

REINCARNATION

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THE NEW ORDERING OF THE NATIONS

The thoughtful student of karmic law finds comfort and encouragement without stint in the possibilities which loom huge upon the horizon for the life of the world by nations.

The great principles that are to control the theory of the life of humanity in its groupings for government and the uses of civilization have undergone reversal in recent decades, and to-day we find the most powerful of all world combinations boldly asserting that war shall not cease until the world is safe for democracy, that the small nations shall be conserved, that men may have the privilege, so dear to the human heart, of maintaining in use their inherited languages with their multiplicitous thought-forms modified

as they wish in the course of their mental growth.

Of especial importance is the proposal to permit peoples of one kindred to dissolve ancient or recent bonds with more powerful states, in order to unite in new republican combinations that shall send powerful currents of heredity and of spiritual influences through the world.

We rejoice with an exceeding great joy that the Slavonic nations of Europe have reached the moment in which they shall make the beginning of their national joining. The genius of these peoples to whom opportunity has been so long denied by the greed and jealousy of their more powerful neighbors is sorely needed by humanity at large.

The temperaments of the nations are God-given and inherent in the national life, making sacred the very being of nations as such. Each nation is entitled to project its special influence into the great harmony of the world's life.

The Slavonic peoples, dear indeed to those Great Men Who have made sacrifice for them, have a new and beautiful message of rare artistic feeling to breathe into the world's life. Study the temperament and the longing of the Slavonic peoples and you will see how poignantly they suffer, how keenly they enjoy, with what consummate art they join strength to grace. These qualities they are now ready to send into the currents of man's life in embodiment.

May all influences conspire to this and to many other consummations of the plans of God now ripe to the hand of Man!

W. V.-H.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

As Thomas Paine said, "These are the times that try the souls of men." Upheavals, destroyings, revolutions, violent changes seem to be the order of the day. To the superficial observer it would seem that ordered law had taken flight and that chaos ruled supreme.

However, students of the laws of life know that the things which can be seen are only the material end-results of an extended series of changes or actions which take place in the higher, invisible worlds, that there is really a grand Order which pervades the universe and that everything that happens is the necessary result of definite causes. Nothing can happen visibly without having first been started invisibly, in the subtler worlds. And in these higher worlds of our universe is realised that unity of life which makes chaos, discontinuity or disorder an utter impossibility.

Having realised something of this great scheme of orderly succession of events, the student naturally tries to discover what he can of the great underlying causes of world-movements, and to anticipate as far as possible the results in which these movements will finally culminate. It is a fact that the great and important changes which are at work in the world are not taking place in some kind of a blind order, but they are being watched over by high spiritual Intelligences of great authority, who guide them to pre-determined ends, so that they may bring about more helpful and desirable conditions for human evolution and the evolution of life on this planet.

If the events of the last few years and months

are studied with these facts in mind, several very interesting results appear. In the first place, the nations of the world are not really struggling for material gain or worldly power, but they are waging a war for ideals. Of course, definite material issues are involved and whenever peace terms are agreed upon there will be many dispositions and arrangements with regard to boundaries, commercial rights and so forth. But if the reasons for the war are carefully studied, it will appear that the real question at issue is one of principle: Shall the destiny of nations, in the coming centuries, be guided by irresponsible autocracies or by responsible representatives of the popular electorate? And there are other questions of principle which are also hanging in the balance: Shall nations develop into recognition of a conscious national life with a full development of national morality, responsibility and a higher idealism, or shall they be highly organised mechanisms of government, without soul life of its own, engineered by a few individuals for the purpose of material efficiency? Shall there be recognised throughout the world that international Law is to be a real organic principle with binding authority, or merely a convenient arbitrary figment of imagination? Shall the future evolution of nations proceed under the operation of the laws of materialised ideals, such as the survival of the most efficient, or under the auspices of spiritual laws of justice and self-sacrifice for the welfare of all nations? Shall governments be founded on the principle of selfish ambition or on the recognition of the solidarity of humanity and the brotherhood of all nations, they being recog-

nised to be actually members in the world-family of different ages and capacities? Shall the world proceed in its evolutionary course along the path of justice and liberty for all nations or shall it be the playground wherein selfish national interests are cunningly and craftily playing the game of Machiavellian world-politics?

Secondly, it appears clear that at this present time the Authorities in charge of the world's spiritual evolution seem to be using every available opportunity to break all those bonds of government which have prevented the peoples of the world from expanding and growing in their own national life with full freedom. Within a few years changes in the nature of government of several nations have been brought about that have fairly taken the world's breath away. The ancient imperial dynasty of China has crumbled away and given place to a democratic form of government. Russia has shaken off the autocratic rule of the Tsars and is now apparently about to establish a true United States of Russia. Mexico has for several years been seething and boiling over with revolutions which have destroyed the old regime of President Diaz, but have not yet succeeded in putting anything stable in its place. The Greeks have at last been rid of a ruler who has learned his ideas of government under the influence of the German imperial dynasty. And now it looks as though Spain, that old conservative nation, might throw off its monarchical form of government and might align itself with a new order of things. Germany alone, that country of material advancement in civilisation, seems to be securely dominated by the autocratic ideas and principles of Frederick the so-called Great and of Bismark.

And even in Germany there are signs of unrest which at the proper moment may blaze out in a fire which may consume the iron bonds which are still preventing true popular liberty, such as was established for a short time in 1848.

One of the most important problems of the day is to give justice to the radical and socialist parties in all the nations, and yet hold them firmly under the control of law and order and obtain from them a full measure of support for the governments in these times of stress and need. Events of the last few years have shown that there is only too much of a tendency on the part of many well-meaning people to disregard the duties of citizens toward their country. Many small parties and schools of thought have for years been engrossed almost exclusively with their rights and privileges, thus losing sight of their equally important duties and obligations.

It appears that a great many socialist leaders have come out openly in favor of almost any sort of a craven peace, based on total disregard of principles of justice and humanity. Many of the more advanced thinkers among socialists who maintain that the world war must be fought to a just and victorious conclusion have found themselves thrown out of their own party by their brethren of a duller vision. It seems more than likely that the actions of the masses of socialists will lead to a curious result: The socialist parties will discredit themselves, leadership and political power will fall away from them, while at the same time many nations will put into practice many socialistic principles and ideals.

C. S.

LESSONS OF THE DRAFT

America is now witnessing the actual choosing of the first increment of the great army authorised by the Selective Draft Act of May, 1917. This stupendous process is affecting the American people as they have never been affected before. For even such an event as the sinking of the *Lusitania* would only slightly arouse many of our people. But now comparatively few families are not vitally interested in the results of the draft. Many new problems have been forced on the nation by the calling of the young men; on the other hand, a number of valuable lessons are evident to the thoughtful observer.

The methods of the drafting are unusually democratic, even in our democratic land. The Act itself does not discriminate between the rich and the poor, the white and the black, but calls *every* man between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-one, without distinction of "race, creed, caste or color." Indeed it is a sight worth while, to see these young men present themselves for examination,—some willingly, even eagerly, some reluctantly,—every man deprived of the insignia of his rank, each being an American citizen on an equal footing with all other American citizens.

It is a fact, we think, that many Americans know of the Federal Government only in a theoretical way. They live their lives in their own way, never realising that there are mutual obligations by the individual to the government and by the government to the individual. In return for the protection afforded him by the nation, every citizen should always be ready to give his

all, in order to ensure the integrity of his own and other nations. Many Americans have lost sight of this duty; and it is to be hoped that this call to arms will bring home to every man involved the fact that he is bound by a sacred tie to the country that gave him birth and afforded him its protection.

There have been many spurious claims for exemption based on the plea of dependents: this is to be deplored. But thousands of family men subject to call have come to see just what their family duties are. Many of these, while eager and anxious to serve humanity in the American armies, have remained to care for their loved ones, realising that one cannot shirk one duty for another less pressing. In fact, it is evident that our part in the great war is causing us to take a more serious view of life and death, the latter being such an ever present reality to the soldier in active service.

But one of the greatest benefits to be derived from the mustering of our young men is the chance every one has of doing something not directly selfishly profitable to the personality. For a great many men service in the army will be the most unselfish action of their lives. This in itself will enable them to make great progress in their evolution. And the unselfishness of the act becomes more apparent when we recall that the point at issue is not as clear as it might be. No foreign foe has invaded our soil, our existence as a nation is not immediately threatened; indeed, the whole struggle centers around a principle, and our common people are not given to risking anything for a "mere abstract principle."

And what of those who will fall in action, granting that our troops will actually engage in the fighting on a large scale? Will not the loss of so many splendid young men be irreparable? The answer to this question will depend upon the view-point of the observer. If we think of man as having only one life on earth, then the loss could not be replaced. But the moment we think of the great truth of reincarnation, we realise that the loss is not so great after all. Surely, they will come back to us, bringing with them all the glorious benefits derived from their great sacrifice, in which they gave themselves in their prime for the helping of all humanity!

I. I. Nelson.



"To dwell with my relatives, even those whose names were wasted before my birth,—is that painful to the thought?", said the old man. "Often, when we dream not, yet we see and hear them as in dreams." "A man is like a grain of corn—bury him and he molds; yet his heart lives, and springs out on the breath of life (the soul) to make him as he was, so again."

From the work by William E. Curtis on the Zuni Indians, entitled "Children of the Sun."

LIBERTY

Throughout the world to-day is ringing the call for more freedom. The war with all its horrors is swiftly breaking down the shackles that are binding the world,—some so old that the people whom they afflict have become callous and unfeeling. And everywhere is heard the cry, "Give the people of the world their liberty!"

What is liberty? What does it mean for a man to be free? The younger human souls would say: "Liberty for us means that we shall be allowed to do just as we choose. We shall not be forced to do anything we do not want to do. We shall not be held responsible for the things we do." For such men the ideal of liberty has been perverted into that of unrestrained licence and lawlessness. They have not yet reached an understanding of individual responsibility.

An older soul would say something like this: "Liberty means for every man freedom to do what he likes, so long as he does not interfere with the similar liberties of other people." This man recognises that in order that liberty may exist, other men must be entitled to enjoy the same degree of freedom as himself.

The deep student of philosophy and life's mysteries, however, has still another view of liberty. He would say: "Liberty is for any man that combination of freedom and restriction which will most wisely and rapidly prepare him to will to be in union with the Supreme Will. This liberty is not always what the personality would regard as full freedom of action: very often there are difficulties and sharp conflicts, but in striving

to exert his will to overcome them, the man gains a higher freedom.

To be free, as far as possible, then, means that the man knows something of the law of karma and may live and work without storing up more of hindering karma. It means that sometimes the man may enter into what seems to the ordinary man a state of limitation and bondage, but which really leads to the possibility of the true man, the ego, expressing himself through his bound personality.

While man remains a separate individual life, he can never be wholly free. The life of separateness limits man to but a small part of Truth. Only when he gives up his individual will does he enter into a state of being in which he may will in perfect harmony with the Supreme Will. This is the liberation of Nirvana for the Buddhist and true Salvation for the Christian.

It is hard for man to renounce what his previous experience has taught him to regard as valuable. Yet in the long course of human evolution, at some time or other, all things which are material must be given up, and even all personal emotions and feelings and modes of thought must be left behind. Helpful as all these may have been in the past, the time will come when they become hindrances, obstacles and bonds of karma which tend to keep man from further advancement. As long as man's life energies are locked up in forms he is not free: only by renunciation can he rise into a higher and freer life. It is a joy that one may find a Master Teacher and that "In His service there is perfect freedom."

C. S.

*TOLSTOY'S LETTER ON KARMA**

You ask me about the Buddhist idea of 'karma.' In dream we live almost in the same way as we do in reality. Pascal says, "I believe the following: If we should see ourselves always in the same situations in dream and always in different ones in reality, we would consider dream a reality and reality a dream." This is not quite correct. Reality differs from dream in that it is more real, more actual. So that I would say thus: If we did not know a life more real than dream, we would consider dream life perfect and would never doubt that it is not real life.

Now, is not all our life from birth to death

*Note by Count Leo N. Tolstoy:

"Karma" is known to be a Buddhist teaching of compensation, which is in a close connection with the teaching of migration of the soul. Each living creature is a result of a series of transformations. The more our life has been virtuous in the past, the closer we come to moral perfection in the present and in the future. Buddha himself before his birth has lived through five hundred and fifty of such transformations.

The teaching about "karma" is in close connection with the teaching of modern naturalists about heredity, on the strength of which each man is the result of virtues and vices of his ancestors and in his turn influences in the most direct way his descendants.

This is also a "karma" in its kind, that is, a law of compensation. With the Buddhists this teaching is clad only in a more practical form. Man could gradually elevate himself by virtue to a god-like state, or, on the contrary, by vice, lower himself to an animal state and be cast into hell. The soul of man is immortal: dying, it is continually reborn, and the outside form into which it is clad, represents only a step toward a state of bliss, or on the contrary—toward extreme torture.

with its dreams in turn a dream, which we take for real life and whose reality we do not doubt only because we do not know another more real life? I not only think so, but I am convinced that it is so.

As dreams in this life are states, during which we live through impressions, thoughts, feelings of a preceding life, so our present life is exactly a state during which we live through karma preceding a more real life and during which we gather strength, work out karma for a following, more real, life out of which we came.

As we live through thousands of dreams in this one life, so this one life is one of thousands of such lives into which we step in from that more real (genuine) actual life out of which we come, stepping into this life and into which we return, when we die. Our life is one of the dreams of that more real life and so forth, till infinity, till that One Last Real Life—the Life of God.

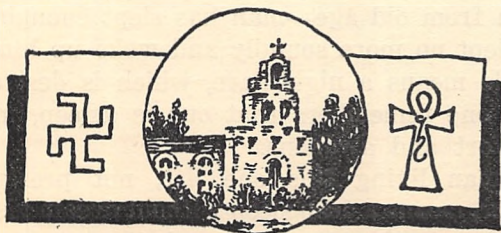
Birth and appearance of the first ideas of the world is—going to sleep and the sweetest of dreams; death—is awakening. An early death—man has been awakened, but has not slept enough. Death from old age—man has slept enough, but has slept no more soundly and woke up himself. Suicide means a nightmare, which is destroyed, when one remembers that one is asleep, makes an effort and awakens.

A man living this one life, not presenting another, means a deep sleep without dream visions, a half animal state. To feel in dream what happens around one, to sleep sensitively, to be ready for awakening any minute, is to be con-

scious all through vaguely of that other life out of which one came and into which one goes. In dream man is always an egotist and lives alone without sharing with others, without unity with them. In that life which we call reality there is more unity with others, there is already something resembling love to one's neighbor. In the one we came from and into which we go, this unity is not only something longed for, but something real. In that life, for which this life is also a dream, the unity and love are still greater and we, in this dream, feel already what perhaps will be there. The foundations of all is already in us and permeates all our dreams.

I would like you to understand me; it is not that I amuse myself inventing things. I believe in this. I see without doubt, I know, that dying, I will become joyful, that I will come closer to that more real world.

[This article, printed some years ago in a Russian magazine, was kindly translated for use in this magazine by a friend of the Legion.]



CONTINUITY, BY SIR OLIVER LODGE

Continuity is an address delivered by Sir Oliver Lodge at Birmingham, England, in 1913, to the British Association for the Advancement of Science.

In this address the famous scientist and speaker has not only discussed his subject, Continuity, showing it to be a necessary condition for evolution as taught by all biologists, but he has also spoken very clearly and at length to his brother scientists concerning their field of labor and the limitations necessarily imposed by the methods of science.

He shows that the exclusiveness of science is its strength, but that this exclusiveness must not drop into dogmatic negation. "For the nature of man is a large thing, and intellect is only a part of it: a recent part, too, which therefore necessarily, though not consciously, suffers from some of the defects of newness and crudity, and should refrain from imagining itself the whole—perhaps it is not even the best part—of human nature."

He emphasises the fact that discrimination, study of parts, specialisation, are necessary in order to gain intellectual grasp. But this must not blind us to the fact that in life they are all merged and co-operating. Hence science has no authority in denials.

There are unexplored fields—life and mind and consciousness—that do not come within the limits of the material world of the scientist.

"Material bodies are all that we (scientists) have any control over, are all that we are experimentally aware of; any conclusions we can draw about them may be legitimately true. But to step outside their province and to deny the existence of any other region because we have no sense organ for its appreciation, or because (like the ether) it is too uniformly omnipresent for our ken, is to wrest our advantages and privileges from their proper use and apply them to our own misdirection." The fact that life introduces new elements that have eluded scientific methods is recognised and though unknown causes must be excluded and treated as non-existent, yet "those causes have only to establish their footing by direct investigation and research; carried on

in the first instance apart from the long-recognised branches of science, until the time when they too have become sufficiently definite to be entitled to be called science."

And although superstition has no place in the realm of science, he says that the term may be wrongly applied to practices of which the theory is unknown. But he says, "the methods of science are not the only way, though they are one way, of being piloted to truth." "I am one of those who think that the methods of science are not so limited in their scope as has been thought: that they can be applied much more widely, and that the psychic region can be studied and brought under law too. Allow us anyhow to make the attempt." "Mysticism must have its place, though its relation to Science has so far not been found. They have appeared disparate and disconnected but there need be no hostility between them. Every kind of reality must be ascertained and dealt with by proper methods. If the voices of Socrates and of Joan of Arc represent real psychical experiences, they must belong to the intelligible universe."

He speaks also of his own thirty years' experience in psychical research and because his words will be noted and remain to be criticised he says: "Your President, therefore, should not be completely bound by the shackles of present day orthodoxy, nor limited to beliefs fashionable at the time. In justice to myself and my co-workers I must risk annoying my present hearers, not only by leaving on record our conviction that occurrences now regarded as occult can be examined and reduced to order by the methods of science carefully and persistently applied."

Sir Oliver says, "That personality persists beyond bodily death; discarnate intelligence may interact with us on the material side."

Lastly he asks the men of science to lay down the stones that they have wrested from the hands of the orthodox religionists and to see to it that revolt ceases when it has gone far enough, for genuine religion has its roots deep down in the heart of humanity and is a real thing.

Pauline Trueblood.

DIVERGENT WAR VIEWS

People are not only of different soul ages but they are, so we are told, of seven distinct types. A third order of difference exists between men because of the very various kinds of experiences that they have had in their long series of earth-lives. And, finally, the conditions under which a man lives as a personality necessarily mold the personality to a considerable extent, so that it shows certain peculiarities and characteristics. Thus it is well known that a number of years spent in teaching a school will put the unmistakable stamp of the teacher on the personality.

If we did not have at hand the great fundamental truths of karma and reincarnation it would be a hopeless task to try to understand why people can take not only widely divergent views on definite questions of the day, but frequently do take diametrically opposed attitudes. The problems connected with the great war have been and are, fruitful causes for divergence and clashings in thought and speech.

It is probably true that by this time the majority of civilised men of some education and culture have fully realised that the great war must be fought to a finish and that the ideals for which the German government stands must be utterly overthrown, so that they will never again stand in the way of progress and the evolution of humanity. But there are many socialists and other idealists of various kinds who are quite unable to see this crucial point and who are clamoring for an early peace, based on leaving difficult problems alone and without regard to

the necessity of finding a settlement which will clear up these problems for all future times. As may always be expected in great world difficulties, there are quite a number of people who are honestly following the ideals of patriotism and nationalism, and are therefore demanding gains and benefits for their nation that would entail distinct loss or injury to humanity or the world as a whole. Nations are still very selfish and the high ideal of world progress is easily limited to national power, prestige and prosperity.

The war has already shown clearly that patriotism can be turned to vicious uses as easily as to wise and virtuous ones. Probably no people on earth are so patriotic and devoted to their fatherland than are the Germans. But it was and is precisely through this noble virtue that the German people have been so grievously misled, and have countenanced or even approved the commission of a long series of international crimes and outrages upon the higher principles of international morality, justice and humaneness.

It is true that patriotism has greatly influenced all of the other warring nations besides Germany, but it may be safely said that in no other case has it been perverted to the same extent and yet made to appear as the highest virtue. In general, nearly all other civilised peoples are patriotic, but they realise that 'above all nations is humanity' and that their national ambitions must be made to follow, not precede, the welfare and necessities of human progress. For most people the feelings of patriotism are thus duly subordinated to the larger principles of justice.

The war has forcibly brought home to our

attention the fact that there are many people who are trying to follow certain abstract ideals in ways which do not at all harmonise with the needs of the world at this day and hour. There are those who would stop the war at once, if it were possible to do so: these men are apparently incapable of entertaining the thought that possibly vastly greater harm would come to the world if this were done than if the war is carried out to its logical conclusion. It is true that thought-principles are more powerful than are thought-forms and that high ideals should rule over personal feelings, but to regard recognised principles and cherished ideals as something to be imposed upon any set of conditions of our ordinary life, without regard to fitness or rightness, justice or the future welfare of the world, would be a very great mistake. Yet there are many sincere and well-meaning men who commit just such blunders.

It is one of the failings of many of the leaders in socialistic thought that they are unable to take large view-points and to see life in proper perspective. They see the ideals which will become realities only after many ages of careful and earnest effort by all humanity, and they overlook entirely the realities of to-day which are, in the course of time, to be perfected and serve as expressions in this world, of ideals in the higher worlds. They do not suit themselves to their age.

Of course, many people are so closely bound by the bonds of nationality that they are quite unable to view the war problem with any approach to impartiality and clearness. For such there is little help in sight except a rude awakening in

the physical world, by the overturning of what they regarded as fixed and unshakable.

For those who are earnestly striving to understand the needs of our present world civilisation we may confidently recommend the study of the basic laws of life and of the nature of man. As we learn that men are actually of very different types, besides being of various soul ages, so are we enabled to see that all honest and sincere views of the war have their place in the scheme of things and in the further outworking of the Great Plan.

Fortunate is he who, having gained a clear conception of the larger span of human life, with its many incarnations in personalities, is able to see the actual reasons for the necessity that there shall be many different types of men, and may find justification in large measure for the clashings of wills, thoughts and feelings!

C. S.

PRACTISING HAPPINESS

One of the most difficult problems the earnest student has to face is that of remaining serene, even happy, in the midst of the thousand and one karmic difficulties that come to him from all directions. A first step in the solution of the problem is to "make believe" we are happy, whether we really feel that way or not. Then we should eagerly look for and cling to the good things among the many evil ones; perhaps we shall find after a time that the evil ones are hopelessly in the minority and that we have been attaching entirely too much importance to them.

I. I. Nelson.

THE LARGER VIEW OF LIFE

In all departments of human life it is recognised that the man who can see things from a large and inclusive point of view is the man who can be of the greatest service to the world. Very primitive men, so-called savages, can find little motive to do anything, except for those things and actions which will satisfy immediate and pressing wants, such as hunger, thirst or lack of comfort of the body. The barbarian man has developed in his longer evolution sufficient human instinct and intellect to work now in such ways that he will reap some benefit in the future. Modern civilised man represents a still further advancement in human growth: he can enter into the complexities of industrial and social life which are based upon the great principle of division of labor or intricate specialisation of human skill and effort.

All of the various viewpoints that belong to these different stages of evolution are true and useful ones. Each point of view can include only a limited area of human experience; it is a limitation made necessary by the requirements of human soul growth. Each man has his own world around him, created by his own thoughts. He makes it out of what he has seen, heard and experienced of the world. Thus the man who has never travelled and has read no books or newspapers lives in a world limited to his own immediate neighborhood. On the other hand the globe-trotter who is wide awake and observant, is able to get a view of the world very much more as it really is, although even he gets only superficial views of it which he combines into

his own world in thought. Thus travel helps enormously in broadening a man's view of the world. However, it is by no means necessary to travel: we can all read books and magazine articles about other countries and see motion pictures which depict interesting scenes of life as seen in many other countries; and out of all this material, if we are careful in our methods of thought, we can construct a very large world which gives us a very good representation of the actual world.

Such a large view of the world in which we live, as just described, can not be of very great service to us, nor can we be of much service to the actual world, unless we can add to our view a very considerable comprehension of the lives of nations, their ideals and their civilisation and culture. It takes more than extensive travels and wide reading to understand the world as it is; it takes a broad sympathy for humanity and a deep understanding of the problems of human life. The man who has merely intellectual knowledge of a subject is very much lacking in real knowledge, which requires an insight into human life and its struggles, its failures, its ideals, its possibilities for unfolding the divinity which lies latent in every human heart.

What, then, is needed to complete the largeness of view of life which we are striving for as our ideal? It takes depth as well as breadth of understanding. To understand the world as it exists would merely be a superficial knowledge. What we want is to know the real meaning of life. We want to know the great scheme of development of life, its evolution in the largest possible sense, and particularly do we want to know as much

as we can of the fundamental laws of life and evolution. In short, we wish to know something of the evolution of the human soul or ego, the immortal man. For if we can gain this knowledge and make it a living reality in our lives, then we have the depth of insight which will make our largeness of view possible, and all this understanding of life will enable us to find our own proper and rightful place in the world and the great scheme of its evolving and growth.

Now, what may we regard as the fundamental facts and laws of life? The facts are these: firstly, life is either a refined form of energy or something which is superior to energy. Therefore it is, like energy, indestructible and permanent. It may, like energy, change its modes of existence, may become invisible and apparently lost or inactive, but it maintains always its fixed amount. Secondly, life is continually tending toward greater refinement and perfection. In other words, consciousness in living beings is growing, expanding and developing higher powers and faculties. Thus the two facts of greatest importance about life are: 1) its indestructibility in its real nature; and 2) its continuous evolution.

All life is immortal but not all of it is individually immortal. The lives of individual animals and plants are not maintained as permanent. When the bodies or organisms of animals or plants are destroyed, then their life energies do not maintain a separate existence, but return to the larger funds or reservoirs of life from which they came, and from which the lives of living creatures of certain species are maintained. Thus there is in nature a definite amount of life energy

in one or more masses or reservoirs, from which all the lives of, say, dogs are maintained, but no other kinds of animals. Thus the life of dogs is already highly specialised but not yet permanently individualised, as is the case for human beings, even of the lowest stages. These facts about life are of the greatest help in our study of life as seen in plants or animals and human beings. We can understand why it is that a school of some hundred minnows can swim about and suddenly take fright and disappear in a moment and all without confusion and collidings of groups of minnows; while in the case of men, if panic-stricken, nearly everybody would get in the way of others. It is because the minnows have a soul-life in common, at least in part, while men's lives are quite distinct, separate and fairly independent, the ones from the others.

The great laws under which evolution of life take place are those of ordered sequence of all events, or their arrangement in time as an ordered succession of causes and effects. Nothing happens without cause; nothing can happen unless it is made necessary and inevitable by the events which have led up to it. Nothing can take place in nature to excess: when there is action in one direction there must always be an equal, corresponding action in the opposite direction. The ancient Aryan philosophers of Vedic times called this great law of nature by the name of 'karma.' This Sanskrit word means simply 'action'; but in the idea of action its complete relation to its causes in the past and its effects in the future were involved. We use the word action to apply to a momentary event, and the ancient sages

understood by 'karma' the whole chain of events of which the momentary action forms but a single link. When we limit our consideration to human evolution then this law of causation or sequence is most clearly and succinctly stated in the one Biblical sentence: "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." This means that not only what a man does, in physical actions, but everything which he feels and thinks will have its due effect which will return to him as the necessary reaction to the action which he sent out. In other words, a kind action will come back some time as a kindness to the man; a feeling of hatred sent out toward another person will some time return to the sender and cause him to feel pain; a thought of help to other people will bring back a helpful thought to the thinker.

Another great and fundamental law of human soul evolution is that of reincarnation, or life in many human embodiments. This may be regarded as made necessary by the law of causation, which requires that all actions must be completed and properly balanced in the account book of nature. It is evident that a single life on earth is a very incomplete thing: it is full of efforts which did not work themselves out to a full and rounded-out completion; it is full of hopes and desires, plans and aspirations which could not be realised for lack of time; it is full of wrongs done which have not been fully made good, and of good deeds which have not had their full returns or rewards. All these things must work themselves out in their full effects and they must come back to the man who had sent them forth. In other words, every man must make progress

in his evolution of soul or ego, in a continuous and orderly way. He can not leave a lot of chaos and confusion behind him, but must clean up his old mistakes and suffer himself the injuries which he has inflicted upon others, as well as reap the good effects of every one of his right actions. All this is provided for in the scheme of nature's workings, and it means that the man lives not only this present life on earth but that he will live many more lives in the future, each one taking up the work of his higher evolution where it was left off before and continuing it onward steadily. It also means that his present life is by no means his first appearance as a human personality, but that it is the necessary outcome or result of a long series of past lives. There is a clear and definite reason why we who are civilised men are far in advance of the primitive men of lowly races and of our own slum-dwellers. It is not because we have been born into favorable circumstances,—that is only a part of the story. It is because we are older souls or egos. We have lived in more human personalities than our less evolved brothers, and the particular experiences which are necessary to develop these other younger human egos, we have ourselves already experienced and passed through, many lives ago. Out of them we have learned better things, but all of us have our present lessons still to learn, and we are perhaps not so very far ahead of the lowliest human beings when we regard human life from the standpoint of completeness or human perfection. All these facts become more real to us and better understood as we think them over without prejudice or fear, and with a deep, strong

and sincere longing to know the great truth: the Truth that shall eventually make us free.

We can only attain to this wonderful large view of life if we are willing to sacrifice our personal prejudices and desires. In order to rise to this higher view we must in very fact silence the clamor and confusion which exist in the life of the personality and try to rise in consciousness into our higher self, the ego. Even though we may not learn how to reach self-consciousness in our ego,—a most difficult thing,—we may yet understand something of the life of the ego and of his wonderful view of life. To approximate to this ideal we can practice the art of controlling our personal desires, of holding our ordinary rushing stream of thought in check, and of viewing our personality as though we were looking at it from the outside and from a higher level of consciousness. As we practice this exercise we gradually become more skilled in it, and this means for us the taking of the larger view of life. Every time we can succeed in viewing our own lives in the same impersonal way in which we can regard the lives of other personalities, we are practicing our higher vision and exercising our higher powers of consciousness. And whenever we thus take a large view of human life and of all life, we are able to see much of the wonderful interrelation of all separate things and beings, all of which make up the one single Great Life of the universe. And as we are able to see more clearly our own individual relation to the larger life all about us, we may more readily know what it is that we can do which will most help the Great Whole to make more rapid progress

toward perfection. It is only by manfully carrying out our own part in the great scheme of things that we can realise our own fulness of growth and perfectioning.

C. S.

NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS

(Concluded from page 117)

The next step is that after ages upon ages of time spent in evolving in these various kingdoms of nature, life is ready to express itself through human bodies, and new powers of consciousness are able to express themselves: that of the mind, logical reasoning, being the one which typically belongs to man.

As evolution proceeds further, the old lessons of progress are made use of again and again in higher ways. Nothing that was found valuable in the past can be allowed to be entirely forgotten and left behind. In the human evolution the different individuals must at first work, each for himself, and thus develop their own latent powers and faculties. The time of early human evolution is one of extreme selfishness and sometimes of brutality. But the family life into which man must be born and in which he grows up, helps to develop the spirit of co-operation and a larger, broader selfishness. The man works for his own family in order that it may help to make life more easy and agreeable for him.

This family life prepares man to make a further step in his evolution of life, and that is the

development of the national feeling and consciousness. The primitive family had to look after all the work of living. But exchanges of products between different families proved to be advantageous, and thus the great principle of closer association and division of labor was gradually recognised and made use of. And we may note that this principle in the case of human life no longer limits itself to the activities which are to maintain the life of the organism, but extends into the more subtle fields of consciousness, of emotions and thoughts, such as are illustrated by the fine arts, by science, philosophy and religion.

We hardly realise what a wonderful organism the modern nation, with all its parts, or organs, is. The railways serve as the organ of circulation, the telegraph and telephone systems are the nervous system. Men are not found doing all the things necessary for living,—they are all specialising, doing those particular things which they are best fitted for. No group of men is independent of the others. The farmer is dependent on all others to consume his food-products. The capitalist depends on labor to manufacture goods and on the general public to use them. The laboring man is dependent on the capitalist to furnish him work to do. The various business men are part of the great organ of distribution, carrying products where they are to be consumed.

Curiously enough the development of a higher unity of life and organism is a process that usually escapes the notice of the individuals who take part in that unity. They somehow find their appropriate places in the organism without knowing it to be such, and the common life in which

they live is so subtle that it is not recognised for what it really is and means.

But just as it marks a great step in advance for a living being to heighten his consciousness so that it becomes self-consciousness, so is it a great gain for a nation to become aware of its organic life and the meaning of that life. This comes about through the individual realisation of this fact by a sufficiently large number of influential citizens, such as are the leaders in the thought and life of the nation.

To-day our modern nations are but vaguely conscious of the fact that there is an organic national life, that it has a real being and evolution. The leading men may see that the nation as an organism is there and they may appreciate the essential unity and interdependence of outward life. But the inner life of the nation is not clearly recognised. Yet the terrible world war is doing much to bring about this recognition.

What is this "soul of a nation"? Surely it is made up of nothing else but that part of the souls of men which have become close-linked in the common life of the people, that part which transcends family and community interests and deals with the things which affect the nation as a whole. So the soul of a nation has the same kind of life as is found in the individual man, only it is much more inclusive and massive in amount. It transcends the ordinary boundaries of individual human lives.

A nation has its life and its death; but it has also its reincarnation. When the time is ripe and ready, when the greater body of its former citizens are again born on earth and to

be closely associated together as a nation, then the old national tendencies, feelings and qualities of character of the dead nation will come again into being. The old thoughts and ideals and methods of work of the former nation will have another opportunity to express themselves in actual fact. The conditions are somewhat different but the old life is flowing through the new organism. The old work is to be done better than before and all the old egos who have come into the new nation are to be lifted another step upward in their human evolution.

To those who can grasp the transcendent importance of self-conscious national life there is given the opportunity of helping others to realise it and to help to guide the life of the nation into its rightful and appointed place. As the individual has his dharma,—that which is best for him to do at the time, so has every nation its greater or lesser part to play in the life and evolution of the world.

C. S.

FIELD NOTES

The following letter from Holland is encouraging, and all *Legion* members will wish a long life and a large circulation for the new Dutch official organ:

Your letter, with enclosed certificates and two Charters, dated March 5, was duly received, although it took a long time before it reached me.

The *Legion* is growing fast in Holland: many people ask for free information and for distribution literature, and many join our movement, convinced of the truth of the laws of karma and reincarnation.

A great improvement in our work has been the issuing

of our little official organ "Mededeelingen", of which I have sent you some copies of the two numbers which have come out. We have made it cheap, in order that everybody might be able to take a subscription, and although in the beginning it looked as if we should not get a sufficient number of subscribers, I am glad to say that now the life of the publication is assured.

On March 12 I sent you 33 applications for membership. I hope they have reached you, and now I have the pleasure to send you again some 31 applications, as well as an application for the Zaandam Group. It is signed by five persons,—the first one, Miss A. M. Buys, will be the leader.

On March 16, Mrs. Ramondt-Hirschmann lectured on "Karma and Reincarnation" to an audience of about 70 persons. This lecture was delivered for the female students of the University of Utrecht and was very successful indeed. On April 18, our well-known speaker Mr. H. J. van Ginkel lectured at Amsterdam, the title of his lecture being: "Does Man Live More Than Once On Earth?" He had an audience of about 120 persons, most of them very interested and very attentive listeners.

Hoping that the work in America is going well, with best wishes and greetings,

*Ever sincerely yours,
Louise van der Hell.*

Lectures are regularly given by Group Akbar of the Legion in Room 706, Fine Arts Building, Chicago, Illinois. Mr. I. I. Nelson, of Austin Group, lectured throughout the summer. The titles of the last three lectures were: "We Make Our Own Future," "The War: Its Deeper Meanings and Results," and "Proofs of Life After Death."

Mrs. Megaw, leader of Cleveland Group, writes to the Secretary: "We are preparing for an annual meeting the fifth of September. At this time we will elect officers, arrange committees and plan generally for the year's work." She hopes to spend some time in Chicago "to get some inspiration to pass on to others."

It is well for our members to spend some time in carefully planning the activities for fall and winter,