of a living relative; in earlier times the name of a dead man was always chosen, and especially of a dead father, as he was supposed to continue his life in his child. In Dahomey, if a child was born with a complete set of teeth, the chief magician explained the event as being a reincarnation of the king, who had returned to devour his son, and the child was drowned. The famous Australian traveller, George Grey, relates that he was once caressed by an old woman who thought that she had found a deceased son in him, and shed tears over him. Here a further feature appears: savages often believe white men to be merely reincarnated

members of their own race. "Who dies a black man rises again a white man," is said to be a common saying among the aborigines of Australia. (pp. 26-28).

The Bishop of Cracow, Vincent Kadlubek (died 1223), states in his Polish chronicle that a foolish belief was universally entertained by the Getæ (by whom he elsewhere means the Prussians) to the effect that souls which leave men's bodies return again in new-born bodies, and that many souls become bestial by assuming animal forms; this evidence seems to me to be somewhat unreliable. (p. 57).

Often the author's comments are illogical, as when he quotes a famous passage of Herodotus:

"Now the Egyptians are the first who have affirmed the opinion that the human soul is immortal, and that when the body decays the soul invariably enters another body upon the point of birth. When it has thus successively passed through the bodies of all the animals on earth, in the water, and in the air, it returns once more into a human body upon the point of birth, and this circle of migrations it completes in three thousand years." As it happens, a large number of inscriptions have provided tolerably complete information concerning the true nature of Egyptian ideas upon the condition of the soul after death, and the observations of Herodotus, as above quoted, remain unconfirmed. (p. 58).

The Greek historian Herodotus thought that his countrymen had borrowed the theory from the Egyptians. This supposition is excluded by the facts we have already stated concerning the Egyptian form of the belief. (p. 79).

It is surely quite unwarranted to conclude that the Egyptians knew nothing of reincarnation, just because the inscriptions on monuments and papyri which have come down to us do not contain positive information. We have good reason to believe that the Egyptian priesthood taught reincarnation only as a secret and perhaps in a modified form in the Mysteries.

(To be continued)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

8. *How is the suffering in Europe now reflected in the physical and higher lives of those in non-belligerent countries?*

The great strain in the astral world no doubt affects the whole world, yet most people pay little attention to it. Especially in America the people have not thoroughly realised that there is a terrible war going on. If they did, then they would not be able to go on light-heartedly about their business as they do. We may say that there is a great mass of unhappy karma being discharged upon the world, chiefly in the warring countries. But other nations also feel the difficult conditions. America has the Mexican question to settle, and also various internal difficulties, and the less our people shirk the task of relieving and cleaning up these conditions, the less of evil karma will there be for the world to bear.

9. *What is the karma of the unwilling fighter, forced by conscription to take part?*

His karma is chiefly that of having to learn a very necessary lesson. When the country is in danger it is the duty of every one to do his share if it is necessary. The man must learn that he owes something to the state which has protected him and his family for generations. In his past lives he has perhaps not sufficiently developed the patriotic feeling. Perhaps he has previously been successful in shirking his duty in time of wars, and now he has reached the point where he is no longer to be allowed to shirk.

10. *An employer installed such new machinery in his pottery factory as to reduce all the wages of the employees. He refused any raise, which could well be afforded, and the workmen and their families suffered from extreme poverty. One workman secretly threw flint into the clay, and the ware cracked after baking, ruining the output entirely. The employer, realising that any one could repeat the act, raised the wages and the suffering of the people was relieved by means in no way detrimental to the employer. Was the intimidation of the employer justified? Is the dishonesty of utterly*

ruining another's property atoned for by the good results? What is the karma of the man who by sacrificing a personal moral scruple benefits a great many of his brothers? What of his example to those not yet swayed by love of their fellows? Also, what is the karma of the employer?

This is a rather ugly karmic condition, from first to last. There is practically nothing good about it at all. The facts are: the employer is sordid and selfish, caring only for his personal gains. The workman is apparently revengeful and certainly criminal and cowardly. The results he achieves for others can certainly not be credited to his own karmic account on the good side. The relief that came must have been due to those afflicted, either through their old karma or the present karma, having suffered as much as they needed to.

Taking up the separate questions: The intimidation of the employer was perhaps justified by his business interests, but morally it is a distinct failure. If he realised that he had been doing wrong in reducing the wages, or at any rate that he was pursuing a bad policy in business,—then he is that much wiser and has gained in evolution. But as stated, it would appear that he was only influenced by sordid motives in raising wages. Note that the employer has not committed a legal crime. He has done a moral wrong, because of his lack of understanding and undevelopment.

Dishonesty is too light a word: the workman is a cowardly criminal, and has committed an overt act which is punishable by common law. His karma is serious, and will cause him more suffering than will come to the employer. If the workman had really any motive of serving his fellows, then that will help him to some extent. It will help to strengthen his sympathies for humanity. But it will in no way help to mitigate the painful karma that the criminal act will bring upon him. Karma acts in different worlds on the different bodies of man, and there is no redeeming physical karma. The workman, and many other men, must learn through suffering that evil must not be done intentionally, even if the motives are good and the results to be achieved are

praiseworthy. The Grand Inquisitor of mediæval times may have had the best of motives, but he was blind to the common law of karma and the moral law of action and reaction, and his lot is a sad one. The example of the workman is not a noble one, and can not help his fellows. It is more likely to lead them into similar errors, since they see the material gain but not the moral loss and the karmic return upon the wrong-doer.

The employer has no particular evil karmic return. He has already suffered his material loss. But he has a difficult road ahead of him to climb in his evolution. He must learn somehow and at some time that he must treat his employees not only according to the policies of good business but also according to brotherly love.

11. *If a mechanic, working under grinding industrial conditions of the present, goes a little slow on his job, cheating his capitalist employer of some of his energy, in order to study at night, with the purpose of bettering life for all, what karma will it bring?*

As stated, the man has a very worthy motive, and if this is true he will gain at some time greater opportunity to serve humanity. But if he shirks any part of his physical duty and does not give the employer as honest service as the employer is entitled to, then the mechanic will here make also a bad piece of karma for himself, and in two ways: firstly, because he is really cheating his employer, or stealing from him; and secondly, because he is violating the delicate occult moral law which says that one must not do evil even if good is expected to come out of it. This point in the moral law is just the same as appeared in the case of the workman in the preceding question.

We may expect that in proportion as the mechanic is deeply in earnest in his desire to help humanity, so will he go rapidly forward in his larger evolution, and in this progress the painful karma of having committed a moral error of method, can only be regarded as really helpful, for what suffering it may bring will be both purificatory and teach the man where he was at fault. And, of course, somewhere the mechanic must make the proper karmic amends to his employer.

C. S.

FIELD NOTES

This month fifty-five certificates of membership were issued. Of these twenty-four will be sent to Holland, seven to Iceland, four to Norway and Sweden, and the remaining twenty to various parts of America.

A new Group was chartered for Deckerville, Michigan, to be known as the Marion Group.

Mr G. Williams, of South Africa, reports that the propaganda fund work is now in very good working order. He is aiming at placing REINCARNATION "before the entire reading public of South Africa for those who are ready for our teachings—and they are many." Through the magazines that have been sent so far, numerous enquiries have been received from all parts of South Africa. He concludes the interesting report with the words, "All, therefore, is very well with our work in this country."

Mrs. L. van der Hell, of Holland, reports: that the work is growing rapidly, from all parts of our country requests for information and free literature about the teachings are coming in daily. We have given several lectures last month, and most of them were very well attended; there is great need to know more of the after-death conditions and the problems of life. If you can procure us one or two lectures with the slides belonging to them, it would certainly help us enormously in our work.

We have placed some of the magazines in libraries. . . . the soldiers get in touch with the teachings in another way: we distribute a lot of leaflets and pamphlets in the camps and barracks, so that in many of them interest is awakening.

I am again enclosing some twenty-four applications for membership; the number of our members is increasing steadily. Our members in the East Indies . . work for the *Legion* in spreading the teachings by giving lectures.

The following extracts are from a letter written by one of the members just enrolled:

Enclosed please find one dollar as payment for two subscriptions, also my application for membership in

the *Legion*. . . I hope to be of some use in spreading the knowledge of karma and reincarnation.

I sometimes wonder if this knowledge brings to everybody such a wonderful sense of calm and peace that it brings to me. I always attended religious services, taught a class in Sunday School, and was an active member of the Epworth League. But always there was something needed to give me real and true enjoyment and understanding, and now I have found it. . . I have some friends here to whom I have been lending pamphlets, etc., and I know it has been of some help, at least, to them.

Two new illustrated lectures are being prepared for the *Legion* work in other countries: *Immortality and Reincarnation* and *Reincarnation in Human Evolution*. Both of these have already been given in Chicago and were well received by the audience.

Now that summer has arrived, some of our Groups are suspending activities until fall. It will be most desirable, however, to hold brief business meetings once or twice a month, anyway, so that the work may be taken care of and some people helped in their study.

A number of sets of magazines for 1914 and 1915 are now in the hands of the binder, and the next issue will probably announce the bound volumes as ready for delivery.

Every *Legion* member is requested to look for opportunities of interesting other persons in our work and study. Every one should try to find ways to spread the work. Get together some people to read with you, form a class, and, if possible, start a new Group. Talk karma and reincarnation to those who are interested. Help to secure another subscriber for REINCARNATION. The growth and usefulness of the *Legion* is in your hands.

Members are urged to keep a notebook for questions and anything of interest to the *Legion* work.

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