ANCIENT WISDOM

A monthly journal devoted to teaching theosophical and occult truths

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy."—Hamlet

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SHALLOW TREATMENT OF A GREAT TRUTH

Why Do Non-Occult Writers Deal With Reincarnation So Superficially?

By CHARLES E. LUNTZ

Every Theosophist must have been struck by the vacuity with which reincarnation is handled by writers on the subject (not Theosophical, of course) who take it upon themselves to discuss it. Even the learned ones make an incredibly poor showing. And the encyclopaedias waste good space on trashy disquisitions that touch on almost every phase of the topic except what is really worth while.

Thus Britannica, considered by many to be only one degree less infallible than the Bible, devotes more than half of a 2½ column article in Metempsychosis (which it prefers to the more forthright Reincarnation) to the ridiculous beliefs of savages on the subject. The rest of the article deals mainly with the Greek view of rebirth, Hinduism and Buddhism in relation to it being barely mentioned, while the Theosophical teaching is dismissed with 4½ lines.

It is no doubt highly educational to learn that the Bakongs of Borneo believe their dead are reincarnated in bear-cats, the Africans in alligators and the Melanesians in sharks, but an exposition of the logic and probability of the teaching set forth by Occultism would seem to be much more valuable to the reader.

It is doubtless amusing to discover that the soul is thought by some races to be small enough to leave by the mouth and appears as a manikin, a snake, a weasel or a mouse, but would it not be better to explain the purpose of reincarnation in spiritual evolution, instead of using paper and ink on irrelevant trivialities such as these?

The illiterate of all races (including our own) are likely to hold queer and irrational ideas on the subject of souls. But people who refer to encyclopaedias are usually interested in the opinions of the literate. At least one piece of information given is highly questionable. It is that the ancient Egyptians "practised embalming to prevent or delay reincarnation." Theosophists have a great deal more respect for the occult knowledge of the ancient Egyptians than to credit them with any such lunacy. They knew quite as well as we do—better perhaps—that when the

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IS A GOD NECESSARY?

A Debate between John L. Talbott and William Marx of the Rationalist Society and Charles E. Luntz, President and Mrs. Careta Thatcher, Vice-President of The Theosophical Society of St. Louis; November 4th, 1948, at The Theosophical Society Auditorium.

Affirmative: Mr. Luntz, Mrs. Thatcher
Negative: Mr. Talbott, Mr. Marx

Moderator: Mr. Alfred Schindler
Former U. S. Undersecretary of Commerce

Mr. Luntz: It is, I think, to the great glory of The Theosophical Society whose members, probably, without exception believe in a Guiding Intelligence, that a debate of this character can be held here without exciting the slightest rancor, resentment or indignation among those same members. We do not forget that our own revered Dr. Annie Besant to whom the Society owes so much came into Theosophy out of Freethought and into Freethought out of the Anglican Church, of which her husband was an ordained priest.

We also do not forget that belief in God is no required qualification for admission to our Society. An atheist, a rationalist, a freethinker, if he subscribes to a belief in human brotherhood may join us and hold office. Indeed, if one dictionary definition of a freethinker is acceptable—one who rejects authority in religious belief—then a great many of us are freethinkers, and I myself most certainly am. Yet we number in our organization those who do accept authority in religion and that, too, is their privilege. Our members may be of any faith or of none and we find Catholics, Baptists, Methodists, Episcopalians and in the East Buddhists, Hindus, Mohammedans and Parsis harmoniously working together in theosophical lodges. I will admit that they are likely to be very broadminded members of those sects and not the more orthodox, but again it is to be the glory of The Theosophical Society that this is both a possibility and a fact.

It may sound paradoxical but actually a member of the Society could take the negative side of tonight's debate if he wished and still remain a perfectly good Theosophist. And as I am informed that some members of the Rationalist Society are not atheists, I suppose they could take the affirmative view without losing their standing in their own Society.

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THE NUMBER EIGHT

By OLIVE HARCOURT

Of the hundred knights of King Arthur's Round Table who went out from Camelot to seek the Holy Grail, only four succeeded in advancing further along the path leading out from the material kingdom than the sphere of the Moon, the astral plane of illusion or maya. All the rest were caught and held by this fascinating region, called Castle Perilous. One of these four Knights was Parsifal or Perceval, who reached Castle Proud, the sphere of Mercury, the Planet of intellectual endeavor and attainmant. Here he found himself playing a game of chess with an invisible opponent, of whom he saw nothing but a hand moving the pieces. Eight is the number attributed to the Planet Mercury, and the board upon which this, the game making the most demands upon the human intellect, is played, is a square containing within itself 64 lesser squares—8×8=64, the exact counterpart of the magic square of Mercury.

John Dalton, the pioneer of the atomic theory, in his table of chemical atoms, attributes to the element mercury the atomic number eight: i. e., eight electrons revolve around the central proton. This is quite as remarkable as his attribution of the number six to the chemical atom of carbon, the first perfect number, representing life. Sir James Jeans tells that if the carbon atom did not exist there would be no life in the Universe. Six is the number of the Messianic Sphere and of the Christ—"I am the Way, the Truth and the LIFE."

Eight is the number of Justice and Balance, because it divided its component parts into equality — 2×2=4, 2×4=8. It is the only evenly even number in the decad.

The eight-pointed star, symbol of the planet Mercury, the messenger of the gods, was carried in very early times to Rome by way of Greece, and when the Christian religion was consolidated it became a symbol—a subordinate one it is true—of the Founder of the new faith, Christ being the Messenger of God, the link between man and the Deity.

Eight also represents the binding together of the positive and negative aspects of man in balanced formation, four masculine and four feminine.

The Gnostics posited a symbol of regeneration and consummation, now

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PRINCIPLES FOR YOUR APPROPRIATION

There are principles in nature—eternal ones which are wholly good, impermanent ones which are negative and carry seeds of destruction but which furnish the dark background, the shadows, which in physical plane manifestation, up to a certain stage, seem always to accompany the light.

You may appropriate to yourself whichever of the dark principles, whichever of the light, you may choose. That is a natural concomitant of the freewill with which you have been endowed .Some go through life lifting from it the ugly and mean—convinced that this is all life holds for them, that the good they see manifesting in the lives of others is barred to them, stored and protected from them by iron doors with bolts and locks. Only the unfriendliness and coldness, the lees of life, are available for their taking. Abundance of all good things, spiritual, mental, material is for others—scarcity, hardship and restriction are nature's allotments to them.

The gospel, the good tidings, of occultism is that the positives of life are not rationed to a favored class but are at the disposal of all. It is a never-ending source of amazement to those who practice so-called "right thought" what seeming miracles that simple shifting of the mind gears from "reverse" to "high" will do. Instead of feebly tottering through life content with whatever crumbs of wellbeing may fall one's way, there is an eager, alert attitude of expectancy of good. And the good comes.

There are people who literally decree—that is the word, *decree*—limitation for themselves. And Theosophists are not altogether free from this folly due to a misunderstanding of the law of karma. The writer, in his capacity of Lodge President, is still asked sometimes by new members or by non-Theosophists at lectures, "If I try to be successful may I not be defeating my karma?"

Very naive!

Gravity is every whit as much of an eternal law as karma. It merely operates in another department of nature. If one ascends in an airplane 7000 feet above ground is one thereby "defeating" the law of gravity? Silly question—but no sillier than the inquiry as to whether the law of karma can be defeated. No natural law can be defeated. But it can be neutralized by the introduction and application of another natural law or laws. Until man discovered the natural laws governing the flight of heavier than air bodies and learned how to apply them—something our younger brothers of the bird and insect kingdoms had known for millions of years—the law of gravity pinned him to earth. When man learned and applied the other laws he conquered gravity but it is quite certain that gravity didn't mind. We stress this because we have known people who really feared the grave displeasure of the karmic agencies if they made attempts to better their lot. As C. W. Leadbeater remarked, "Nothing we could do could occasion the karmic deities the slightest embarrassment."

If we recognize two fundamentals connected with karma we cannot possibly go wrong in that way. Firstly, karma is not something manufactured by the Lords of Karma on our behalf and rained on us at appropriate times. We make our own. The karmic department is a distributing not a fabricating agency. Karma deals strictly in goods produced by others. It produces nothing itself. Yet the most minute, super-expert judgment of a perfection impossible to the wisest human being is exercised in allotting to each of the world's billions precisely what is best for him at any given moment in his destiny. We use the word "best" in preference to "just" because we think the *justice* of karma has been too much emphasized, thus obscuring its superlative educational value. As no man can, by karmic law, obtain one penny's worth more of either pleasant or unpleasant karma than he himself has created, the justice of the proceedings may be taken for granted. As karma does no manufacturing but assigns us back our own end products it would be an impossibility for it to overpay us either in well or ill.

But those end products may be modified, changed or even annihilated by us at any time before karma gets around to delivering them. Our own new actions can set a reversing current into operation which will mitigate or kill karma that otherwise would have desended upon us. The karmic agencies exercise only the choice of when and in what amount the material we have handed to them shall be handed back to us in the form of reactions. If we have by acts subsequent to the making of the original karma but prior to its rebound assuaged its intensity or destroyed it entirely, we have in no sense "defeated" it but, if it is unpleasant karma, have handled it exactly in the right way.

Occultists are supposed to be and should be grown-up mentally and to some extent spiritually. The childish idea of heavenly wrath, punishment and the like should with them have long since gone out the window. Karma is nobody's wrath, nobody's punishment but our own education of ourselves through the inevitable consequence of our actions. This principle of belief must be a true one because it adds up, it makes sense, it is worthy of being entertained by a mature thinker; it is worthy, if we may say so in all reverence, of an Intelligence lofty enough as we can conceive it to have fashioned the cosmic order in which we function. We can entertain such a principle of belief without outraging our reason and we cannot entertain ideas of heavenly hate, heavenly punishment, heavenly vengeance or even heavenly forgiveness without doing that exact thing. "It knows not wrath nor pardon."

Let those who will revel in their primitive notions of eternal burning, salvation by sacrifice of some one else, salvation by belief, God's anger and other unhappy relics of a bygone day when men created God in their own image and endowed him with their own vices and irrationalities. That is not the way of the occultist. "If you would be happy, "says the old-time religionist, "get right with God." You are always right with God. You cannot be otherwise for you are He in essence and He is you. Get your lower self right with your higher self and you will be happy and that is not dependent upon form of belief or lack of it, churchgoing or staying away, nor upon ceremonial, prayer or anything external. It is an attitude of mind and of spirit and these other things, while they may or may not contribute to it, depending upon the temperament, are in no way essential.

For if we do not grow spiritually from within we do not grow spiritually at all.

OCCULT PERSPECTIVE

Correct perspective of events, or at least something approximating it, is essential to a well-balanced life. Many, if not most, of our mental difficulties are due to viewing incidents in wrong perspective. Their relationship to each other, to ourselves, to the past, present and future is given a wrong focus. Unimportant occurrences are enormously magnified or distorted. Important ones are dimmed out. Trivial things are regarded seriously, serious things as trivial.

People who can manfully withstand the major buffets of destiny go to pieces over small irritations. Opinions on the most vital facts of life are lightly held but some minor point of religious or political dogma is clung to and defended with a tenacity both incompre-

hensible and absurd. Reasoned convictions are scant; prejudices innumerable.

This does not apply in fullness to all by any manner of means. There are great souls who have in large measure corrected the astigmatic mental vision which afflicts the less evolved but even in the greatest, short of Masterhood, we may occasionally find an outcropping of bias, perhaps the vestige of a hundred lives of wrong belief on some particular subject not quite eradicated.

We are sometimes asked of what practical value is the occult knowledge regarding the enormous cycles of time over which spiritual evolution extends. What good does it do to learn that our human consciousness dates back millions of years and has before it hundreds of lives to attain cosmic know-how, and an eternity in which to put it to use? Apart from the intellectual grandeur of the concept, the answer is that it gives a sublimity of perspective beside which all lesser perspectives appear shrunken and mean.

To the non-occultist, even when fortified by all the rites and consolations of religion, death possesses such terrific finality that often the mind can hardly endure the brief harboring of the thought of it. The life is lived as though it would go on physically forever. Bereavements are a stunning shock bringing hopelessness and despair, forcing the avoided terror of the end temporarily into the consciousness, to be ejected at the first opportunity and thereafter ignored until another death in the circle throws it back again. The officiant at the funeral is listened to politely, even intently. He says what everyone expects him to say. But except at theosophical funeral services where the words are received by those present who accept Theosophy as statements of literal fact, practical and true, there is an air of unreality about the entire proceedings. The most helpless person there appears to be the minister, particularly if the death was accidental or premature. Everyone dumbly looks to him for an explanation that will really explain and, no matter how great his eloquence or religious learning, no matter how deep his sincerity, he has none to offer save the platitudes which from threadbare repetition no longer bring consolation or conviction. The words are, "In sure and certain hope of the resurrection of the dead." The unspoken thought in the minds of all too many of the mourners, "Gone forever."

This utterly wrong perspective in viewing an episode which soon or late must be experienced by everyone living is common to believers and unbelievers alike, excepting Theosophists and members of the many offshoots from Theosophy, also the Spiritualists and in a measure the Christian and Divine Scientists. The Spiritualists, for all that their knowledge of after-death conditions appears to the occultists to be very restricted and misunderstood, are yet able to meet the grim reaper with a fortitude that puts to shame the conventional believers who scoff at them. The "Scientists," who banish all signs of mourning and retain a mountainous faith that all is well with the departed to a degree not exceeded even by Theosophists, have no such precise knowledge as the latter of what actually happens, to strengthen the faith that is in them. But Theosophists, Spiritualists and "Scientists" have an enormous advantage over the traditional religions in their breadth of perspective when death strikes. It is easy to poke fun at the beliefs all three, and followers of the old-line faiths or of no faiths are not slow to do it, but the acid test is the last test and neither theology nor agnosticism nor yet disdainful atheism can supply what it takes and what these three faiths possess.

Even the Catholic, so ingrained in the teachings of his Church that all others pass him by as though non-existent, must look upon the face of his dead with the sadness of knowing that the soul is being tormented in Purgatory for an indefinite time to come. Knowing, too, that this fate awaits him when the dread summons comes.

But to the Theosophist death is an incident—one of many that has happened to him and to his in their long cycle of lives. He does not close his eyes never expecting again to open them on this goodly world. He is going away. . . for a time. He will be back. Those who have left him will be back—and he with them. There will be no memory, except that indefinable spiritual recollection that comes to a few that they have been here before; and to many that they have known before those who are very close and dear to them now.

The occultist and the occultist alone —we say it advisedly—has the right perspective on the great adventure called death. Others may hope, may believe, may have faith that all will be well, as indeed it will be, but the occultist has a deeper conviction—a conviction born of knowledge. And what applies to death applies to life. Occult perspective is the longest-range perspective known to man. It enables one to die bravely and, more important, to live bravely.

The only way in which we can, with any approach to adequacy, acknowledge and deserve the good karma which is ours, in that perspective has been given to us, is to try to give it to others. If we are derelict in doing so it may be many lives before it comes to us again, and think of what life would be without theosophical knowledge. Are we seeing this dharma—this duty—of ours in its right perspective?

GIVE THE OLDER MEN A CHANCE

A letter to the St. Louis Globe-Democrat—one of many similar letters appearing in newspapers all over the country—complains bitterly of the discrimination exercised by employers against men over 45. The writer, a skilled draftsman with a proven record, is past 50 and in reasonably good health but finds it useless for him to try to get work in his lifelong occupation "or any other decent job." During the war, he points out, "much was said about the wonderful work that the older men were doing and it was predicted by some that the age limit would be a thing of the past, especially for men of ability, able and willing to work." He sadly concludes that all these statements were meaningless claptrap.

While there are many tasks calling for hard physical endurance which can be filled adequately by the younger men only, there are thousands, millions of jobs which can be done as well or even better by men past middle age—even by old men. And the stability and experience which the latter bring to bear on their work, their gratefulness for the opportunity and their eagerness to give satisfaction weights the scale heavily in their favor. If from no other standpoint than that of enlightened selfishness, employers who insist on a ridiculous age limit for positions which can be capably filled regardless of age are passing up a good bet.

The present writer practices what he is preaching. In his own shipping warehouse he has employed since the war men aged 70, 63, 65 and—86, the latter being a spry old gentleman doing light but important work who takes pride in his precision and accuracy and has been given two advances in wages during the past few months, not out of benevolence but because he had earned them. So successfully has this experiment, forced by the war, worked out that the permanent policy has been adopted of hiring no shipping help under 50. Absenteeism, a constant harassment when young men were employed, has almost completely disappeared. And the department is operated with far greater efficiency and lack of friction than in the old days when we, too, held the superstition that "only young fellows make good warehouse help." (This has to do with the editor's wholesale commodity business and not with ANCIENT WISDOM).

The same principle applies to the sales force. All advertisements for travelling representatives now read, "Must be over 40." For steadiness, experience, good judgment all-around ability, we have found no equal in the younger ranks to the old-timers we now engage exclusively in selling positions.

Young men are, and rightly should be, ambitious. They constantly look

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TRUE WISDOM

By Ella Welge

With all our knowledge and the use of many wonderful things in life we often find ourseves restless and unhappy. We should seek wisdom and understanding for therein lies our mastery over all bondage and limitation. But true wisdom in its completeness cannot be revealed to us all at one time nor will it be handed to us on a silver platter. It has to be earned for it is a gradual unfoldment in consciousness, and only as we apply our knowledge to the lessons of each day and perform our duties to the best of our present understanding and ability do we grow the wiser and happier.

Knowledge that is based on intellectual learning alone is good as far as it goes but it will not substantiate itself in times of emergency and need unless it has been put to the test and found "not wanting." Knowledge that is practical and illuminating and proves itself to be a light on our path becomes the true wisdom that we are seeking. We cannot withhold our ideas and service to others and expect to develop a richer consciousness and appreciate true values. It is necessary to express and share our talents and good will whenever opportunity affords it and so enlarge our capacity to appreciate and to receive greater good.

True wisdom is our divine heritage but we must do our part in cooperating with its law. Step by step we rise in consciousness to new and higher levels of understanding as we express whatever degree of understanding we have at the present time and are open to new ideas. Wisdom unfolds with each transcendent step and the final goal to freedom and perfection will be attained after many lives of sincere, patient and persistent effort.

Since God is no respecter of persons we all travel this road that leads onward and upward. Unless we are conscious of His Presence within and around us the way seems long and tedious. But with the realization of an inner Source of Life and Wisdom to strengthen and direct us we find the journey a joyous one and we deem it a privilege to be on the path of spiritual attainment.

As our faith increases, this task of unfolding the most precious of gifts, brings into our soul the peace and happiness that transcends all earthly things. We have found the key to the kingdom when we seek wisdom and understanding with our whole heart, mind and strength, for upon it everything else in life depends.

"With all thy getting get wisdom and understanding." (Prov. 4:7.)

* * * *

The spiritual aid of the Esoteric Healing Group of St. Louis Lodge is available to all who write, giving full name and address, to Mrs. Ella Welge c/o The Theosophical Society, 5108 Waterman Ave., St. Louis 8, Mo.

DO YOU KNOW?——

That Theosophy does not recognize the existence of the supernatural?

* * * *

That this word is meaningless and has no place in the language?

* * * *

That nothing supernatural has ever happened or can ever happen either in time or eternity,

* * * *

That this is because *supernatural* means "above, outside of or contrary to nature?"

* * * *

That as nature embraces the whole of the phenomena on all planes of the Cosmos, visible and invisible, and is governed by eternal unchanging Laws, nothing can occur outside of the range of these Laws, never has and never will?

* * * *

That what *appears* supernatural to us is merely a phenomenon governed by a Law or Laws of which we are ignorant?

* * * *

That to postulate the existence of natural law only for physical matter, and to deny it for the many forms of super-physical substance in which manifestation takes place, is philosophical presumption and absurdity?

* * * *

That to insist that the Eternal would at times capriciously reverse or set aside His immutable Laws for benefit of an individual, group or nation is theological presumption and absurdity?

* * * *

That denial of the supernatural in no way negatives the frequent occurrence of the *supernormal?*

* * * *

That such occurrence is due to the working of a law or laws which may be operative, but not yet understood, on the physical plane or which may govern non-physical manifestations—or both?

* * * *

That there have been and are occultists, particularly in India and other Eastern countries, who have produced supernormal phenomena (wrongly termed supernatural) by reason of their knowledge of such laws?

* * * *

That all so-called miracles, when not fraudulent, owe their origin to this correct application of existing natural laws, physical or otherwise?

* * * *

More about the supernormal next month.

THE ZODIAC IN PROVERBS

11. Aquarius

I am wealthy in my *friends.*

—Shakespeare.

"OUR LANGUAGE"

A Simple Explanation of Theosophical Terms

(Continued from Last Month)

Augoeides: The Ego in the Causal Body. At our stage the God in man.

Aura: That part of the invisible bodies which extends beyond the periphery of the physical. Also includes emanations (health aura etc.) beyond the range of non-clairvoyant vision.

Avidya: Ignorance, especially in spiritual matters.

Bhagavad-Gita: "The Lord's Song," "The Song Celestial." A great Hindu classic embodying teachings on yoga of Shri Krishna to his disciple Arjuna. Highly regarded and constantly studied by Theosophists.

Brahma (pronounced Brah-MA): The Third Logos, corresponding to the Holy Spirit of Christianity.

Brahman (pronounced Brah-MAHN): The Absolute.

Chain: An aeonic field of evolution, spiritual, psychic and physical, consisting of seven globes of which not more than three can be on the physical plane. The life-wave of the Logos passes from globe to globe ensouling all kingdoms, sub-human, human and superhuman, repeating this process seven times until that evolutionary stage is complete. The immense periods of time consumed and the limitless conditions afforded for the billions of Monads involved, permit every variety of experience needed for the perfection of the soul and its acquirement of divine powers.

Chakra: The revolving wheels of force observable to clairvoyant sight as centers in the etheric double, astral and mental bodies.

Chela (pronounced CHAY-la): A disciple or pupil of a Master or advanced occultist.

Dharma: The right and proper course of action for any individual or group at a given period.

Dhyan Chohans: Embodiments of Divine Intelligence and Power who supervise manifestation and evolution.

Elementals: Invisible creatures who perform the more menial tasks of the natural order under direction of the Devas. Also the aggregate life in the bodies, visible and invisible, of men, animals, etc., constituting temporary entities.

(To Be Continued)

One of the certain marks of an old soul is absence of prejudice—against religions, races, people, things, anything. How many old souls do you know?

Every once in awhile we are privileged to meet an ANCIENT WISDOM subscriber we have known only by correspondence and we must say we invariably find them to be most delightful people.

PERSONAL OPINIONS

By L. W. Rogers

A Great Undertaking

If it sometimes seems that the work of theosophizing a nation of a hundred and sixty million people moves rather slowly it is because it is really a tremendous job and there are few to do it. The Theosophical Society in America, with lodges attached to the Wheaton Headquarters, covers the ground fairly well but each lodge is but a tiny glow in the vast wilderness of material thought and activity.

Those of us who now know how completely the theosophical philosophy can change a person's life from dull monotony to a realization of the thrilling truth that we are all gods in the making with an assured future of indescribable wisdom and power may sometimes feel that it should be easier to awaken the average human being to an interest in that supreme fact. But we must remember that evolution is a very, very slow process and that the glorious facts of eternal life must be placed again and again before the man of the world from many different viewpoints before he awakens and slowly begins to respond to the vibrations of the inner life.

It will require many incarnations for the average man in the street to develop a real interest in such matters but there is always a fringe of people a little more advanced who need only a slight contact with theosophical information to enable them to step at once into the light and realize the truth. A lecture, a book, a chance remark by some informed friend, is sufficient to start them as inquirers. It is that type of person that the Theosophical Book Gift Institute has in mind as it places books in all sorts of libraries in all the states of the nation. Think of what has already been accomplished by the many thousands of books thus sent to our public libraries. At the Convention last year several new members were encountered who deliberately spoke of their experience of being brought into the Society by finding a theosophical book on a library shelf. That type, of course, are those who are fully "ripe" —those who are what is sometimes called "natural theosophists"—who for years have been vaguely aware that there *is* such a philosophy if they could only find it.

There are thousands of others sufficiently dissatisfied with the usual vague teaching about a future life to welcome Theosophy eagerly if they are given a chance to discover it. It is a grand work to give them that chance. A few dollars sent to the TBGI is enough to give the invaluable knowledge to several people. Nobody has had time to figure it out but the percentage of your gift that reaches the library is very high. All the officers of TBGI are

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REINCARNATION IS NOT TRANSMIGRATION

By Charles E. Luntz

Transmigration: Rebirth of the soul into another physical form, which may or may not be human.
Reincarnation: Rebirth of the soul into another human body.

Informed Theosophists never use the first mentioned term as a synonym for reincarnation, knowing that rebirth into sub-human kingdoms is an impossibility except in certain remote instances of exceptionally terrible karma so rare as to be virtually nonexistent. In Theosophy it has come to mean only that.

It might be in order to plan for a session
With people who constantly use an expression
So false it annoys us each time that we hear it.—
If what it implies were the truth, we should fear it.

The word we refer to—oh horrible fate!
Is the baneful and menacing term, "transmigrate."
Denoting rebirth of a man as a bird
Or an insect or something that's just as absurd.

For may we point out, with no tincture of vanity,
It took quite awhile to develop humanity?—
Some billions of years from the mouse to the human
Before we were fit to be born man or woman.

It's now been some time since we finished the chore
And found we need take forms sub-human no more.
Between man and beast there's a roomy hiatus;
Why should we revert to our primitive status?

These animal births by our group-souls were sired,
But now that we're men they're no longer required.
One Ego apiece is the law which applies
To a human, no matter how often he dies.

We admit that the humble who dwell in the East
Think one may be reborn as a reptile or beast;
But though lower caste Hindu belief most uncouth is,
The higher caste Brahmin knows well what the truth is.

We can no more take birth as a horse or a dog
Than to sleep as a man and wake up as a frog.
We never go back to what we have outgrown.
Evolution permits us to safeguard our own.

We were never so fully confirmed in our belief in a God as after listening intently to the efforts of Rationalist speakers in the recent St. Louis debate to prove that there is not one. "Proofs, give us proofs," was their reiterated cry. "Who has seen Him, heard Him, talked with Him?" To which we answered, "God has furnished His own proofs. They are all about you. Open your eyes and look. If you don't see them, look harder." But it was a vain admonition. "We see nothing but dumb natural causes—no intelligence, no guidance. Your God is wishful thinking. Only matter and energy is eternal. Intelligence there is none save what matter and energy over the ages have evolved." If this is the stuff they have been for decades teaching in many of our universities it is little wonder that a crop of frustrated, unhappy, complex-ridden individuals haunt the consulting rooms of the psychiatrists and psychoanalysts. Hell and damnation are only one grade more pernicious. No intelligence in nature. No intelligence in Eternal Law. No God! —Good God! ! !

After two full evenings spent in reading and correcting 24 galleys of ANCIENT WISDOM proofs, the editor feels that if he did not have the experience of being a galley slave in a former incarnation that omission has been partially made good in this one.

"Do you mean to say," a freethinking friend asked us recently, "that at a given time long ago some Divine Intelligence or God actually decided or decreed that one atom of hydrogen and two of oxygen would produce water and that before this decree they would do no such thing—and so with the other natural laws? Was there a time when these laws were not operative because your so-called God had not ordained them? I don't believe it." Neither do we. Eternal laws subsist in the Eternal. They always were. Only their application awaited the dawn of a new manifested universe. In an Eternal Now there is no past, present or future and no divine ordination of laws coming into effect in time. But the trend of evolution using these laws for its purposes and effects may well be the subject of a guidance which is Divine. And we are sure it is—there are so many evidences of it.

REBIRTH NOMENCLATURE*
(Lower Kingdoms)
Animals
The right designation is **in-zo-on-ation**
Vegetable Kingdom
With neat adaption the term's **inherbation**
Minerals
Correct appelation—**inmetalization**

*These terms were coined by Mr. A. P. Sinnett in a letter to his Master, who complimented him on their appropriateness.

THE EGO SPEAKS IN DREAMS

By Charles E. Luntz

(Continued from September)

Sometimes the premonitory dream is direct, in the form of an actual portrayal of events to happen, and the classic work dealing with this type of vision is L. W. Rogers' *Dreams and Premonitions,* to which the reader is referred. Symbolic dreams are instructively handled in the little book, *Some Occult Experiences* by Johan van Maanen, with commentaries and explanations by C. W. Leadbeater.

H.P.B. states (Secret Doctrine Vol. V, page 8, Adyar Edition) that if we could recall the dreams of deep sleep we should remember all our past incarnations. She does not elaborate on this cryptic remark and no other Theosophist has, to the best of our knowledge, followed it up. It may be profitable, therefore, to devote a little time to explore this fascinating field her hint suggests. Madame Blavatsky never made occult statements at random nor for the sake of sensationalism. Neither were the clues she gave in such tantalizing brevities as this one so obscure as to be impossible to run down. Difficult they may have been, and often were, but esoteric instructors do not waste their own and their pupils' time by dealing in material too deep to be fathomed.

Sometimes she gives us a second hint somewhere else in her writings and by matching up the two we find ourselves on the right trail. She does in this case, in Vol. 1, page 303, where she quite casually but approvingly quotes the Cabalist Eliphas Levi as stating that our dreams are caused by the "Astral Light." H.P.B. brands this latter an erroneous description stating that the real term is the *Akasha.* And that puts us still further on the scent. For the Akashic Records, the memory of nature, are well known to occultism as a sort of subtle moving picture film in three dimensions (probably also in many more) complete with sound track, on which is recorded everything that has ever happened. A stupendous concept indeed and fantastic, perhaps, to those hearing of it for the first time, yet demonstrably true by the very fact of its lowest manifestation—psychometry—on the physical plane.

A clairvoyant, not too highly gifted with superphysical vision, can take an article belonging to a person he knows nothing about and has never seen and can give a description of him accurate in every detail, even to recounting events which have happened to him. Or, if furnished with an object picked up at random in the vicinity of a battlefield or other historic spot, can supply a vivid account of incidents occurring on such a site although having no idea from what part of the world the article psychometrized was procured. Such "strange" feats are the commonplaces of clairvoyance but an extension of this faculty on higher planes may produce a "super-psychometry" which, without any physical object as a catalyst, may delve into the past, its degree and exactness depending upon the subtlety of the plane on which it acts.

The reason for such a mysterious and seemingly impossible phenomenon lies in the existence of these same akashic records to which H.P.B. refers. In their completeness they are located on the highest plane of all—the atmic. But each plane lower reflects them; the higher the plane the clearer the reflection.

On the buddhic and upper mental planes the reflection is very distinct and trustworthy. The lower mental mirrors it fairly well but with some cloudiness or distortion. By the time the astral is reached it can be seen, in Paul's words, only as "through a glass darkly." The physical plane mars it still further but still permits apparent miracles of divination by the psychometric technique described. They are not miracles but trace to an occult source lying all about us but unsuspected by most of the scientific minds of the west. It is well known and frequently used, however, by the esoteric scientists of the east. It is also known to Theosophists and a very few have been or are able to employ it.

It is obvious that if this mirror of nature, as it is sometimes called, exists in near-perfect form on the plane of the Ego (higher mental), that if the consciousness can ever penetrate to that plane during physical life it could perhaps explore these eternal records, which must contain all memories of our long-ago states of being. Advanced occultists inform us that while our dreams may occasionally represent such episodes of our nightly astral experiences as impress themselves on the brain, most of these experiences do not come through to the average person. Dreamless sleep, so called, is not dreamless. Everybody dreams—that is goes through some experience or other while sleeping, even if it is a mere humdrum wandering about the astral plane doing nothing. But this would be in comparatively light sleep. In deep sleep we transcend the astral world and actually penetrate to the mental. The deeper the sleep the higher we automatically go, until in heavy slumber we may actually reach the plane of the Ego.

Here a mere effort of will would enable us to focus attention on any prior life in which we might happen to be interested and on any period of that life. Indeed, as our consciousness would be unified for a short space with that of the Ego, the recollection of all lives would be present. And so, as H. P. B. states, if we could recall the dreams of a deep sleep we would bring back these memories. Few can. But once in a great while some tiny flash of recollection may creep through. It may not be in the form of an occurrence at all—merely of an impression. Awakening with a great sense of peace and refreshment without any concrete memory of what gave rise to this happy state may be an indication of a direct return from the Egoic level.

A frequently repeated dream in childhood may be a true memory of some incident or scene in the last earth life if the dreamer reincarnated within a year or two of the prior death, which happens only in certain exceptional cases. In such an event the same astral body is invariably re-attracted to the incoming Ego as it has not had time to disintegrate. But memory of a long past incarnation must come from the high mental.

Some Theosophists do not care who or what they were last time but it is probable that they are in the minority. While it does not matter, and there is nothing they can do about it anyway, a sort of natural curiosity leads many to say, "I wish I could remember my past lives." Even Blavatsky recognizes this by inference, in her remark which forms the subject of this instalment.

There is little chance. Possibly by concentrating very powerfully night after night before sleeping on bringing something through, a faint wisp of recollection may register on the brain, but it might be necessary to keep up the concentration for weeks or months and with no absolute assurance of success. If something did register, however, it would be likely to carry its own conviction and be unmistakable. The dreamer would not know why he was so sure he had discovered a fragment of a former incarnation—he would just know. His conviction would be no proof to anyone but himself, and his friends should not be bored with it. There is too much telling around of dreams by those interested in occult study, and nobody except the narrator usually cares a thing in the world about them. Only when they are very much out of the ordinary, premonitory or clairvoyant, or the subject of dreams is being studied by a T.S. group, should they be publicized. This does not, of course, refer to dreams which a psychoanalyst wishes to hear for professional reasons, nor to any private study of them in which for their own purposes students exchange information. But the "Do you know what I dreamt last night" individual, Theosophist or non-Theosophist, who buttonholes every acquaintance with his dreary sleep images, is Public Nuisance Number One.

In the next instalment, which will be the last of the series, the material considered will be summed up and some final conclusions attempted.

(To Be Continued)

SHALLOW TREATMENT

(Continued from Page 89)

soul leaves the body it is on its own and nothing that happens to its former habitation can possibly affect its future destiny. The embalming was for the same reason that we embalm—to show respect to the remains. A mistaken idea, the occultist would say, but aside from providing a good livelihood for the undertakers it does not seem to have any other purpose. Perhaps 3000 years from now some encyclopaedia writer will assert that we primitives embalmed to prevent or delay the soul from going to hell. There would be just as much sense to the idea as in the one attributed to the ancient Egyptians.

One interesting fact gleaned from the hodge-podge is that an early Christian Sect holding the belief were called the "Metempscyhi." A silly Roman legend is given considerable prominence though it seems entirely purposeless. Ennius, a poet, tells how Homer appeared to him, assuring him that the soul of both Homer and Ennius once belonged to a peacock. The Romans must have had a greater appetite for corn than even some of our radio listeners, as this idiotic dream was quoted by the Roman writers Persius, Lucretius and Horace. Why it should also be referred to by Encyclopaedia Britannica, one can only surmise.

The philosophy of Reincarnation as set forth in Theosophy is one of the most significant teachings of all time. Yet it is played with, slighted, ignored and treated with far less respect than the philosphy of contract bridge.

We Theosophists have a stupendous job still to do. May we be equal to it!

(The End)

IS A GOD NECESSARY?

(Continued from Page 89)

In presenting my arguments I should explain that I am not speaking authoritatively on the subject for The Theosophical Society. No one may do that on matters of belief—not even the International President. I can only say, "This is my concept of Theosophy and I believe it to represent fairly the concept held by most Theosophists." That is as far as I can go. If I appeal to the writings of great theosophical leaders such as Blavatsky, Besant or Leadbeater, that appeal must be based only on the fact that they are recognized by nearly all members of the Society as possessed of very great knowledge on theosophical subjects. It cannot be to them as authorities. They themselves consistently repudiated the idea that their statements were infallible and cautioned Theosophists against accepting them as such. But we do believe that they are made in good faith and worthy of respectful consideration. I mention this only in passing, as I expect to do little, if any, citing of the opinions of others in tonight's discussion. Such opinions would not be likely to carry weight with my opponents and they have, I think, the right to expect that our case stand or fall by its inherent reasonableness as presented here and not by the views of others, no matter how eminently Theosophists may feel them to rank.

For we ourselves have the same baffled feeling I suppose our Rationalist friends experience, when those who do not agree with us take refuge in quoting from the Bible. While we have high regard for the scriptures when authentic, properly translated and thoroughly understood—please note those qualifications—we do not look upon any of their statements, not even the Ten Commandments or the Sermon on the Mount, as binding upon the conscience of anyone unless he voluntarily chooses to accept them as such. Most of us probably do, but the choice is our own and not imposed from without.

So with the atmosphere cleared, I hope, by this preliminary outline of our position I will come to grips with the subject of tonight's debate and put before you the reasons as I see them, why most Theosophists believe in God.

It may interest our freethought brothers to know that in the early days of The Theosophical Society the word God was very much out of favor and some highly placed Theosophists declared that God had no existence and denied a belief in him. Yet at the same time they paid reverential tribute to a Supreme Directing Intelligence, which they designated variously as the SELF (usually written in capital letters), the Logos, or by the Eastern term *Ishvara*. The Hindu *Brahman* was also employed. Why then the allergy to the word God?

Because in the last century, when The Theosophical Society was founded, God had become a creature of orthodoxy, endowed with all sorts of magnified human qualities of the most unpleasant nature, hatred, revenge, jealousy, a lust for blood sacrifices and other outrageous attributes, which to the Theosophist appeared blasphemous when imputed to the stupendous Life in which we live and move and have our being. And so Theosophists shied off from the Western term God with its medieval connotations and resorted to Eastern nomenclature, even to the point of referring to the Supreme as *That* rather than *He*, for surely the idea of sex should not be associated with the Divine.

In later years, when the more liberal and even some of the traditional sects had largely substituted a God for love for a God of vengeance, the prejudice against the word gradually died down, but Theosophists are still busy explaining to readers of the works written in the 'seventies and 'eighties that we are not atheists and that our apparent unbelief is a matter only of words. Today the word God is used interchangeably in our literature with the Eastern terms.

I believe in God and I am profoundly convinced that His existence is necessary and His non-existence unthinkable and philosophic folly. I do not see how the fact of His non-existence can be sustained or of His non-necessity can be upheld, but perhaps my opponents will enlighten me. I have read a good many atheistic arguments and have thought about them a great deal. It may be that some new ones will be produced tonight but those with which I am familiar seem to boil themselves down to these: (1) That as there is no real proof that anyone has ever seen God (except the averments of characters in the Bible which are ruled out, and I think rightly) there therefore cannot be one. This seems to me to be remarkably shallow reasoning. To throw out the case because there is not some sort of divine *corpus delicti* appears to be so inane as to be hardly worthy of an answer. Our senses are known to register so little of what exists about us, even some animals, birds and insects being able to apprehend what is non-existent to us, that this argument, if it is an argument, can surely be tossed aside as completely invalid.

(2) That if God existed He would not permit the evils and injustices with which we are all so unhappily familiar. There is a fundamental difficulty, I think, in the way of admitting the cogency of this point, though it is considered invincible by those who deny a beneficent Deity. That difficulty lies in the fact that the human mind is often incapable of determining what is evil and what is not. It may frequently mistake good for evil and evil for good. Religious people speak of "the good" and "the evil" as though these things came neatly packaged and branded, whereas no such easy recognition of these two alleged opposites is within the capacity of fallible man.

I say *alleged* opposites because Theosophy rejects the notion that anything is evil or that there is inherent evil in anything. Unlike the Christian Scientists, Theosophy does not deny to God the knowledge of so-called evil on the ground that He is too pure to behold it. This again would require an arbitrary division of things into the good and the not-good, the former within the purview of Diety and the latter outside of it. We cannot listen to any such facile solution of the problem, which according to our way of thinking is no problem at all.

This way of thinking was summed up by the natural Theosophist Alexander Pope whose *Essay On Man* contains a great deal of unconscious Theosophy, in these words:

> **"All nature is but art, unknown to thee;**
> **All chance, direction which thou canst not see;**
> **All discord harmony, not understood;**
> **All partial evil universal good;**
> **And spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,**
> **One truth is clear, Whatever is, is right."**

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(To Be Continued)

THE NUMBER EIGHT

(Continued from Page 89)

very little known or regarded—the astrological symbol of the Planet Mercury *completed,* showing the crescent at the summit developed into a full circle. To them it was the emblem of the Pleroma, the Heavenly Jerusalem, and the final initiation of Man made Perfect.

We respect the atheist's right to his opinion even though we question his ability to reason correctly from available phenomena. But, to paraphrase Emerson, "Not for all his faith can't see, would we that unbeliever be."

PERSONAL OPINIONS

(Continued from Page 91)

volunteers. There are no salaries to be paid. They donate time as well as money. Such an organization, doing so useful a work, is sure to live long and be gratefully remembered by the thousands who are guided by it into the higher knowledge and a more satisfactory life.

Gospel means "good tidings," and the gospel of Theosophy is the best tidings of all for it brings knowledge, hope, understanding and complete conviction that all is and ever shall be well.

Theosophical teaching should never be made obscure. Unlike some of the pseudo-occult bodies we do not revel in mysteries. Our job is to clear them away.

H. P. B. often used sharp language in her writings. Annie Besant was always and C. W. Leadbeater nearly always kindly in their admonishments. These things are matters of personality. If one can learn new and valuable facts from a sharp-tongued teacher, learn and never mind the sharp tongue. What does it matter?

GIVE THE OLDER MEN A CHANCE

(Continued from Page 93)

around for new and improved positions, and that is well. But the employer who, perhaps, has only a limited number of the better paying jobs open in his own organization, is kept constantly on the anxious seat by the possibility or likelihood of losses in personnel. Continuous replacements of help are expensive, unsatisfactory and the work suffers. Having had this experience times without number under the "young men" policy, it has ceased to be a problem now that this policy has been reversed.

There is also the deeper satisfaction of feeling that in a commercial world so often cold and almost hostile to the old, some little recognition of the fact that brotherhood knows no age-limit can be shown. The writer will not soon forget the gratitude of that 86-year-old worker at being given the chance to work again. And in material results it has amply paid off. No lad of 20 has ever turned out a better day's work for us than our 65-year-old shipping foreman. No youngster of 25 has ever approached the monthly sales volume of our present "star" salesman who is over 50.

Which is not to disparage the youngsters. But most of the good positions of the world are open to them and to the early middle-aged. The older men, who have borne the burden and heat of the day, should not be callously pitched into the discard when there are so many niches which they can competently fill. If you are an employer who bars those over 40 or 45 or 50, may we suggest that you try the experiment, if the nature of the work permits, of letting down the bars just once or twice and see how it works out? If your experience is that of the writer you will never put them up again.

MINSTRELSY

A Selection from the Poems of Patience Worth

Leaves

Wet leaves besogged of dew,
  Red leaves of the wild rose,
Beglossed leaves of violets,
  Fringed leaves of ferns,
Slender leaves of the willow,
  Trembling leaves of the aspen,
Sturdy leaves of the oak.
  Pale leaves of spring,
Green leaves of summer,
  Red leaves of fall,
Seared leaves of winter.
  Leaves, harborage of the hosts of heaven.
Beloved, I would plight thee my troth in leaves
  And place it on thy brow
For they are the quick of life,
  The speech of God,
Making the gardens wordy things
  And the trees eloquent.