



KEY NOTEBOOK

VII

(Continued from April Supplement)

(Section VIII)

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On Reincarnation or Rebirth

What is Memory According to Theosophical Teaching?

The major, most repeated objection to reincarnation, is the loss of memory in each of us of our previous incarnation. Yet, when we take into consideration

- (a) the utter inability of the best modern psychologists to explain to the world the nature of **mind**; and
- (b) their complete ignorance of its potentialities, and higher states,

we must admit that this objection is based on an **a priori** conclusion drawn from **prima facie** and circumstantial evidence more than anything else. Occult science teaches that "**Memory**" is a generic word, and therefore we must analyze it to make the discussion intelligible. Besides memory in general we have **Remembrance, Recollection and Reminiscence**. Contrary to common belief, the words are not synonyms — not in philosophy, at all events.

Memory is simply an innate power in thinking beings, and even in animals, of reproducing past impressions by an association of ideas principally suggested by objective things or by some action on our external sensory organs. Memory is a faculty depending entirely on the more or less healthy and normal functioning of our **physical** brain; and **remembrance and recollection** are the attributes and handmaidens of that

memory. **But reminiscence** is an entirely different thing. "Reminiscence" is defined by the modern psychologist as something intermediate between **remembrance and recollection**, or "a conscious process of recalling past occurrences, but **without that full and varied reference** to particular things which characterizes **recollection**." Locke, speaking of recollection and remembrance, says: "When an **idea again** recurs without the operation of the like object on the external sensory, it is **remembrance**; if it be sought after by the mind, and with pain and endeavor found and brought again into view, it is recollection." But even Locke leaves **reminiscence** without any clear definition, because it is no faculty or attribute of our **physical** memory, but **an intuitional perception apart from and outside our physical** brain; a perception which, covering as it does (being called into action by the ever-present knowledge of our spiritual Ego) all those visions in man which are regarded as abnormal — from the pictures suggested by genius to the **ravings** of fever and even madness — are classed by science as having no existence outside our fancy. Occultism and Theosophy, however, regard reminiscence in an entirely different light. For us, while memory is physical and evanescent and depends on the physiological conditions of the brain — a fundamental proposition with all teachers of mnemonics, who have the researches of modern scientific psychologists to back them — we call **reminiscence the memory of the soul**. And it is **this** memory which gives the assurance to almost every human being, whether he understands it or not, of his having lived before and having to live again. Indeed, as Wordsworth has it:

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Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting,

The Soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath elsewhere had its setting, And cometh from afar.

Physiologists and scientists in general regard such reminiscences as hallucinations and fancy, to which **learned** conclusion they are welcome. We do not deny that **such visions of the past** and glimpses far back into the corridors of time, are not abnormal, as contrasted with our normal daily life experience and physical memory. But we do maintain with Professor W. Knight, that "the absence of memory of any action done in a previous state cannot be a conclusive argument against our having lived through it." And every fair-minded opponent must agree with what is said in Butler's **Lectures on Platonic Philosophy** —

that the feeling of extravagance with which it (pre-existence) affects us has its secret source in materialistic or semi-materialistic prejudices.

Besides which we maintain that memory, as Olympiodorus called it, is simply **phantasy**, and the most unreliable thing in us.¹ Ammonius Saccas asserted that the only faculty in man directly opposed to prognostication, or looking into futurity, is **memory**. Furthermore, remember that memory is one thing and mind or **thought** is another; one is a recording machine, a register which very easily gets out of order, the other (thoughts) are eternal and imperishable. Would you refuse to believe in the existence of certain things or men only because your physical eyes have not seen them? Would not the collective testimony of past generations who have seen him be a sufficient guarantee that Julius Caesar once lived? Why should not the same testimony of the psychic senses of

¹ "The phantasy," says Olympiodorus (in **Platonis Phaed.**), is an impediment to our intellectual conceptions; and hence, when we are agitated by the inspiring influence of the Divinity, if the phantasy intervenes, the enthusiastic energy ceases: for enthusiasm and the ecstasy are contrary to each other. Should it be asked whether the soul is able to energise without the phantasy, we reply, that its perception of universals proves that it is able. It has perceptions, therefore, independent of the phantasy, at the same time, however, the phantasy attends in its energies, just as a storm pursues him who sails on the sea."

the masses be taken into consideration?

If these are too fine distinctions to be accepted by the majority of materialists, then we say to them, behold: even in the short span of ordinary existence, memory is too weak to register all the events of a lifetime. How frequently do even most important events lie dormant in our memory until awakened by some association of ideas, or aroused to function and activity by some other link. This is especially the case with people of advanced age, who are always found suffering from feebleness of recollection. When, therefore, we remember that which we know about the physical and the spiritual principles in man, it is not the fact that our memory has failed to record our precedent life and lives that ought to surprise us, but the contrary, were it to happen.

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WHY DO WE NOT REMEMBER OUR PAST LIVES?

A Theosophist would account for our complete loss of any recollection of having lived before in this way: Since those "principles" which we call physical², are disintegrated after death with their constituent elements, **memory** along with its brain, it stands to reason that this vanished memory of a vanished personality, can neither remember nor record anything in the subsequent reincarnation of the EGO. Reincarnation means that this Ego will be furnished with a new body, a new brain, and a new memory. Therefore it would be as absurd to expect this **memory** to remember that which it has never recorded as it would be idle to examine under a microscope a shirt never worn by a murderer, and seek on it for the stains of blood which are *to be found only on the clothes he wore*. It is

² Namely, the body, life, passional and animal instincts, and the astral eidolon of every man (whether perceived in thought or our mind's eye, or objectively and separate from the physical body), which principles we call **Sthula sarira, Prana, Kama rupa, and Linga sarira** (vide supra).

not the clean shirt that we have to question, but the clothes worn during the perpetration of the crime; and if these are burnt and destroyed, how can you get at them?

One might object to this saying: "Aye! how can you get at the certainty that the crime was ever committed at all, or that the "man in the clean shirt" ever lived before?"

Not by physical processes, most assuredly; nor by relying on the testimony of that which exists no longer. But there is such a thing as circumstantial evidence, since our wise laws accept it, more, perhaps, even than they should. To get convinced of the fact of re-incarnation and past lives, one must put oneself in **rapport** with one's real permanent Ego, not one's evanescent memory.

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One might object that people cannot believe in that which they **do not know**, nor have ever seen, far less put themselves in **rapport** with. Yet, this objection, on close analysis, will be seen to be invalid.

If people, and the most learned, will believe in the Gravity, Ether, Force, and what not of Science, abstractions "and working hypotheses," which they have neither seen, touched, smelt, heard, nor tasted — why should not other people believe, on the same principle, in one's permanent Ego, a far more logical and important "working hypothesis" than any other?

It is this mysterious and eternal principle which re-incarnates, the **individual** and immortal — not personal — "I;" the vehicle, in short, of the **Atma-Buddhic MONAD**, which is rewarded in Devachan and punished on earth, and that, finally, to which the reflection only of the Skandhas, or attributes, of every incarnation attaches itself.¹

¹ There are five Skandhas or attributes in the Buddhist teachings: "Rupa (form or body), material qualities; Vedana, sensation; **Sanna**, abstract ideas; Samkhara, tendencies of mind; Vinnana, mental powers. Of these we

These Skandhas, or "attributes," among which is memory, perish like a flower, leaving behind them only a feeble perfume. H. S. Olcott's, *Buddhist Catechism*, deals with the question as follows:-

The aged man remembers the incidents of his youth, despite his being physically and mentally changed. Why, then, is not the recollection of past lives brought over by us from our last birth into the present birth? Because memory is included within the Skandhas, and the Skandhas having changed with the new existence, a memory, the record of that particular existence, develops. Yet the record or reflection of all the past lives must survive, for when Prince Siddhartha became Buddha, the full sequence of His previous births were seen by Him... and **any one who attains to the state of Jhana** can thus **retrospectively trace the line** of his lives.

This proves to you that while the undying qualities of the personality — such as love, goodness, charity, etc. — attach themselves to the immortal Ego, photographing on it, so to speak, a permanent image of the divine aspect of the man who was, his material Skandhas (those which generate the most marked Karmic effects) are as evanescent as a flash of lightning, and cannot impress the new brain of the new personality; yet their failing to *do so impairs in no way* the identity of the re-incarnating Ego.

Something of each personality, unless the latter was an **absolute** materialist with not even a chink in his nature for a spiritual ray to pass through, must survive, as it leaves its eternal impress on the incarnating permanent Self or spiritual Ego.² (See On **post mortem and post natal** Consciousness.) The personality with its Skandhas is ever changing with every new birth. It is, as said before, only the

are formed; by them we are conscious of existence, and through them communicate with the world about us."

² Or the **Spiritual**, in contradistinction to the personal **Self**. The student must not confuse this Spiritual Ego with the "**HIGHER SELF**" which is **Atma**, the God within us, and inseparable from the Universal Spirit.

part played by the actor (the true Ego) for one night. This is why we preserve no memory on the physical plane of our past lives, though the **real** "Ego" has lived them over and knows them *all*.

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To understand why the real or Spiritual man does not impress his new personal "I" with this knowledge we must delve into the question more deeply.

For example, how is it that the servant-girls in a poor farm-house could speak Hebrew and play the violin in their trance or somnambulant state, and knew neither when in their normal condition? Every genuine psychologist of old, would have explained this problem by reminding us that the Spiritual Ego can act only when the personal Ego is paralysed. The Spiritual "I" in man is omniscient and has every knowledge innate in it, while the personal self is the creature of its environment and the slave of the *physical memory*. Could the former manifest itself uninterruptedly, and without impediment, there would be no longer men on earth, but we should all be gods.

Thus there are exceptions, and some do remember, but who believes in their report? Such sensitives are generally regarded as hallucinated hysterics, as crackbrained enthusiasts, or humbugs, by modern materialism. Let them read, however, works on this subject, preeminently *Reincarnation, a Study of Forgotten Truth*. by S. D. Walker, F.T.S., and see the mass of proofs which the able author brings to bear on this vexed question. One speaks to people of soul, and some ask "What is Soul?" "Have you ever proved its existence?" Of course it is useless to argue with those who are materialists. But even to them I would put the question: "Can you remember what you were or did when a baby? Have you preserved the smallest recollection of your life, thoughts, or deeds, or that you lived at all during the first eighteen months or two years of your existence? Then why not deny that you have ever lived as a babe, on the same principle?"

When to all this we add that the reincarnating Ego, or **individuality**, retains during the Devachanic period merely the essence of the experience of its past earth-life or personality, the whole physical experience **involving into a state of in potentia**, or being, so to speak, translated into **spiritual formulae**; when we remember further that the term between two rebirths is said to extend from ten to fifteen centuries, during which time the physical consciousness is **totally and absolutely inactive**, having no organs to act through, and therefore **no existence**, the reason for the absence of all remembrance in the purely physical memory is apparent. The omniscience of the **SPIRITUAL EGO** is latent and potential during Devachanic life because, first of all, the Spiritual Ego (the compound of Buddhi-Manas) is not the Higher SELF, which being one with the Universal Soul or Mind is alone omniscient; and, secondly, because Devachan is the **idealized continuation** of the terrestrial life just left behind, a period of **retributive adjustment, and a reward for unmerited wrongs and sufferings undergone in that special life**. It is omniscient only **potentially** in Devachan, and **de facto** exclusively in Nirvana, when the Ego is merged in the Universal Mind-Soul. Yet it rebecomes **quasi** omniscient during those hours on earth when certain abnormal conditions and physiological changes in the body make the Ego free from the trammels of matter. Thus the examples cited above of somnambulists, a poor servant speaking Hebrew, and another playing the violin, give you an illustration of the case in point. This does not mean that the explanations of these two facts offered us by medical science have no truth in them, for one girl had, years before, heard her master, a clergyman, read Hebrew works aloud, and the other had heard an artist playing a violin at their farm. But neither could have done so as perfectly as they did had they not been ensouled by **THAT which**, owing to the sameness of its nature with the Universal Mind, is omniscient. Here the higher principle acted on the Skandhas and moved them; in the other, the personality being paralysed,

the individuality manifested itself. Pray do not confuse the two.

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On Individuality and Personality.

In his **Buddhist Catechism**, Col. Olcott explains the difference between Individuality and personality in this way:

"The successive appearances upon the earth, or 'descents into generation,' of the **tanhaically** coherent parts (Skandhas) of a certain being, are a succession of personalities. In each birth the **PERSONALITY** differs from that of a previous or next succeeding birth. **Karma, the DEUS EX MACHINA**, masks (or shall we say reflects?) itself now in the personality of a sage, again as an artisan, and so on throughout the string of births. But though personalities ever shift, the one line of life along which they are strung, like beads, runs unbroken; it is ever that **particular line**, never any other. It is therefore individual, an individual vital undulation, which began in Nirvana, or the subjective side of nature, as the light or heat undulation through aether began at its dynamic source; is careering through the objective side of nature under the impulse of Karma and the creative direction of **Tanha** (the unsatisfied desire for existence); and leads through many cyclic changes back to Nirvana. Mr. Rhys-Davids calls that which passes from personality to personality along the individual chain 'character,' or 'doing.' Since 'character' is not a mere metaphysical abstraction, but the sum of one's mental qualities and moral propensities, would it not help to dispel what Mr. Rhys-Davids calls 'the desperate expedient of a mystery' (**Buddhism**, p. 101) if we regarded the life-undulation as individuality, and each of its series of natal manifestations as a separate personality? The perfect individual, Buddhistically speaking, is a Buddha, I should say; for Buddha is but the rare flower of humanity, without the least super-natural admixture. And as countless generations ('four **asankheyas** and a hundred thousand cycles,' Fausboll and Rhys-Davids' **BUDDHIST BIRTH STORIES**, p. 13) are required to develop a man into a Buddha, and **the iron will to become one** runs throughout all the successive births, what shall we call that which thus wills and perseveres? Char-

acter? One's individuality: an individuality but partly manifested in any one birth, but built up of fragments from all the births?" (Bud. **Cat.**, Appendix A. 137.)

To understand the idea well, you have to first study the dual sets of "principles": the **spiritual**, or those which belong to the imperishable Ego; and the **material**, or those principles which make up the everchanging bodies or the series of personalities of that Ego. Let us fix permanent names to these, and say that:

- I. **Atma, the "Higher Self,"** is neither your Spirit nor mine, but like sunlight shines on all. It is the universally diffused "**divine principle**," and is inseparable from its one and absolute Meta-Spirit, as the sunbeam is inseparable from sunlight.
- II. **Buddhi** (the spiritual soul) is only its vehicle. Neither each separately, nor the two collectively, are of any more use to the body of man, than sunlight and its beams are for a mass of granite buried in the earth, unless the **divine Duad** is **assimilated by, and reflected in, some consciousness**. Neither Atma nor Buddhi are ever reached by Karma, because the former is the highest aspect of Karma, **its working agent of ITSELF** in one aspect, and the other is unconscious **on this plane**. This consciousness or mind is,
- III. Manas¹, the derivation or product in a reflected form of *Ahamkara*, "the conception of I," or EGO-SHIP. It is, therefore, when inseparably united to the first two, called the

¹ **MAHAT** or the "Universal Mind" is the source of Manas. The latter is Mahat, i.e., mind, in man. Manas is also called **Kshetrajna**, "embodied Spirit," because it is, according to our philosophy, the *Manasa-putras*, or "Sons of the Universal Mind," who *created*, or rather produced, the *thinking* man, "*manu*," by incarnating in the *third Race* mankind in our Round. It is Manas, therefore, which is the real incarnating and permanent *Spiritual Ego*, the **INDIVIDUALITY**, and our various and numberless personalities only its external masks.

SPIRITUAL EGO, and *Taijasi* (the radiant). This is the real Individuality, or the divine man. It is this Ego which — having originally incarnated in the *senseless* human form animated by, but unconscious (since it had no consciousness) of, the presence in itself of the dual monad — made of that human-like form *a real man*. It is that Ego, that "Causal Body," which overshadows every personality Karma forces it to incarnate into; and this Ego which is held responsible for all the sins committed through, and in, every new body or personality — the evanescent masks which hide the true Individual through the long series of rebirths.

This responsibility of the Ego is just for there resides memory of the whole string of personalities. The Ego knows and remembers its misdeeds as well as you remember what you have done yesterday. Is it because the memory of that bundle of physical compounds called "body" does not recollect what its predecessor (the personality *that was*) did, that you imagine that the real Ego has forgotten them? As well say it is unjust that the new boots on the feet of a body, who is flogged for stealing apples, should be punished for that which they know nothing of.

There are, in fact, some modes of communication between the personality and the permanent Ego. They could be widened by use, but are generally ignored and denied by modern man. To what would he attribute intuition, the "voice of the conscience," premonitions, vague undefined reminiscences, etc., etc., if not to such communications? Would that the majority of educated men, at least, had the fine spiritual perceptions of Coleridge, who shows how intuitional he is in some of his comments. Hear what he says with respect to the probability that "all thoughts are in themselves imperishable." "If the intelligent faculty (sudden 'revivals' of memory) should be rendered more comprehensive, it would require only a different and appropriate organization, the **body celestial** instead of the **body terrestrial**, to bring before

every human soul **the collective experience of its whole past existence (existences, rather).**" And this **body celestial** is our Manasic EGO.

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ON THE REWARD AND PUNISHMENT OF THE EGO.

The **Ego**, whatever the life of the person he incarnated in may have been on Earth, is never visited with **post-mortem** punishment, save in very exceptional and rare cases of which we will not speak here.

It is punished in this life for the misdeeds committed in a previous one, and it is this Ego that is rewarded also, whether here, or when disincarnated. If we do not admit of any punishment outside of this earth, it is because the only state the Spiritual Self knows of, hereafter, is that of unalloyed bliss.

Crimes and sins committed on a plane of objectivity and in a world of matter, cannot receive punishment in a world of pure subjectivity. Man's post-mortem state or mental condition is such as we are in during a vivid dream. We believe in an immutable law of absolute Love, Justice, and Mercy. And believing in it, we say: "Whatever the sin and dire results of the original Karmic transgression of the now incarnated Egos¹, no man (or the

¹ It is on this transgression that the cruel and illogical dogma of the Fallen Angels has been built. It is explained in Vol. II, of the **Secret Doctrine**. All our "Egos" are thinking and rational entities (**Manasa-putras**) who had lived, whether under human or other forms, in the precedent **life-cycle** (Manvantara), and whose Karma it was to incarnate in the man of this one. It was taught in the **MYSTERIES** that, having delayed to comply with this law (or having "refused to create" as Hinduism says of the **Kumaras** and Christian legend of the Archangel Michael), *i.e.*, having failed to incarnate **in due time**, the bodies predestined for them got defiled (Vide Stanzas VIII. and IX. in the "Slokas of Dzyan," Vol. II. Secret Doctrine, pp. 19 and 20), hence the original sin of the senseless forms and the punishment of the Egos. That which is meant by the rebellious angels being hurled down into Hell is simply explained by these pure Spirits or Egos being imprisoned in bodies of unclean matter, flesh.

HPB expands on this in her article "Esotericism of Christian Dogma":

outer material and periodical form of the Spiritual Entity) can be held, with any degree of justice, responsible for the consequences of his birth. He does not ask to be born, nor can he choose the parents that will give him life. In every respect he is a victim to his environment, the child of circumstances over which he has no control; and if each of his transgressions were impartially investigated, there would be found nine out of every ten cases when he was the one sinned against, rather than the sinner. Life is at best a heartless play, a stormy sea to cross, and a heavy burden often too difficult to bear. The greatest philosophers have tried in vain to fathom and find out its **raison d'être**, and have all failed except those who had the key to it, namely, the Eastern sages. Life is, as Shakespeare describes it:-

..... but a walking shadow — a poor player, That struts and frets his hour upon the stage, And then is heard no more. It is a tale

Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, Signifying nothing

The terrible crime was merely the natural result of the law of evolution: that is the races — hardly solidified at first — of our androgynous and *semi*-ethereal prototypes, materializing themselves little by little, taking on a physical body, then separating into distinct males and females, finally *procreated* carnally after they had formerly *created* their likenesses by entirely different methods which will be explained some day (if, however, one may express by the word *create* an idea quite contrary to that of engender).

This "audacious revolt" [*i.e.*, refusal to create] is again an *anthropomorphic* and *personifying* allegory that we owe to the Church, which materialized, in order to disguise them the better, all the ancient ideas — old as the world. It was a philosophic doctrine imbedded in the esoteric meaning of the Prometheal legend. The sacred fire which he stole from the Gods is the flame of conscious intellect, the spark which animates the fifth principle, or *Manas*; it is also the generating and sexual flame; that spark is the reflection — if not the very essence — of the Archangels or *Monads*, forced by their *karma* from the preceding *manvantara*, to incarnate in the astral forms of the *third* great pre-Adamite race before its "fall" — the fall of *Spirit into Matter*. That supposed "revolt," that "theft" of the *creative* fire, is a result of Evolution.

Nothing in its separate parts, yet of the greatest importance in its collectivity or series of lives. At any rate, almost every individual life is, in its full development, a sorrow. And are we to believe that poor, helpless man, after being tossed about like a piece of rotten timber on the angry billows of life, is, if he proves too weak to resist them, to be punished by a **sempiternity** of damnation, or even a temporary punishment? Never! Whether a great or an average sinner, good or bad, guilty or innocent, once delivered of the burden of physical life, the tired and worn-out **Manu** ("thinking Ego") has won the right to a period of absolute rest and bliss. The same unerringly wise and just rather than merciful Law, which inflicts upon the incarnated Ego the Karmic punishment for every sin committed during the preceding life on Earth, provides for the now disembodied Entity a long lease of mental rest, *i.e.*, the entire oblivion of every sad event, aye, to the smallest painful thought, that took place in its last life as a personality, leaving in the soul-memory but the reminiscence of that which was bliss, or led to happiness. Plotinus, who said that our body was the true river of **Lethe**, for "souls plunged into it forget all," meant more than he said. For, as our terrestrial body is like Lethe, so is our **celestial body** in Devachan, and much more.

However, we must not confuse these intervals of sleep or rest as an escape from Karma. No deed, not even a sinful thought, will go unpunished, the latter more severely even than the former, as a **thought is far more potential in creating evil results than even a deed.**¹ We believe in an

1 "Verily, I say unto you, that whosoever looketh at a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." (Matt. v., 28.)

[Cf.: That which is desire, or instinctive impulse in the lower, becomes thought in the Higher. The former finds expression in acts, the latter in words. Esoterically, thought is more responsible and punishable than act. But exoterically it is the reverse. In ordinary human law, an assault is more severely punished than the thought or intention, *i.e.*, the threat, whereas Karmically it is the contrary. Transactions, p. 142.1

unerring law of Retribution, called **KARMA**, which asserts itself in a natural concatenation of causes and their unavoidable results.

Every action, good or bad, is a prolific parent, saith the Wisdom of the Ages. Put the two together, and you will find the "why." After allowing the Soul, escaped from the pangs of personal life, a sufficient, aye, a hundredfold compensation, Karma, with its army of Skandhas, waits at the threshold of Devachan, whence the Ego re-emerges to assume a new incarnation. It is at this moment that the future destiny of the now-rested Ego trembles in the scales of just Retribution, as it now falls once again under the sway of **active** Karmic law. It is in this rebirth which is ready for it, a rebirth selected and prepared by this mysterious, inexorable, but in the equity and wisdom of its decrees infallible LAW, that the sins of the previous life of the Ego are punished. Only it is into no imaginary Hell, with theatrical flames and ridiculous tailed and horned devils, that the Ego is cast, but verily on to this earth, the plane and region of his sins, where he will have to atone for every bad thought and deed. As he has sown, so will he reap. Reincarnation will gather around him all those other Egos who have suffered, whether directly or indirectly, at the hands, or even through the unconscious instrumentality, of the past **personality**. They will be thrown by Nemesis in the way of the new man, concealing the old, the eternal EGO, and

Do not question the **equity** of Karma simply because these new "personalities" are not aware of having sinned or been *sinned* against. Has the coat torn to shreds from the back of the man who stole *it*, by another man who was robbed of it and recognises his property, to be regarded as fairly dealt with? The new "personality" is no better than a fresh suit of *clothes* with its specific characteristics, color, form and qualities; but the **real** man *who*

wears it is the same culprit as of old. It is the **individuality** who suffers through his "personality." And it is this, and this alone, that can account for the terrible, still only **apparent**, injustice in the distribution of lots in life to man. When your modern philosophers will have succeeded in showing to us a good reason, why so many apparently innocent and good men are born only to suffer during a whole life-time; why so many are born poor unto starvation in the slums of great cities, abandoned *by fate* and men; why, while these are born in the gutter, others open their eyes to light in palaces; while a noble birth and fortune seem often given to the worst of men and only rarely to the worthy; while there are beggars whose inner selves are peers to the highest and noblest of men; when this, and much more, is satisfactorily explained by either your philosophers or theologians, then only, but not till then, you will have the right to reject the theory of reincarnation. The highest and grandest of poets have dimly perceived this truth of truths. Shelley believed in it, Shakespeare must have thought of *it* when writing on the worthlessness of Birth. Remember his words:

"Why should my birth keep down my mounting spirit?"

Are not all creatures subject unto time? There's legions now of beggars on the earth, That their original did spring from Kings, And many monarchs now, whose fathers were the riff-raff of their age

alter the word "fathers" into "Egos"--and you will have truth.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

Intuition

Every one of us possesses the faculty, the interior sense, that is known by the name of *intuition*, but how rare are those who know how to develop it! It is, however, only by the aid of this faculty

that men can ever see things in their true colours. It is an *instinct of the soul*, which grows in us in proportion to the employment we give it, and which helps us to perceive and understand the realities of things with far more certainty than can the simple use of our senses and exercise of our reason. What are called good sense and logic enable us to see only the appearances of things, that which is evident to every one. The *instinct* of which I speak, being a projection of our perceptive consciousness, a projection which acts from the subjective to the objective, and not *vice versa*, awakens in us spiritual senses and power to act; these senses assimilate to themselves the essence of the object or of the action under examination, and represent it to us as it really is, not as it appears to our physical senses and to our cold reason. "We begin with *instinct*, we end with omniscience" says Professor A. Wilder, our oldest colleague. Iamblicus has described this faculty, and certain Theosophists have been able to appreciate the truth of his description.

"There exists," he says, "a faculty in the human mind which is immeasurably superior to all those which are grafted or engendered in us. By it we can attain to union with superior intelligences, finding ourselves raised above the scenes of this earthly life, and partaking of the higher existence and superhuman powers of the inhabitants of the celestial spheres. By this faculty we find ourselves liberated finally from the dominion of destiny (Karma), and we become, as it were, the arbiters of our own fates. For, when the most excellent parts in us find themselves filled with energy; and when our soul is lifted up towards essences higher than science, it can separate itself from the conditions which hold it in the bondage of every-day life; it exchanges its ordinary existence for another one, it renounces the conventional habits which belong to the external order of things, to give itself up to and mix itself

with another order of things which reigns in that most elevated state of existence."

Plato has expressed the same idea in two lines: "The light and spirit of the Divinity are the wings of the soul. They raise it to communion with the gods, above this earth, with which the spirit of man is too ready to soil itself. . . . To become like the gods, is to become holy, just and wise. That is the end for which man was created, and that ought to be his aim in the acquisition of knowledge."



IN MEMORY OF A GRAND LADY

The Queen Mother of England passed on March 30th. She was 101. The Order of Service was prefaced with a poem by an unknown author which set the tone of thanksgiving for the Queen Mother's long and remarkable life:

"You can shed tears that she is gone or you can smile because she has lived.

"You can close your eyes and pray that she'll come back or you can open your eyes and see all she's left.

"Your heart can be empty because you can't see her or you can be full of love you shared.

"You can turn your back on tomorrow and live yesterday or you can be happy for tomorrow because of yesterday.

"You can remember her and only that she's gone or you can cherish her memory and let it live on.

"You can cry and close your mind, be empty and turn your back or you can do what she'd want: smile, open your eyes, love and go on."



*HOW TO STAY YOUNG
(AND CONTENT)*

1. Throw out nonessential numbers. This includes age, weight and height.
2. Keep only cheerful friends. The grouches pull you down. If you really need a grouch, there are probably family members that fill that need.
3. Keep learning. Learn more about the computer, crafts, gardening, whatever. Just never let the brain be idle.
4. Enjoy the simple things. When the children are young, that is all that you can afford.

When they are in college, that is all that you can afford. When they are grown, and you are on retirement, that is all that you can afford!

5. Laugh often, long and loud. Laugh until you gasp for breath. Laugh so much that you can be tracked in the store by your distinctive laughter.
6. The tears happen. Endure, grieve, and move on. The only person who is with us our entire life, is ourselves.
7. Surround yourself with what you love, whether it is family, pets, keepsakes, music, plants, hobbies, whatever. Your home is your refuge.
8. Cherish your health. If it is good, preserve it. If it is unstable, improve it. If it is beyond what you can improve, get help.
9. Don't take guilt trips. Go to the mall, the next county, a foreign country, but not guilt.

10. Tell the people you love, that you love them, at every opportunity.

Remember, Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away.

BLESSINGS ALWAYS AND HAPPY SPRING

Thomas A. Hodges

Two Roads

**LAWS GOVERNING
ELEMENTALS**

by William Q. Judge

“Every time you harshly and unmercifully criticize the faults of another, you produce an attraction to yourself of certain quantities of elementals from that person. They fasten themselves upon you and endeavor to find in you a similar state or spot or fault that they have left in the other person. It is as if they left him to serve you at higher wages, so to say.” – W.Q. Judge

STUDENT. — A materialist stated to me as his opinion that all that is said about mantrams is mere sentimental theorizing, and while it may be true that certain words affect people, the sole reason is that they embody ideas distasteful or pleasant to the hearers, but that the mere sounds, as such, have no effect whatever, and as to either words or sounds affecting animals he denied it altogether. Of course he would not take elementals into account at all, as their existence is impossible for him.

Sage. — This position is quite natural in these days. There has been so much materialization of thought, and the real scientific attitude of leading minds in different branches of investigation has been so greatly misunderstood by those who think they follow the example of the scientific men, that most people in the West are afraid to admit anything beyond what may be apprehended by the five senses. The man you speak of is one of that always numerous class who adopt as fixed and unalterable general laws laid down from time to time by well known *savants*, forgetting

that the latter constantly change and advance from point to point.

Student. — Do you think, then, that the scientific world will one day admit much that is known to Occultists?

Sage. — Yes, it will. The genuine Scientist is always in that attitude which permits him to admit things proven. He may seem to you often to be obstinate and blind, but in fact he is proceeding slowly to the truth - too slowly, perhaps for you, yet not in the position of knowing all. It is the venerated scientist who swears by the published results of the work of leading men as being the last word, while, at the very moment he is doing so, his authority may have made notes or prepared new theories tending to greatly broaden and advance the last utterance. It is only when the dogmatism of a priest backed up by law declares that a discovery is opposed to the revealed word of his god, that we may fear. That day is gone for a long time to come, and we need expect no more scenes like that in which Galileo took part. But among the materialistic minds to whom you referred, there is a good deal of that old spirit left, only that the "revealed word of God" has become the utterances of our scientific leaders.

Student. — I have observed that within even the last quarter of a century. About ten years ago many well-known men laughed to scorn any one who admitted the facts within the experience of every mesmerizer, while now, under the term "hypnotism," they are nearly all admitted. And when these lights of our time were denying it all, the French doctors were collating the results of a long series of experiments. It seems as if the invention of a new term for an old and much abused one furnished an excuse

for granting all that had been previously denied. But have you anything to say about those materialistic investigators? Are they not governed by some powerful, though unperceived, law?

Sage. — They are. They are in the forefront of the mental, but not of the spiritual, progress of the time, and are driven forward by forces they know nothing of. Help is very often given to them by the Masters, who, neglecting nothing, constantly see to it that these men make progress upon the fittest lines for them, just as you are assisted not only in your spiritual life but in your mental also. These men, therefore, will go on admitting facts and finding new laws or new names for old laws, to explain them. They cannot help it.

Student. — What should be our duty, then, as students of truth? Should we go out as reformers of science, or what?

Sage. — You ought not to take up the role of reformers of the schools and their masters, because success would not attend the effort. Science is competent to take care of itself, and you would only be throwing pearls before them to be trampled under foot. Rest content that all within their comprehension will be discovered and admitted from time to time. The endeavor to force them into admitting what you believe to be so plain would be due almost solely to your vanity and love of praise. It is not possible to force them, any more than it is for me to force you, to admit certain incomprehensible laws, and you would not think me wise or fair to first open before you things, to understand which you have not the necessary development, and then to force you into admitting their truth. Or if, out of

reverence, you should say, "These things are true," while you comprehended nothing and were not progressing, you would have bowed to superior force.

Student. — But you do not mean that we should remain ignorant of science and devote ourselves only to ethics?

Sage. — Not at all. Know all that you can. Become conversant with and sift all that the schools have declared, and as much more on your own account as is possible, but at the same time teach, preach, and practice a life based on a true understanding of brotherhood. This is the true way. The common people, those who know no science, are the greatest number. They must be so taught that the discoveries of science which are unilluminated by spirit may not be turned into Black Magic.

Student. — In our last conversation you touched upon the guarding of buried treasure by elementals. I should like very much to hear a little more about that. Not about how to control them or to procure the treasure, but upon the subject generally.

Sage. — The laws governing the hiding of buried treasure are the same as those that relate to lost objects. Every person has about him a fluid, or plane, or sphere, or energy, which-ever you please to call it, in which are constantly found elementals that partake of his nature. That is, they are tinted with his color and impressed by his character. There are numerous classes of these. Some men have many of one class or of all, or many of some and few of others. And anything worn upon your person is connected with your elementals. For instance, you wear cloth made of wool or linen, and little objects made of wood, bone, brass, gold, silver, and other

substances. Each one of these has certain magnetic relations peculiar to itself, and all of them are soaked, to a greater or less extent, with your magnetism as well as nervous fluid. Some of them, because of their substance, do not long retain this fluid, while others do. The elementals are connected, each class according to its substance, with those objects by means of the magnetic fluid. And they are acted upon by the mind and desires to a greater extent than you know, and in a way that cannot be formulated in English. Your desires have a powerful grasp, so to say, upon certain things, and upon others a weaker hold. When one of these objects is suddenly dropped, it is invariably followed by elementals. They are drawn after it, and may be said to go with the object by attraction rather than by sight. In many cases they completely envelop the thing, so that, although it is near at hand, it cannot be seen by the eye. But after awhile the magnetism wears off and their power to envelop the article weakens, whereupon it appears in sight. This does not happen in every case. But it is a daily occurrence, and is sufficiently obvious to many persons to be quite removed from the realm of fable. I think, indeed, that one of your literary persons has written an essay upon this very experience, in which, although treated in a comic vein, many truths are unconsciously told; the title of this was, if I mistake not, "Upon the Innate Perversity of Inanimate Objects." There is such a nice balancing of forces in these cases that you must be careful in your generalizations. You may justly ask, for instance, Why, when a coat is dropped, it seldom disappears from sight? Well, there are cases in which even such a large object is hidden, but they are not very common. The coat is full of your magnetism, and the

elementals may feel in it just as much of you as when it is on your back. There may be, for them, no disturbance of the relations, magnetic and otherwise. And often in the case of a small object not invisible, the balancing of forces, due to many causes that have to do with your condition at the time, prevents the hiding. To decide in any particular case, one would have to see into the realm where the operation of these laws is hidden, and calculate all the forces, so as to say why it happened in one way and not in another.

Student. — But take the case of a man who, being in possession of treasure, hides it in the earth and goes away and dies, and it is not found. In that instance the elementals did not hide it. Or when a miser buries his gold or jewels. How about those?

Sage. — In all cases where a man buries gold, or jewels, or money, or precious things, his desires are fastened to that which he hides. Many of his elementals attach themselves to it, and other classes of them also, who had nothing to do with him, gather round and keep it hidden. In the case of the captain of a ship containing treasure the influences are very powerful, because there the elementals are gathered from all the persons connected with the treasure, and the officer himself is full of solicitude for what is committed to his charge. You should also remember that gold and silver - or metals - have relations with elementals that are of a strong and peculiar character. They do not work for human law, and natural law does not assign any property in metals to man, nor recognize in him any peculiar and transcendent right to retain what he has dug from the earth or acquired to himself. Hence we do not find the elementals anxious to restore to him

the gold or silver which he had lost. If we were to assume that they occupied themselves in catering to the desires of men or in establishing what we call our rights over property, we might as well at once grant the existence of a capricious and irresponsible Providence. They proceed solely according to the law of their being, and, as they are without the power of making a judgment, they commit no blunders and are not to be moved by considerations based upon our vested rights or our unsatisfied wishes. Therefore, the spirits that appertain to metals invariably act as the laws of their nature prescribe, and one way of doing so is to obscure the metals from our sight.

Student. — Can you make any application of all this in the realm of ethics?

Sage. — There is a very important thing you should not overlook. Every time you harshly and unmercifully criticize the faults of another, you produce an attraction to yourself of certain quantities of elementals from that person. They fasten themselves upon you and endeavor to find in you a similar state or spot or fault that they have left in the other person. It is as if they left him to serve you at higher wages, so to say.

Then there is that which I referred to in a preceding conversation, about the effect of our acts and thoughts upon, not only the portion of the astral light belonging to each of us with its elementals, but upon the whole astral world. If men saw the dreadful pictures imprinted there and constantly throwing down upon us their suggestions to repeat the same acts or thoughts, a millennium might soon draw near. The astral light is, in this sense, the same as a photographer's

negative plate, and we are the sensitive paper underneath, on which is being printed the picture. We can see two sorts of pictures for each act. One is the act itself, and the other is the picture of the thoughts and feelings animating those engaged in it. You can therefore see that you may be responsible for many more dreadful pictures than you had supposed. For actions of a simple outward appearance have behind them, very often, the worst of thoughts or desires.

Student. — Have these pictures in the astral light anything to do with us upon being reincarnated in subsequent earth-lives?

Sage. — They have very much indeed. We are influenced by them for vast periods of time, and in this you can perhaps find clues to many operations of active Karmic law for which you seek.

Student. — Is there not also some effect upon animals, and through them upon us, and *vice versa*?

Sage. — Yes. The animal kingdom is affected by us through the astral light. We have impressed the latter with pictures of cruelty, oppression, dominion, and slaughter. The whole Christian world admits that man can indiscriminately slaughter animals, upon the theory, elaborately set forth by priests in early times, that animals have no souls. Even little children learn this and very early begin to kill insects, birds, and animals, not for protection, but from wantonness. As they grow up the habit is continued, and in England we see that shooting large numbers of birds beyond the wants of the table, is a national peculiarity, or, as I should say, a vice. This may be called a mild illustration. If these people could catch elementals

as easily as they can animals, they would kill them for amusement when they did not want them for use; and, if the elementals refused to obey, then their death would follow as a punishment. All this is perceived by the elemental world, without conscience of course; but, under the laws of action and reaction, we receive back from it exactly that which we give.

Student. — Before we leave the subject I should like to refer again to the question of metals and the relation of man to the elementals connected with the mineral world. We see some persons who seem always to be able to find metals with ease - or, as they say, who are lucky in that direction. How am I to reconcile this with the natural tendency of elementals to hide? Is it because there is a war or discord, as it were, between different classes belonging to any one person?

Sage. — That is a part of the explanation. Some persons, as I said, have more of one class attached to them than another. A person fortunate with metals, say of gold and silver, has about him more of the elementals connected with or belonging to the kingdoms of those metals than other people, and thus there is less strife between the elementals. The preponderance of the metal-spirits makes the person more homogeneous with their kingdoms, and a natural attraction exists between the gold or silver lost or buried and that person, more than in the case of other people.

Student. — What determines this? Is it due to a desiring of gold and silver, or is it congenital?

Sage. — It is innate. The combinations in any one individual are so intricate and due to so many causes

that you could not calculate them. They run back many generations, and depend upon peculiarities of soil, climate, nation, family, and race. These are, as you can see, enormously varied, and, with the materials at your command now, quite beyond your reach. Merely wishing for gold and silver will not do it.

Student. — I judge also that attempting to get at those elementals by thinking strongly will not accomplish that result either.

Sage. — No, it will not, because your thoughts do not reach them. They do not hear or see you, and, as it is only by accidental concentration of forces that unlearned people influence them, these accidents are only possible to the extent that you possess the natural leaning to the particular kingdom whose elementals you have influenced.

Student. — I thank you for your instruction.

Sage. — May you be guided to the path which leads to light!

Path, September, 1888