

The Light Beyond Death

COMPILED FROM WRITINGS BY
MAX HEINDEL



The Rosicrucian Fellowship

MT. ECCLESIA
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Max Heindel, spiritual Initiate and messenger of the Rosicrucian Brotherhood, was born in Denmark on July 23, 1865. He became a shipping engineer and eventually emigrated to the United States. By 1905 he had become seriously interested in the study of metaphysics, and spent the next few years consciously working and searching for spiritual Truths. When he was visiting Germany in 1907, the Elder Brother of the Rose Cross who became his Teacher made contact with him on the inner planes. He was instructed in the etheric Temple of the Rose Cross, receiving the occult Teachings that he eventually incorporated into *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*, published in November 1909. He founded *The Rosicrucian Fellowship* in August 1909, and spent his remaining years, until January 6, 1919, writing, lecturing, establishing Fellowship Headquarters in Oceanside, California, and generally spreading the Teachings of Esoteric Christianity - the pioneer spiritual Teachings which will prepare all humanity for the New Age of Aquarius, when all nations will join in Universal Brotherhood.



ROSICRUCIAN SYMBOLISM

“Divine symbols which have been given to mankind from time to time speak to that forum of truth which is within our hearts, and waken our consciousness to divine ideas entirely beyond worlds.” - Max Heindel. The Emblem of the Western Mystery School of the Rosicrucians is one such symbol: in its entirety it represents God in manifestation. It expresses the key to man’s past evolution, his present constitution, his future development, and the method of attainment.

The blue background represents God the Father; the golden star symbolizes Christ born within the spiritual aspirant and radiating from the five points - the head and four limbs; the red roses indicate the purification of the human desire nature on the cross of matter - the blood of the aspirant cleansed from passion. The white rose symbolizes purity of heart and also the larynx with which, once purified, humanity will speak the Creative Word. The white cross represents the physical body. The golden star represents the “Golden Wedding Garment” - the etheric vehicle which the Spirit builds during lifetimes of purity and service.

Another reading shows that the cross also indicates plant, animal and human life-waves. The lower limb is the plant nourished through the roots with spiritual currents from the Earth; man, the upper limb, receives spiritual influences from the Sun through the head; animals are sustained by spiritual currents horizontally surrounding the Earth.

The lamp of wisdom and the heart show the two streams of evolving humanity: those following the path of intellect (occult) and those following the path of love (mystic). There can be no contradiction in Nature, therefore the heart and the mind must be capable of uniting. Eventual union of head and heart will signify the Perfected Man.

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At the foot of the page is the *fleur-de-lis*, the emblem of the Trinity - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - but as only the Father and Holy Spirit were active at the time here represented, we find but two of the petals colored with red, thus showing energy.

The beings created we see as a stream flowing upwards, provided with two bodies, the dense and the vital, but after a time the desire body is added and is shown by the red appearing in the ascending stream.

Although each stream looks alike outwardly, they are vastly different. The one on the left is known in our literature as the Sons of Cain. They are full of positive energy and are the craftsmen of the world, the *phree-messen*, who carve their way through life, rather enjoying the obstacles which they know strengthen the character; they work through the intellect, as is shown by the lamp from the flame of which proceed *nine rays*, showing the positive path chosen by the esoteric student. The other stream develops the heart side of life, and the divine flame proceeding from it shows by *eight rays*, a negative path; those following it desiring that they should have a leader; someone to follow, someone to worship; they are the churchmen of the world who obey the teachings of their leaders.

Each stream of life flows onward side by side till a time comes when the wise and loving ones guiding the evolution decide that to hasten progress it is necessary that the two unite, and plan that this shall be accomplished by the building of a temple for the worshippers by the craftsmen and that both streams would unite in a Mystical Molten Sea. We can see the wonderful impulse by the chalice raised from each and filled with the red wine of life. You will read the story of this in the building of Solomon's Temple. This plan was frustrated by the treachery of the Sons of Seth - those on the right. And after this each swung further away from the other than before.

A serious condition now is shown in which some appear to fall away entirely through materialism. But still the race lives on, the churchman and the scientist, the mystic and the occultist, each pursuing their own path independent of the other, till a stage of such materialism is reached the spiritual guiders see grave dangers ahead. To prevent the plan of evolution being defeated, a great destruction of the human bodies is permitted which for a time looks as if it would wipe humanity off the earth. See the break in each stream. But this calamity has the desired effect: we now see again great force and each stream turned directly toward the other, where they may shortly unite as one. At the foot of the page we find another symbol, so small that you may have overlooked it. Here is a small black cross that represents the physical body. In the enlarged head of the cross is seen the heart. Heart and head have united and the result is shown in the spreading ray - the resultant soul-body.

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CHAPTER I

TO THOSE WHO MOURN

"Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." (Matthew 5:4)

These words of the great comforter who visited the Earth two thousand years ago are brought to the minds of all during the Easter feast which brings joy to millions, for humanity is now awakening more and more to its true import.

Easter, which at one time was celebrated by the few Christians, is no longer only a Christian festival. It is no longer reserved for those who accept the sacramental bread and wine from the hands of their minister. It has now become a great day of rejoicing by peoples of all nations, and followers of all religions, as well as those who never see the inside of a church.

It has become a custom for people in rural districts as well as in cities to select a hill upon which they plant a cross and on the glad Easter day to meet in fellowship; worship as a community, regardless of race, creed, or color; and in the name of the greatest Spirit that has ever inhabited a physical body to worship the Universal Spirit, offering up praise and thanks for the life and the light which were His part of the great scheme of God. This universal spirit of joy is expressed on a day which in memory brings to us the picture of a man nailed upon a cross. It pictures to humanity a face drawn in pain, a human body suffering in the agony of death. Why should all mankind rejoice on a day which is connected in memory with that act of brutality of two thousand years ago?

Christ Jesus

Man, in his lack of knowledge, his vague understanding of the justice of a loving Father, has made the grave a darkened sepulcher, a thing to be dreaded, and an end to all his aspirations and his ambitions. For ages he has feared this ending of physical existence and has made of it a time of intense mourning, a period filled with tears. BUT, this great Spirit who had power over life and death permitted Himself to be crucified; He came to the Earth for that great purpose. But the question may be raised: If we claim that Jesus the Christ had power over His life, then why did he permit the great indignities and cruelties which were perpetrated upon Him and why did He not save Himself from this undignified and cruel death? In the parable of the sheepfold in John 10, Jesus tells His hearers, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." We find another statement given by the Christ after the crucifixion, after He had suffered death on the cross--when He had come back from the spiritual world to commune with His disciples. In the twenty-eighth chapter of Matthew, the eighteenth verse, He again claims the same power. "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in Earth."

Life After Death

The Christ came to Earth to teach mankind a particular lesson; and if He was destined to become the Savior of mankind, then the greatest lesson which He could have taught man was that of faith; faith in his God and faith in a life after death. By His very death Christ Jesus must bring to man faith, and the belief in a **LIFE AFTER DEATH**. He preached immortality, and to further impress this fact upon humanity, He must go through the throes of death in order to return to life and bring to man proof of an after-death life. To accomplish this He appeared to His beloved disciples in His spiritual body. In I Corinthians, 15:6, Paul says, "After that, he was seen

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of above five hundred brethren at once: of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep." He walked and talked to them so that they might believe that what He had preached, the immortality of the soul, was a fact and that after man has laid aside his physical body, he still lives in a finer and more ethereal body.

The Spiritual Body

Paul also brings man much hope in a life after death in the fifth chapter of II Corinthians, verses 1, 2: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven." In the fifteenth chapter of I Corinthians, Paul again preaches to those who have no faith in the life after death. This wonderful chapter is used by the majority of ministers to bring comfort and faith to those who have been bereaved by the loss of their loved ones. "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."

During the old dispensation and all through the Old Testament, man had very little hope in a life after death; to him the grave ended all. We find such discouragement when we read the ninth chapter of Ecclesiastes, the fifth verse, where the statement is made, "For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten."

Made in God's Image

The Rosicrucian Teachings claim that man is an immortal Spirit, made in the image of God, for are we not told in the 26th verse of the first chapter of Genesis that God said, "Let us make man in our image?" Now if God is Spirit and man is made in His image, can we longer deny that man cannot die, or that if he did that a part of God would die? Can one imagine a great Spirit which would create a being like man in His own image and then permit him to die? Could such a being himself become a creator as God had destined him to do if one Earth life were all, and if, when man had lived his three score and ten years, he should pass out of existence with no further chance to become as his Father in heaven, perfect? If he but stops to reason this thing out he cannot but be convinced that man, too, must go on evolving, learning, in order to become all wise as his Father in heaven is wise, and that this cannot be accomplished in the few years of one short life. To learn these lessons on the Earth over which God gave man dominion, he must return again and again, and in each embodiment he must take up his cross of matter (his physical body).

It is through the physical vehicle that man must learn to become a creator like unto his Father in heaven; it is the toll which he uses in his efforts to master the numerous lessons of life so that he can be recognized by his Father in heaven as a son. This tool (the physical body) becomes tired, wears out; and it is necessary that the Spirit be given a time to assimilate and digest all the experience gained on Earth. Therefore, God has arranged that the Spirit step out of this worn-out old robe and function in its spiritual body.

When this occurs, man, with his limited vision, grieves over this change; to him it appears as a final parting from a loved one when this worn-out garment disintegrates and the loved one is permitted to function in a finer and a more ethereal robe, or body, one in which the individual is not limited by distance, nor can physical matter obstruct him in his progress. This is the spiritual body of which Paul tells us in II Corinthians, a building not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. In this vehicle our loved ones can visit us, and while we in our blindness may not have the spiritual eyes with which we can see them, yet they are none the less very near to us. They are still interested in our welfare, and when we need them they do not fail us; they encourage and help us more often than we realize, though by our very grief we may hinder their progress in this new life to which they have been called.

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When a man enters into a sound sleep and his physical body is inert on the bed then he is awake and active in the realm of the spirit. He is no longer hampered by a physical body. However, he is tied to this vehicle by the silver cord which leads him back again to his body upon awakening. During the unconsciousness of sleep he is in the land of the living dead and if he will he can communicate with his loved ones who are ever near him.

The Rosicrucian Fellowship student has this assurance of his nearness to those who have passed over in what is commonly termed death and does not grieve as do others who have no hope. He knows that his loved ones have not gone away, but, as John McCreery says in his poem, "There Are No Dead"--

They are not dead. They have but passed
Beyond the mists that blind us here
Into the new and larger life
Of that serener sphere.

Immortal Life

The actual knowledge acquired by the students of these advanced teachings has removed the sting of death, and they know that those who have laid aside their mortal bodies are not dead but are now enjoying the freedom of life in the spiritual worlds. They are convinced that God did not build the house of man's soul, and inspire the human Spirit with faith and love, to pull it down in death, to destroy His own handiwork. Man is God's masterpiece, and as such this spark of divinity made in His image cannot die, else a part of God were destroyed.

The Christ willingly came to the Earth to be encased in a physical body, knowing that the result would be to bring hope and faith to mankind. He must die and rise again, thus proving to man that death is only a physical manifestation, a freeing of a divine Spirit. He came to a humanity blinded with the fear of the grave, to whom the grave was an abyss where the Spirit was swallowed up and lost. He found death the king of terrors, and knew that only He could restore man's faith in an immortal life and give him the assurance of being a glorified Spirit. He left these comforting words which should bring solace and faith to all who believe in Him:

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. (John 14:1-3)

CHAPTER II

THE SCIENCE OF DEATH

Fear of Death

When the birth of a child is expected the parents prepare for its coming months in advance, usually with the greatest joy. Sometimes the entire family, especially the feminine part of it, will assist in preparing the most wonderful creations for the comfort of the tiny stranger who has not yet made its appearance. For a few years this little life is sheltered if it is fortunate enough to be attracted to parents who have been blessed with this world's goods; but the greater number are among the poorer classes who are unable to provide the child with the material necessities for its well-being. While they may welcome and love it, still their lives are more or less filled with adversities and sorrows, and the child grows to manhood or womanhood amidst hardships and suffering. Yet with all this suffering which often makes man's life a burden to him, he clings to life tenaciously, and the thought of death fills him with horror.

The writer visited some of the helpless, hopeless, and aged invalids in one of the large county hospitals. She found that a number of them looked upon death with fear. Some repeatedly read their Bibles, but the fear of death could not be removed.

We find aged ones, feeble, tottering, surrounded by grandchildren whose flippant and more modern ways often elicit criticism from the neglected and lonely grandparents. The latter are often made to feel that they are in the way, yet when the time arrives for one of them to journey into the Great Beyond, he or she usually meets this period with fear and regret. The doctor is called, and the relatives who at one time felt that the grandparent was in the way, now do their utmost to prevent the exit of this Spirit into the unknown world.

Why should the thought of this journey into the life beyond be filled with so much horror, especially in a Christian nation which accepts the teachings of the Great Master, THE CHRIST, Whose mission upon Earth was to take away the sting of death?

Death as Punishment

The ancient history of mankind as recorded in the Bible from the time of Adam and Eve, when the Lord turned mankind out of the Garden of Eden, shows that death has always been associated with the idea of punishment. In Genesis, 2nd chapter 17th verse, the Lord threatened Adam with death if he ate of the Tree of Knowledge. All through the history of the ancient Israelites we find that their Lord, Jehovah, constantly threatened them with the punishment of death for their sins. This fear was implanted in the minds of these earlier races, whose infantile minds were not yet able to reason, and who could only comprehend through fear. They could not conceive of a God of love, but responded only to an angry God Who would thrust them into unknown darkness for their sins.

The ancient people were very superstitious, and they used a great deal of ceremonial to free themselves from the powers of darkness. The fear of death created in them a desire to preserve their bodies which resulted in embalming of various kinds. Among the ancient Egyptians embalming became an art. After the body had been put through a preservative process by the priests, it was placed in a sycamore box fashioned in the form of the body and returned to the relative, who often kept it in the home, and sometimes in a private vault or sepulcher. Some of these mummies may be found in our museums.

Life After Death

The ideas of death have undergone various alterations in accordance with man's evolution, but the deep mystery of life after death was not explained until after the advent of Christ, Who through His death upon the Cross brought to man the hope of salvation. St. John, 5th chapter, 24th verse, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my words and believeth on him that sent me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." The Apostle Paul states in the second epistle of Timothy, 1st chapter, 9th and 10th verses, "God hath saved us and called us, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, Who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

How has the world grasped the opportunity of Christ's supreme sacrifice to bring to the world the hope of immortality? Has the fear of death diminished? Has the method of caring for the bodies of the dead changed from that of the ancient Jews or Greeks? Has the science of death kept up with evolution? Let us see if a change is perceptible. Among the more advanced among us mourning robes are slowly disappearing. The method of embalming has been changed, the viscera and brain are no longer removed as in olden times, but a fluid is injected into the main arteries which temporarily keeps the body from putrefaction. But the fear of death and great grief are still prevalent. Fabulous sums are expended on costly funerals and floral pieces. This extravagance has been carried to great extremes and has become a custom which is often very embarrassing to the relatives, who may be restricted in this world's goods. The relatives must pay for the plot of ground, the sexton is paid for digging the grave, and the undertaker for his casket, robe, and conveyances to take the relatives to the funeral. To add to the loss of their loved ones, the funeral expenses are often a burden to the bereaved ones. It is also customary with many ministers to prolong the services, and in their great zeal for converts to grasp this opportunity to appeal to the emotions of those present, thereby adding to the mourner's grief and strengthening the fear of death and the life beyond.

Since World War I mankind has become greatly interested in life after death. The world has been flooded with books supposedly dictated by the so-called dead, who have used mediums to transmit their message. Numbers, through their great grief and longing to communicate with loved ones, have rent the veil and have been able to see into the beyond. But with the fear of death removed, which is a great step forward and a wonderful comfort to mankind, what is being done to prepare the Spirit for the change called death? Are such careful preparations made for this journey as for the entrance of the Spirit into the physical body (birth)? Is this passing from physical life made pleasant by love and good wishes of friends? Alas! No. This greatest of all journeys into the home of the Spirit is still attended by grief, the way is paved with fears, and washed with tears. The traveler is not attended by the love and joy which awaited his entrance into Earth life. The Spirit often enters into this new life unprepared, unhappy on account of the grief of relatives.

Death as a Birth

The question may be asked: What is the science of death? We will answer this from the Rosicrucian standpoint. Death, so called, is but a passing of the Spirit into a larger sphere--a birth. It should be prepared for with the greatest care. The physical body is but a vehicle which the Spirit uses to gain experience in this school day of life. At the end of this life the Ego must assimilate what it has experienced, and in order to extract the best from its experiences certain conditions must be prepared for it at the time of the severing of the silver cord. This usually occurs about three and one-half days after death. Now in order to explain why the period immediately after the passing out of the Spirit is of vital importance, we must understand that man's body is fourfold, consisting of the physical or dense body, the vital body, the desire body, and the mind or mental body. At what is called death the Spirit withdraws with the two higher vehicles, which are tied to the etheric and physical bodies by a slender cord. This when seen with the eyes of the Spirit has a silvery sheen, and is in the shape of two figure sixes, connected at

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the points of the two hooks; the upper end is connected with the two higher vehicles while the lower end is still in touch with the physical body.

At death the desire and mental bodies leave the physical, taking with them but one permanent atom, which during life was deposited within the left ventricle of the heart. This atom, like the negative film of the camera, has been impressed with all the experiences of the life just ended. At death the force of this atom leaves the body and all these impressions are transferred from the vital (etheric) body (which is the storehouse of these experiences) into the desire body, which then forms the basis of the man or woman's life in purgatory and the first heaven. This transfer is done by the Spirit during the first three and one-half days after the rupture of the connection between the seed atom and the heart, ordinarily known as death. We may thus see that death is not complete until this transfer has been accomplished. Sensation is still present, and the Spirit suffers through inharmonious surroundings. It can feel somewhat during postmortem examination or embalming. When the body is mutilated or cremated before the silver cord is severed, the Spirit suffers pain. The doctors and undertakers, believing the person "dead," usually do not handle the body with the same care that they would if they knew the real facts.

Cases have been reported where those whose bodies were mutilated immediately after death were able to communicate with those in the body and complained that they had suffered. In one case a woman stated that they had butchered her, and she was helpless to make the undertaker understand that she could feel the knife. If it were more generally known that our dead can feel physical pain up to a certain time, embalming would be discontinued and the body kept on ice instead.

When the panorama of life has been fully etched into the desire body and the silver cord broken, the two lower ethers of the vital body gravitate back to the physical body, leaving the Spirit free to go on into the higher realms. The two higher ethers coalesce with the desire body. When the physical body is buried, that part of the vital body which remains disintegrates synchronously with it. When the body is cremated, the Spirit is freed much more quickly from all ties that bind it to the worn out physical robe.

As the interest and belief in a life after death becomes more universal, the necessity for a scientific method for the care of those who are passing into the higher life will be impressed upon the people, and we shall then have nurses, doctors, and ministers who are versed in the science of death as well as in the science of birth. The Spirit will then be surrounded not only with love, but with peace and quiet at the time of passing. It will also have a deeper and clearer record with which to begin its life work in its new state.

CHAPTER III

The Riddle of Life and Death

At every birth, what appears to be a new life comes into the world. Slowly the little form grows, it lives and moves among us, it becomes a factor in our lives; but at last there comes a time when the form ceases to move and decays. The love that came, whence we know not, has again passed to the invisible beyond. Then, in sorrow and perplexity we ask ourselves the three great questions concerning our existence: Whence have we come? Why are we here? Whither are we going?

Across every threshold the fearsome specter of Death throws his shadow. It visits alike the palace and the poorhouse. None are safe: old or young, well or ill, rich or poor. All alike must pass through this gloomy portal, and down the ages has sounded the piteous cry for a solution of the riddle of life, the riddle of death.

Unfortunately there has been much vague speculation by people who did not know, and it has therefore come to be the popularly accepted opinion that nothing definite can be known about the most important part of our existence: Life prior to its manifestation through the gate of birth and beyond the portal of death.

That idea is erroneous. Definite firsthand knowledge may be had by anyone who will take the trouble to cultivate the "sixth sense" which is latent in all. When it is acquired it opens our spiritual eyes so that we perceive the Spirits who are about to enter physical life by birth, and those who have just re-entered the beyond after death. We see them as clearly and definitely as we cognize physical beings by our ordinary sight. Nor is firsthand information about the inner worlds indispensable to satisfy the inquiring mind any more than it is necessary to visit China to learn about conditions there. We learn about foreign countries through the reports of returned travelers. There is as much knowledge concerning the world beyond as about the interior of Africa, Australia, or China.

The solution of the problem of Life and Being advocated in the following pages is based upon the concurrent testimony of many who have cultivated the above-mentioned faculty and are qualified to investigate the superphysical realms in a scientific manner. It is in harmony with scientific facts, an eternal truth in Nature which governs human progress, as the law of gravity serves to keep the stars unchangeably in their orbits about the Sun.

Three Theories

Three theories have been brought forward to solve the riddle of life and death, and it seems to be universally agreed that a fourth is an impossible conception. If so, one of the three theories must be the true solution, or it remains insoluble; at least by man.

The riddle of life and death is a basic problem; everyone must solve it at some time, and it is of the utmost importance to each individual human being which of these theories he accepts; for his choice will color his whole life. In order that we may make an intelligent choice, it is necessary to know them all, to analyze, compare, and weigh them, holding the mind open and free from the bias of preconceived ideas, ready to accept or reject each theory upon its merits. Let us first state the three theories and then let us see how they agree with established facts of life and how far they are in harmony with other known laws of Nature, as we should reasonably expect them to be, if true, for discord in Nature is impossible.

1. THE MATERIALISTIC THEORY holds that life is a journey from the womb to the tomb; that mind is the product of matter; that man is the highest intelligence in the cosmos; and that intelligence perishes when the body dissolves at death.

The Riddle of Life and Death

2. THE THEORY OF THEOLOGY asserts that at each birth a newly-created soul enters the arena of life fresh from God; that at the end of one short span of life in the material world it passes through the gate of death into the invisible beyond, there to remain; and that its happiness or misery there is determined for all eternity by its belief just prior to death.

3. THE THEORY OF REBIRTH teaches that each Spirit is an integral part of God; that it enfolds all divine possibilities as a seed enfolds the plant; that by means of repeated existences in a gradually improving earthly body those latent powers are being slowly unfolded into dynamic energy; that none are lost, but that all Egos will ultimately attain the goal of perfection and reunion with God, bringing with them the cumulative experience which is the fruitage of their pilgrimage through matter.

The Materialistic Theory

Comparing the materialistic theory with the known laws of Nature, we find that it is contrary to such well-established laws as those which declare matter and force indestructible. According to those laws mind cannot be destroyed at death as the materialistic theory asserts, for when nothing can be destroyed mind must be included.

Moreover, mind evidently is superior to matter, for it molds the face so that it mirrors the mind; also, we know that the particles of our bodies are constantly changing; that an entire change takes place at least once in seven years. If the materialistic theory were true, our consciousness ought also to undergo an entire change, with no memory of what preceded; so that no one could remember an event more than seven years.

We know that is not the case. We remember our whole life; the smallest incident, though forgotten in ordinary life, is vividly remembered by a drowning person; also in the trance state. Materialism takes no account of these states of sub-consciousness or super-consciousness; it cannot explain them, so it ignores them, but in the face of scientific investigations which have established the verity of psychic phenomena beyond cavil, the policy of ignoring rather than disproving these alleged facts is a fatal defect in a theory which lays claim to solve the greatest problem of life: Life itself.

The materialistic theory has many more defects which render it unworthy of our acceptance; but sufficient has been said to justify us in casting it aside and turning to the other two.

The Theory of Theology

One of the greatest difficulties in the doctrine of the theologians is its entire and confessed inadequacy. According to their theory that a new soul is created at each birth, myriads of souls have been created since the beginning of existence (even if that beginning goes back only 6,000 years). According to certain sects, only 144,000 are to be saved; the rest are to be tortured forever. And that is called "God's plan of salvation"; extolled as proof of God's wonderful love.

Let us suppose a wireless message is received at New York, stating that a large transatlantic liner is sinking just outside Sandy Hook; that 3,000 people are in danger of drowning. Would we hail it as a glorious plan of salvation if a small, fast motorboat were sent to their relief, and succeeded in rescuing two or three people? Certainly not. Only when some adequate means was provided to save the great majority at least would it be hailed as a plan of salvation."

The "plan of salvation" which the theologians are offering is worse than sending a motorboat to save the people on an Atlantic liner, for two or three are a larger proportion saved out of a total of 3,000 than 144,000 of all the myriads of souls created on the plan of theology. If God had really evolved that plan, it would seem to the logical mind that He cannot be good. If He cannot help Himself, He is not all-powerful. In neither case can He therefore be God. Such suppositions are, however, unthinkable as actualities, for that cannot be God's plan, and it is a gross libel to attribute it to Him.

The Doctrine of Rebirth

If we turn to the doctrine of rebirth (rebirth in human bodies) which postulates a slow process of development carried on with unwavering persistence through repeated embodiment in human forms of increasing efficiency, whereby all beings are in time brought to a height of spirituality inconceivable to our present limited understanding, we can readily perceive its harmony with nature's methods. EVERYWHERE IN NATURE IS FOUND THIS SLOW AND PERSISTENT STRIVING FOR PERFECTION; AND NOWHERE IS FOUND A SUDDEN PROCESS OF EITHER CREATION OR DESTRUCTION ANALOGOUS TO THE PLAN WHICH THE THEOLOGIANS AND MATERIALISTS WOULD HAVE US BELIEVE.

Science recognizes the process of evolution as Nature's method of development alike for the star and the starfish, the microbe and the man. It is the progression of spirit in time, and as we look about and note evolution in our three-dimensional universe, we cannot escape the obvious fact that its path is also three-dimensional, a spiral; each loop of the spiral is a cycle, and cycle follows cycle in unbroken progression, as the loops of the spiral succeed each other, each cycle being the improved product of the preceding and the basis of progress in the succeeding cycles.

A straight line is but the extension of a point, and analogous to the theories of the materialist and the theologians. The materialistic line of existence goes from birth to death; the theologian commences the lines at a point just previous to birth and carries it into the invisible beyond at death.

There is no return. Existence thus lived would extract but a minimum of the experience from the school of life, such as might be had by one-dimensional beings incapable of broadening out or rising to sublime heights of attainment.

The Spiral Progression

A two-dimensional zigzag path for the evolving life would be no better, a circle would mean a never-ending round of the same experiences. Everything in Nature has a purpose, the third dimension included. In order that we may live up to the opportunities of a three dimensional universe, the path of evolution must be a spiral. So it is. Everywhere in heaven and on earth all things are going onward, upward forever.

The modest little plant in the garden and the giant redwood of California with its forty-foot diameter alike show the spiral in the arrangement of their branches, twigs, and leaves. If we study the great vaulted arch of heaven and examine the spiral nebulae, which are worlds in the making, or the path of the solar systems, the spiral is evidently the way of progression.

We find another illustration of spiral progression in the yearly course of our planet. In the spring she emerges from her period of rest, her wintry sleep. We see the life budding everywhere. All the activities of Nature are exerted to bring forth. Time passes; the corn and the grape are ripened and harvested, and again the silence and inactivity of winter take the place of the activity of the summer; again the snowy coverlet wraps the Earth. But she will not sleep forever; she will wake again to the song of a new spring, and will then be a little farther progressed along the pathway of time.

The Law of Alternating Cycles

Is it possible that a law, universal in all other realms of Nature, should be abrogated in the case of man? Shall the Earth wake each year from its wintry slumber; shall the tree and the flower live again, and man die? No, that is impossible in a universe governed by immutable law. The same law that wakes the life in the plant to new growth must wake the human being to further progress toward the goal of perfection. Therefore the doctrine of rebirth, or repeated human embodiment in gradually improving vehicles, is in perfect accord with evolution and

The Riddle of Life and Death

the phenomena of Nature, when it states that birth and death follow each other in succession. It is in full harmony with the law of alternating cycles which decrees that activity and rest, ebb and flood, summer and winter, must follow each other in unbroken sequence. It is also in perfect accord with the spiral phase of the Law of Evolution when it states that each time the Spirit returns to a new birth it takes on a better body, and as man progresses in mental, moral, and spiritual attainment in consequence of the accumulated experiences of past lives he comes into an improved environment.

When we seek to solve the riddle of life and death; to find an answer that shall satisfy both head and heart as to the difference in the endowment of human beings, and give a reason for the existence of sorrow and pain; when we ask why one is reared in the lap of luxury while another receives more kicks than crusts; why one obtains a moral education, but another is taught to steal and lie; why one has the face and figure of a Venus, while another has the head of a Medusa; why one has perfect health and another never knows a moment's rest from pain; why one has the intellect of a Socrates, and another can only count "one, two, many," as do the Australian aborigines, we receive no satisfaction from the materialist or the theologian. Materialism gives the law of heredity as the reason for sickness, and in regard to economic conditions a Spencer tells us that in the animal world the law of existence is "eat, or be eaten"; in civilized society it is "cheat, or be cheated."

Accounting for Moral Proclivities

Heredity accounts partly for the PHYSICAL constitution. Like begets like, so far as the FORM is concerned, but heredity does not account for the moral proclivities and mental trend, which differ in each human being. Heredity is a fact in the lower kingdoms where all the animals of a certain species look nearly alike, eat the same kind of food, and act similarly in similar circumstances, because they have no individual will, but are dominated by a common Group Spirit. In the human kingdom it is different. Each man acts differently from others. Each requires a different diet. As the years of infancy and youth pass the indwelling Ego molds its instrument so that it reflects itself in the features. Thus no two look exactly alike. Even twins who could not be distinguished in childhood grow to look different as the features of each express the thought of the Ego within.

On the moral plane a like condition prevails. Police records show that though the children of habitual criminals generally possess criminal tendencies, they invariably keep out of the courts, and in the "rogues' galleries" of Europe and America it is impossible to find both father and son. Thus criminals are the sons of honest people, and so heredity is unable to account for moral proclivities.

When we come to a consideration of the higher intellectual and artistic faculties we find that the children of a genius are mediocre and often even idiots. Cuvier's brain was the greatest brain ever weighed and analyzed by science. His five children died of paresis. The brother of Alexander the Great was an idiot, and so cases could be cited ad lib. to show that heredity only partially accounts for similarity of Form, and not at all for mental and moral conditions. The Law of Attraction, which causes musicians to congregate in concert halls, and brings about meetings of literary people because of similarity of tastes; and the Law of Consequence, which draws one who has developed criminal tendencies into association with criminals, that he may learn to do good by beholding the trouble incident to wrong-doing, account more logically than heredity for the facts of associations and character.

The theologian explains that all conditions are made by the will of God, who in His inscrutable wisdom has seen fit to make some rich and poor; some clever and others dull, etc.; that He sends trouble and trials to all, much to the many and little to a favored few, and they say we must accept our lot without murmur. But it is hard to look with love to the skies when one realizes that thence, according to divine caprice, comes all our misery, be it little or much, and the benevolent human mind revolts at the thought of a father who lavishes love, comfort, and luxury upon a few, and sends sorrow, suffering, and misery to millions. Surely there must be another solution to the problems of life than this. Is it not more reasonable to think that the theologians may have misinterpreted the Bible than to saddle such monstrous conduct upon God?

The Law of Consequence

The Law of Rebirth offers a reasonable solution to all the inequalities of life, its sorrow and pains, when coupled with its companion law--the Law of Consequence--besides showing the road to emancipation.

The Law of Consequence is Nature's law of justice. It decrees that whatever a man sows, he reaps. What we are, what we have, all our good qualities are the result of our labor in the past, thence our talents. What we lack in physical, moral, or mental accomplishments is due to neglect of opportunities in the past or to lack of them, but sometime, somewhere, we shall have other chances, and retrieve the loss. As to our obligations to others or their debts to us, the Law of Consequence also takes care of that. What cannot be liquidated in one life holds over to future lives. Death does not cancel our obligations any more than moving to another city pays our debts here. The Law of Rebirth provides a new environment, but in it are our old friends, and our old enemies. We know them, too, for when we meet a person for the first time, yet feel as if we had known him all our lives, that is but the recognition of the Ego who pierces the veil of flesh and recognizes an old friend. When we meet a person who at once inspires us with fear or repugnance, it is again a message from the Ego, warning us of our old-time enemy.

The School of Life

The occult teaching regarding life, which bases its solution upon the twin Laws of Consequence and Rebirth, is simply that the world about us is a school of experience; that even as we send a child to school day after day and year after year in order that it may learn more and more as it advances through the different grades from kindergarten to college, so the Ego in man, as a child of the Father, goes to the school of life, day after day. But in that larger life of the Ego, each day at school is a life on earth and the night which intervenes between two days at the child's school corresponds to the sleep of death in the larger life of the human Ego (the Spirit in man).

In a school there are many grades. The older children who have attended school many times have very different lessons from the tots in the kindergarten. So in the school of life, those in high positions, endowed with great faculties, are our Elder Brothers, and the savages are but entering the lowest class. What they are we have been, and all will in time reach a point where they will be wiser than the wisest we know. Nor should it surprise the philosopher that the powerful crush the weak; the elder children are cruel to their younger brothers at a certain stage of their growth because they have not at that time evolved the true sense of right, but as they grow they learn to protect weakness. So will the children of the larger life. Altruism is flowering more and more everywhere, and the day will come when all men will be as good and benevolent as are the greatest saints.

There is but one sin--Ignorance; and but one salvation--Applied Knowledge. All sorrow, suffering and pain are traceable to ignorance of how to act, and the school of life is as necessary to bring out our latent capabilities as is the daily school which evokes those of the child.

We are Masters of Our Destiny

When we realize that this is so, life will at once take on an altogether different aspect. It does not matter then what the conditions are in which we find ourselves, the knowledge that WE have made them helps us to bear them in patience; and, best of all, the glorious feeling that we are masters of our destiny and can make the FUTURE what we will, is of itself a power. It rests with us to develop what we lack. Of course we still have the past to reckon with, and perhaps much misfortune may yet accrue from wrong deeds, but if we will cease to do evil we may look with joy to every affliction as liquidating an old score and bringing the day nearer when we shall have a clear record. It is no valid objection, that often the most upright suffer the greatest. The great intelligences who apportion to each man the amount of his past score which is to be liquidated in each life always help the man who pays the debts of his past without adding new delinquencies, by giving him as much as he can bear, to hasten the day of emancipation; and in that sense it is strictly true that "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth."

The Riddle of Life and Death

The doctrine of rebirth is sometimes confounded with the theory of transmigration, which teaches that a human soul may incarnate in an animal. That has no foundation in Nature. Each species of animal is the emanation from a Group Spirit, which governs them FROM THE OUTSIDE, by suggestion. It functions in the Desire World; and as distance does not exist there, it can thus influence its members, no matter where located. The human Spirit, the Ego, on the other hand, enters right into a dense body; there is an individual Spirit in each person, dwelling in its instrument and guiding it FROM WITHIN. These are two entirely different stages of evolution, and it is as impossible for man to incarnate in an animal body as for a Group Spirit to take human shape.

Remembering Past Lives

The question, "Why do we not remember our past existences?" is another apparent difficulty. But if we realize that we have an entirely new brain at each birth, and that the human Spirit is weak and engrossed in its new environment, so that it fails to make a full impression on the brain in the days of childhood, when it is most sensitive, it is not so surprising after all. Some children do remember the past, especially in the earliest years, and it is one of the most pathetic phases of childhood that they are so thoroughly misunderstood by their elders. When they speak of the past, they are ridiculed, and even punished for being "imaginary." If children speak of their invisible playmates, and of "seeing things," for many children are clairvoyant, they meet the same harsh treatment, and the inevitable result is that the little ones learn to keep still until they lose the faculty. Sometimes it happens, however, that the prattle of a child is listened to and results in some wonderful revelations. The writer heard of such a case a few years ago on the Pacific Coast.

A Remarkable Story

A little child in Santa Barbara ran up to a gentleman by the name of Roberts on the street and called him papa, persisting that she had lived with him and another mama in a little house by a brook, and that one morning he had left the cabin and never returned. She and her mother had both died of starvation and the little one finished quaintly, "But I didn't die; I came here." The story was not told at once, or succinctly, but in the course of an afternoon, by intermittent questioning it came out. Mr. Roberts' story of an early elopement, marriage and emigration from England to Australia, of the building of a cabin by a stream with no other houses near, of leaving his wife and baby, of being arrested, denied permission to notify his wife because the officers feared a trap, of being driven to the coast at the point of a gun, of being taken to England and tried for a bank robbery committed the night he sailed for Australia, of proving his innocence; of how only then notice was taken of his persistent ravings about a wife and child who must starve to death, of the telegram sent, the search party organized and the answer that they had found but the skeletons of a woman and a child. All these things corroborated the story of the little three-year-old tot; and being shown some photographs in a casual way, she picked out the pictures of Mr. Roberts and his wife, though Mr. Roberts had altered much in the eighteen years which intervened between the tragedy and the Santa Barbara incident.

Frequency of Rebirth

It must not be supposed, however, that all who pass through the gate of death reenter as quickly as that. Such a short interim would give the Ego no chance to do the important work of assimilating experiences and preparation for a new Earth-life. But a three year old child has had no experience to speak of, so it seeks a new embodiment quickly, often incarnating in the same family as before. Children often die because a change in the parents' habits has frustrated the working out of their past acts. It is then necessary to seek another chance, or they are born and die to teach the parents a needed lesson. In one case an Ego incarnated eight times in the same family for that purpose before the lesson was learned. Then it incarnated elsewhere. It was a friend of the family who acquired great merit by thus helping them.

The Light Beyond Death

The Law of Rebirth, where it is not modified by the Law of Consequence to such an extent as in the above cases, works according to the movement of the Sun known as the precession of the equinoxes, by which the Sun goes backward through the twelve signs of the zodiac in the so-called sidereal or world-year comprising 25,868 of our ordinary solar years.

As the passage of the Earth in her orbit around the Sun makes the climatic changes which alter our conditions according to seasons and change our activities, so the passage of the Sun through the great world-year makes still greater changes in climate and topographical conditions, in respect to civilization, and it is necessary that the Ego should learn to cope with it all.

Therefore the Ego incarnates twice in the time it takes the Sun to go through each one of the signs of the zodiac, which is about 2,100 years. There are thus normally about 1,000 years between two incarnations and, while the experiences of a man are widely different from those of a woman, the conditions are not materially different in a thousand years, so the Spirit usually incarnates alternately as a man and a woman. But that is not a hard and fast rule; it is subject to modification when such is required by the Law of Consequence.

Solution of the Riddle

Thus occult science resolves the riddle of life into the Ego's quest for experience, all conditions having that purpose in view, and all being automatically determined by desert; it robs death of its terror and its sting, by placing it where it belongs, as an incident in a larger life, similar to the removal to another city for a time; it makes the parting from loved ones easier by assuring us that the very love we feel will be the means of reuniting us, and it gives us the grandest hope in life that some day we shall all obtain the knowledge which illumines all problems, links all our lives, and best of all, as taught by occult science, we have it in our own power, by application, to hasten that glorious day when faith shall be swallowed up in knowledge. Then we shall realize in a higher sense the beauty of Sir Edwin Arnold's poetic statement of the doctrine of rebirth:

Never the Spirit was born!
The Spirit shall cease to be never!
Never was time it was not,
End and beginning are dreams.
Birthless and deathless remaineth the spirit forever.
Death has not touched it at all,
Dead though the house of it seems.

Nay! but as one layeth
A worn-out robe away.
And taking another sayeth:
This will I wear today,
So putteth by the spirit
Lightly its garment of flesh
And passeth on to inherit
A residence afresh.

CHAPTER IV

Where Are the Dead?

A little thought will soon make it apparent to any investigator that we live in a world of EFFECT which is the result of INVISIBLE CAUSES. MATTER and FORM we see, but the FORCE which molds the matter into form and quickens it is invisible to us. Life cannot be cognized directly by the senses; it is invisible and self-existent, independent of the varied forms we see as its manifestations.

Electricity, magnetism, and steam are names given to forces never seen with physical eyes, though, by conforming to certain laws discovered by experiment, we have made them our most valuable servants. We see their manifestations in moving streetcars, in railways and steamships; they light our path at night and carry our message around the globe with a speed that annihilates space. They are at our beck and call at any and all hours, tireless and faithful in the performance of innumerable tasks, yet, as said, we have never seen these, our most faithful and valuable servants.

These Nature Forces are neither blind nor unintelligent as we mistakenly think; there are many classes of them and they work along different avenues of life. Perhaps an illustration will make clear their status in relation to us. Let us suppose a carpenter is making a fence and a dog is standing by watching him. The dog sees both the carpenter and his work, though it does not fully comprehend what he is doing. If the carpenter were invisible to the dog it would see the fence being slowly built, it would see every nail driven, it would perceive the manifestation but not the cause, and it would then be in the same relation to the carpenter as we are to the Nature Forces which manifest about us as gravity, electricity, and magnetism.

Scientific Progress

During the past few centuries, but particularly in the last sixty years, science has made giant strides in the investigation of the world in which we live, and the result has been to reveal in all directions a hitherto invisible world. With telescopes of increasing power the astronomers have been reaching out into space, discovering more and more worlds; with admirable ingenuity they have attached the camera to the telescope, and have thus been able to photograph suns at such enormous distances from us that their rays make no impression on our eyes, and can only be caught by hours of exposure of a sensitized photographic plate.

In the direction of the minutely small, the increasing perfection of the microscope has achieved similar results; a world that was hitherto invisible to us has been discovered, containing an exceeding activity of LIFE and marked by a diversity of form scarcely less complex than the world we behold through our unaided senses.

The effort of making such investigations through the eyepiece of a microscope is a severe one, causing intense strain on the eyes; but here also the camera lends its aid to man. With proper mechanical attachments and lightning speed it can make permanent records of microscopic phenomena at the rate of perhaps seventy negatives per second. These may then be magnified and projected upon a screen as moving pictures; they may be seen by hundreds of people at the same time in comfort and ease.

We may see how the sap slowly circulates through the veins of a leaf, or watch the way the blood races like a millstream through the semitransparent veins of a frog's leg. Maggots in cheese appear as large as gray crabs meandering hither and thither in search of prey. A drop of water contains many dark colored balls which grow and burst, throwing out numerous tiny globes which in their turn expand and fling out offspring. Dr. Bastian of London has even seen how a little black spot on the spine of a cyclop (of which there are many in a drop of water) developed into a parasite which fed on the cyclop.

The Light Beyond Death

By means of the X-ray science has been able to invade the innermost recesses of the dense body of the living human, photographing the skeleton and any foreign substance which may have become located there by accident.

Thus in many directions a hitherto invisible world has presented itself to the gaze of the persistent investigators. Who shall say the end has been reached; that there are no other worlds in space beyond those now photographed by astronomers; no life dwelling in forms more minute than those discovered by the best microscopes of today? Tomorrow an instrument may be designed that will reach beyond all previous devices and show much of what is hidden today. The infinitude of space, of the great and of the small seems to be beyond question and independent of our cognition.

Investigating Invisible Worlds

In looking over the marvelous achievements of physical science, there is one characteristic particularly worth while to note; namely, that each new discovery has been made through the invention of new or the improvement of previously existing devices to aid the senses; and for that reason the investigations of science have been limited to the world of sense -- the dense Physical World. Scientists have dealt with the chemical elements: solids, liquids, and gases; but beyond that they have no instruments capable of reaching, although forced to postulate a still finer matter they call "ether," because without this finer medium they find it impossible to account for light, electricity, etc. Thus we see that physical science inductively recognizes the existence of an invisible world as a necessity in the economy of Nature.

Both physical and occult science are therefore agreed on that point and both reach into the invisible world for solutions to problems. They differ as to the method of investigation and the credence to be given evidence thus obtained. Material science seeks only for explanation to problems insoluble on a purely physical basis, such as the passage of light waves through a vacuum or the resemblance of the flowers of the present season to those of past summers. In such cases science readily postulates an invisible, intangible something like ether or heredity and prides itself on its acumen and the ingenuity of its explanations.

Occult science asserts that THERE IS AN INVISIBLE CAUSE AT THE ROOT OF ALL VISIBLE PHENOMENA, which when known will afford a more thorough knowledge of the facts of life than a mechanical concept, and that the most comprehensive idea of life is obtained by the study of BOTH the phenomena of the visible and the noumena or underlying causes of the invisible world. It therefore investigates the invisible worlds and offers a more thorough and reasonable solution to the problems of life than mere facts of science derived only through observation of the physical phenomena.

Proving Scientific Hypotheses

Material science postulates ether and heredity as solutions to the above problems, though unable to offer actual proof of the truth of its hypotheses except their seeming reasonableness. Yet when occult science employs similar methods and declares the existence of the Spirit, its immortality, its pre-existence to birth, and persistence after death, its independence of the body, etc., physical science sneers and inconsistently speaks of superstition and ignorance. It demands proof, though the evidence offered is at least as good as the scientific evidence of the existence of ether, heredity, and numerous other ideas advanced by science, implicitly believed in by the multitude that admiringly bows its head in the dust before any dictum supported by the magic word Science.

No one can demonstrate the truth of a proposition in geometry to a person unacquainted with the principles of mathematics. For similar reasons the facts of the inner worlds cannot be proved to the material scientist. If the person with mathematical knowledge studies that science he will be easily satisfied as to the solution of the problem. When the physical scientist has fitted himself for the apprehension of superphysical facts he will have the proof and be compelled to uphold the very theories he now combats as superstition.

Where Are the Dead?

Occult science commences its investigations at the point where material science leaves off, at the door to the superphysical realms, mistakenly called supernatural. There is nothing "*supernatural*" or "*unnatural*"; nothing whatever can be outside Nature, although it may easily be superphysical, for the Physical World is the smallest part of the Earth. Unlike the material scientist, however, the occult scientist does not pursue his investigations by means of mechanical instruments, but by IMPROVING HIMSELF; by cultivating faculties of perception latent in every human being and capable of being awakened by proper training. The words of Christ, "Seek and ye shall find," were particularly applied to spiritual qualities, and directed to "whosoever will." All depends upon oneself; there is none to hinder and many to help the earnest seeker after knowledge. The discussion of the means and ways are, however, outside the present topic, and must be left for elucidation in future essays.

Why Study Invisible Worlds?

"But," someone will say, "what is the use of troubling about an invisible world? We are placed here in this workaday material world; what have we to do with an invisible world? And even though it may be true that we go there after death, why not take one world at a time? 'Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof'; why borrow more?"

Surely such a view is a most shortsighted one. In the first place, a knowledge of the after-death state would take away the fear of death which haunts so many people even while they are in the most vigorous health. In the most careless life there are times when the thought of the leap in the dark which must some time be taken dulls the sense of joy in life; and any explanation offering definite, reliable knowledge upon this important subject surely ought to be eagerly welcomed.

Besides, as we look about us in the world, we see there is one law that must be apparent even to the most callous: the law of causation. Each day our work and condition depend upon what we did or did not do the day before; it is absolutely impossible for us to tear ourselves away from our past; to "start afresh." We cannot perform an act that is not connected in some way with our previous acts, limited and hedged about by former conditions; and it must surely appear as reasonable to suppose that, whatever may be the mode of expression of life in the invisible world, it will be in some way determined by our present mode of life. It would be logical, also, to declare that if reliable information about this invisible world were available it would be wise to prepare oneself with it for the same reason that when we wish to travel in a foreign country we acquaint ourselves with its geography, laws, customs, language, or other necessary information. We do this because we know that the more thoroughly we are primed with this knowledge the more we shall profit by our travel and the less will be the annoyances due to changed conditions. The same must logically hold as regards the postmortem state.

Again some objector will say: "Ah, but that is just the rub! Whatever the condition after death may be no one knows for certain. Those who profess to know all differ from each other in their stories, many of which are unreasonable, impossible--"

In the first place, no man has a moral right to assert that NO ONE knows, except he himself is omniscient and knows the extent of the knowledge of ALL who live; and it is the height of arrogance to attempt to judge the mental capacity of all others by the exceedingly narrow ideas which wiseacres who make such statements generally have. The wise man will always have an ear open for new evidence, he will be willing and eager to investigate; and even though there were but one man who professed knowledge of the invisible worlds, that would not necessarily prove him mistaken. Did not Galileo stand alone in asserting his theory concerning the movement of the heavenly bodies, to which the whole western world has since become converted?

Points of View

As to the difference of the stories told by those who profess to know about the invisible worlds, this is not only to be expected but is a valuable feature, as an illustration from daily life will show.

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Supposing San Francisco had been entirely rebuilt on an imposing scale with all the latest and most modern improvements, and had decided to celebrate the occasion by a grand festival. Many thousands would flock to the Golden Gate to rejoice in the new Phoenix which had arisen from the ashes of that beautiful city, so suddenly swept from the face of the earth in a fiery death. Among others would probably come a considerable number of newspaper men, reporters from different parts of the country, for the purpose of sending reports to their respective publications. It is a foregone conclusion that although reporters are trained observers, no two reports would be alike. Some might have certain points in general. Some would be unlike the others in every respect, for the simple reason that every reporter saw the city from his own particular viewpoint and noted only what appealed to him. Thus, instead of the diversity of reports being an argument against their accuracy it will readily be seen that they would all be valuable as different phases of the one whole; and it is safe to say that a man who read all the different reports would have a vastly more comprehensive idea of San Francisco than if he had read only one report subscribed to by all the reporters.

The same principle holds good concerning the different stories describing the invisible worlds; they are not necessarily untrue because varying, but form collectively a more complete narrative.

Negative Testimony

As to the "impossible" stories, let us suppose that one of our San Francisco reporters instead of observing had spent the time enjoying himself, and sent in an imaginary report; surely that would not invalidate the honest reports. Or let us suppose that one was wearing a pair of yellow spectacles put on him without his knowledge and he sent a report that the houses and streets were of gold; that would only show HIS ignorance in not knowing that the glasses were that color and not the city; and his report should not reflect on the sanity and veracity of the others. Lastly, let us remember that even though some things are at present beyond OUR reasoning power that does not prove that they are unreasonable. The fact that a baby cannot understand square root constitutes no valid argument against mathematics. In short, no reasonable argument can be made by the materialist to prove that there is no invisible world any more than the man born blind can successfully debate against the existence of light and color in the world about him. If his sight is obtained he will see them. So no argument from those blind to the invisible world can convince the seer of the nonexistence of what he sees, and if the proper sense is awakened in such people they too will perceive a world to which they have previously been insensible, though it was all about them, as light and color pervade the sense-world, whether perceived or not.

Positive Evidence

Passing onward from this negative testimony to the existence of the superphysical realms, to more positive evidence, an everyday illustration will show how matter is constantly changing from denser to finer states in Nature. If we take a block of ice we have a "solid"; by applying heat to it we raise the vibrations of the atoms which compose it, and it becomes a "liquid"--"water." If we apply more heat we raise the vibrations of the atoms in the water to such a rate that it becomes invisible to the eye; then we have a "gas" which we call "steam." The same matter which was visible in the ice and in the water has passed from our sight but not out of existence; for by the application of cold it will be condensed into water, and then may again be frozen into ice.

Though matter may pass beyond the range of our perception it still persists. So does consciousness continue though it may be unable to give to me the slightest sign of existence. That has been proven in cases where a person has seemingly died, where not the faintest flutter of the heart or the slightest respiratory movement could be perceived, and perhaps at the last moment before interment, the supposedly dead would come to life, repeat every word and describe every action of those who had been around him while entranced.

Therefore, when matter, which is indestructible, is known to exist in states invisible and intangible, and when consciousness is as alert, or even keener when the dense body is entranced than in ordinary waking life, is it not reasonable to suppose that this consciousness may mold the matter invisible to us and function in it when

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excarnate (as it shapes during earth-life the matter of this world), thus bringing into existence another world of form and consciousness as real to the excarnate Spirit as this world is to the eyes dwelling in fleshly bodies?

Even during life in the dense body we know and deal with the invisible world at every moment of our existence, and the life which we live there is the most important part of our being--the basis of our life in the dense world.

Crystallized Imaginations

We all have an inner life where we live amidst our thoughts and feelings in scenes and under conditions unknown to our outside environment. There the mind shapes our ideas into thought pictures which we afterwards externalize. All, everything we see about us and contact with our senses and call real, is but the evanescent shadow of the intangible, invisible world. The visible world has consolidated from the invisible realms in essentially the same manner that the hard and flinty house of the snail has crystallized from the juices of its soft body. Moreover, as the house of the snail is inert and would remain motionless did not the snail move it about, so the bodies of plant, animal, and man are but inert emanations from the Spirit which dwells in the invisible world, and except this indwelling life galvanizes the form into action it is incapable of movement. These bodies are preserved only so long as they serve the purpose of the Spirit; when that leaves there is nothing to hold the form together, so it decays.

Furthermore, all that we see about us, as houses, streetcars, steamboats, telephones, in short, all objects that have been fashioned by the hand of man are crystallized IMAGINATIONS which had their origin in the invisible world. If Graham Bell had not been able to imagine the telephone it would never have come into existence. It was Fulton's "inner life" that first witnessed the birth of the steamboat, long before it became the visible "Clermont."

The Reality of Ideas

As to the reality and permanence of the objects in the invisible world, they are far more so than the visible conditions which we mistakenly think of as the acme of "reality." We regard our mental pictures and imaginations as less real than a mirage and speak of them in a slighting manner as a "mere thought" or "just an idea," when in truth they are the underlying realities of all that we see in the world about us. An illustration will further emphasize the point:

When an architect wishes to build a house he does not order lumber and other material sent to the building site, hire workmen and tell them to go ahead and build! He formulates an idea, thinks it out, first building the house "in his mind" with as much detail as possible, and from this mental model the house might be built if it could be seen by the workmen, but it is yet in the invisible world; and although the architect perceives it plainly, "the veil of flesh" prevents others seeing it. Thus it becomes necessary to bring it within the sense world and make a visible plan which the workmen may follow. This is the first consolidation of the thought picture of the architect and when the house is built we see in wood and stone what was first an idea in the architect's mind and invisible to us.

As to the relative stability of the idea and building; it is plain that the house may be destroyed by dynamite or some other powerful element of destruction, but the "idea" in the architect's mind even he cannot destroy; and from that "idea" a similar house may be built at any time while the architect lives. Even after his death the idea may be found in the Memory of Nature (of which more will be explained in the next essay), by anyone qualified for this research; for no matter how long ago the impression was formed it is never lost or destroyed.

While we may thus inductively "infer" the existence of an invisible world this is not the only means of proof. There is an abundance of direct testimony to show that there is such a world, testimony from men and women of unquestioned integrity whose truth and accuracy are never questioned regarding other matters, who state that this invisible world is inhabited by those whom we call dead, who are living there in full possession of all their mental and emotional faculties, living under conditions which make their life as real and profitable as ours, perhaps more

so. It is further capable of proof that at least some of them take considerable interest in the affairs of the Physical World. Suffice it to take two instances of world-wide fame.

Joan of Arc

There is first the testimony of Jeanne D'Arc, the "maid of Orleans," to hearing "voices which spoke to and directed her." Let us consider the story of her life and see if it does not bear the stamp of truth. Here we have a simple, pure, and unsophisticated peasant girl, scarcely more than a child, who had never been outside her native village before going upon her "mission." She was extremely timid, afraid of disobeying her father, yet the imperious "voices" drove her to brave his displeasure and she set out to find the King of France. After much trouble but constantly guided by voices, she was finally granted an audience by the King. When she entered the King stood in the midst of his courtiers, a puppet was seated on the throne, and everyone expected to see her discomfited, for she had never seen the King, but, guided by the faithful voices, Jean unhesitatingly walked up to him and saluted. She convinced him of the truth of her mission by whispering in his ear an exceedingly weighty secret known only to himself.

In consequence of this proof the command of the French army was taken out of the hands of the experienced generals, who had been defeated by the English at every turn, and placed in the hands of this child who knew nothing of war craft herself, yet, taught by her invisible prompters, led the French troops to victory. Her knowledge of military tactics was the constant wonder of her associates, and in itself a proof of the guidance she claimed.

Next we see her imprisoned, subjected for years to threats or cajolery, as the mood of her cruel persecutors prompted, to induce her to acknowledge that there had been no voices, but the records of the proceedings of her different trials show in her answers a singleness of mind, an innocence and a straightforwardness unequalled in the annals of history, which confounded her judges at every turn. Not even death at the stake could make her abjure the truth as she knew it, and to this day her testimony to the guiding voices from the invisible world stands unshaken, sealed with her life blood. This martyr to truth has lately been canonized a saint by the church which slew her.

"Ah, but," some one may say, "while she was no doubt honest, she was but a simple peasant girl, unaware that she was suffering from hallucinations!" Strange hallucinations which enabled her to unhesitatingly pick out the King she had never seen and tell him a secret unknown to any other person, to accurately describe battles while they were being fought many miles away, as afterwards verified by participants.

Socrates

But let us pass on to our second witness, who is by no means of the "simple minded." In that respect Socrates is an absolute contrast to Jeanne D'Arc, for his was the keenest intellect, the greatest mind we know, unexcelled to the present day. He also sealed his testimony to the voice of guidance from the invisible world with his life blood, and we may take it as a self-evident fact that it must have been an exceedingly intelligent voice or it would never have been able to counsel so great a sage as Socrates.

To hold that he was insane or suffering from hallucinations will hardly meet the case, for a man who, like Socrates, would weigh all other matters with such nicety, is above suspicion in that respect, and the more reasonable course is to acknowledge that "there are more things in heaven and earth" than we know individually or collectively, and then start to investigate.

That is indeed what the most advanced people are doing in our day and age, realizing that it is just as foolish to be too skeptical to investigate as to be over credulous and take for gospel truth everything we hear. Only by

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properly informing ourselves is it possible for us to arrive at a conclusion worthy of our manhood or womanhood, no matter whether we decide one way or the other.

Testimony of a Scientist

Recognizing this principle, and the signal importance of the subject, the Society for Psychical Research was formed more than a quarter of a century ago and numbers among its members some of the brightest minds of our time. They have spared no pains to sift truth from error in the many thousands of cases brought to their attention, and as a result we find that one of the most prominent scientists of our time, Sir Oliver Lodge, as president of the society, gave to the world several years ago the statement that "the existence of an invisible world, inhabited by the so-called dead, and their power to communicate with this world, had been established beyond peradventure in such an abundance of cases as to leave no room for doubt."

Coming as that statement does, from one of the greatest of modern scientists, one who has brought to his psychic studies a mind sharpened by science, who was well protected against being duped in any way, such testimony should command the highest respect among all who are seeking for truth.

"There is no Death"

Having thus submitted inductive, deductive, and direct evidence, we may add that the existence of another world, intangible to the five senses but readily investigated by means of a "sixth sense," is a fact in Nature, whether we recognize it or not, as light and color exist around "blind" and "seeing" alike. It is the blind man's loss that he cannot see the light and color all about him. It is ours if we are "blind" to the superphysical realms; but to all who will take the trouble to awaken their latent faculties, the opening of the proper sense is but a matter of time. When that time comes we shall see that the so-called "dead" are all about us, and that in fact "there is no death," as John McCreery says in the following beautiful poem:

There is no death. The stars go down
To rise upon another shore,
And bright in heaven's jeweled crown
They shine for evermore.

There is no death. The forest leaves
Convert to life the viewless air;
The rocks disorganize to feed
The hungry moss they bear.

There is no death. The dust we tread
Shall change beneath the summer showers
To golden grain or mellow fruit,
Or rainbow-tinted flowers.

There is no death. The leaves may fall,
The flowers may fade and pass away--
They only wait through wintry hours
The warm, sweet breath of May.

There is no death, although we grieve
When beautiful familiar forms
That we have learned to love are torn
From our embracing arms.

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Although with bowed and breaking heart.
With sable garb and silent tread
We bear their senseless dust to rest
And say that they are dead--

They are not dead. They have but passed
Beyond the mists that blind us here
Into the new and larger life
Of that serener sphere.

They have but dropped their robe of clay
To put a shining raiment on;
They have not wandered far away,
They are not "lost" or "gone."

Though unseen to the mortal eye,
They still are here and love us yet;
The dear ones they have left behind
They never do forget.

Sometimes upon our fevered brow
We feel their touch, a breath of balm;
Our spirit sees them, and our hearts
Grow comforted and calm.

Yes, ever near us, though unseen,
Our dear, immortal spirits tread--
For all God's boundless Universe
Is Life--there are no dead.

CHAPTER V

Death and Life in Purgatory

Amid all the uncertainties which are the characteristics of the world, there is but one certainty--Death. At one time or another, after a short or a long life, comes this termination to the material phase of our existence which is a birth into a new world, as that which we term "birth" is, in the beautiful words of Wordsworth, a forgetting of a past.

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar:
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing Boy,
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
He sees it in his joy;
The Youth, who daily farther from the east
Must travel, still is Nature's priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended;
At length the Man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

Birth and death may therefore be regarded as the shifting of man's activity from one world to another, and it depends upon our own position whether we designate such a change birth or death. If a man enters the world in which we live, we call it birth, if he leaves our plane of existence to enter another world, we call it death; but to the individual concerned the passage from one world to another is but as the removal to another city here; he LIVES, unchanged; only his exterior surroundings and condition are changed.

Unconsciousness at Birth and Death

The passage from one world to another is often attended by more or less unconsciousness, like sleep as Wordsworth says, and for that reason our consciousness may be fixed upon the world we have left. In infancy heaven lies about us in actual fact; children are all clairvoyant for a longer or shorter time after birth, and whoever passes out at death still beholds the material world for some time. If we pass out in the full vigor of physical manhood or womanhood, with strong ties of family, friends, or other interests, the dense world will continue to attract our attention for a much longer time than if death occurred at a "ripe old age," when the earthly ties have been severed before the change we call death. This is on the same principle that the seed clings to the flesh of unripe fruit, while it is easily and cleanly detached from the ripe fruit. Therefore it is easier to die at an advanced age than in youth.

The unconsciousness which usually attends the change of the incoming spirit at birth, and the outgoing spirit at death is due to our inability to adjust our focus instantly, and is similar to the difficulty we experience when

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passing from a darkened room to the street on a light, sunny day, or vice versa. Under those conditions some time elapses before we can distinguish objects about us; so with the newly born and to the newly dead, both have to readjust their viewpoint to their new condition.

When the moment arrives which marks the completion of life in the physical world, the usefulness of the dense body has ended, and the Ego withdraws from it by way of the head, taking with it the mind and the desire body, as it does every night during sleep, but now the vital body is useless, so that too is withdrawn, and when the "silver cord" which united the higher to the lower vehicles snaps, it can never be repaired.

Weighing the Vital Body

We remember that the vital body is composed of ether, superimposed upon the dense bodies of plant, animal, and man during life. Ether is physical matter, and has therefore weight. The only reason why the scientists cannot weigh it is because they are unable to gather a quantity and put it upon a scale. But when it leaves the dense body at death a diminution in weight will take place in every instance, showing that something having weight, yet invisible, leaves the dense body at that time.

In 1906 Dr. McDougall, of Boston, weighed a number of dying persons by putting their beds upon scales, which he balanced. It was noted that the platform bearing the weights came down with startling suddenness at the moment when the last breath was drawn. The news was flashed all over the Union that the soul had been weighed, an achievement that can never be accomplished, for the soul is not amenable to physical laws. Later Professor Twining, of Los Angeles, supposedly weighed the soul of a mouse, but what the scientists really did was to weigh the vital body as it leaves the dense body at death.

Sins Against the Dying

A word should be spoken in regard to the treatment of dying persons, who suffer unspeakable agony in many cases through the mistaken kindness of friends. More suffering is caused by administering stimulants to the dying than perhaps in any other way. It is not hard to pass out of the body, but stimulants have the effect of throwing the departing Ego back into its body with the force of a catapult, to experience anew the sufferings from which it was just escaping. Departed souls have often complained to investigators, and one such person said that he had not suffered as much in all his life as he did while kept from dying for many hours. The only rational way is to leave Nature to take its course when it is seen that the end is inevitable.

Another and more far-reaching sin against the passing Spirit is to give vent to loud crying or lamentation in or near the death chamber. Just subsequent to its release and from a few hours to a few days afterwards, the Ego is engaged upon a matter of the utmost importance; a great deal of the value of the past life depends upon the attention given to it by the passing spirit. If distracted by the sobs and lamentations of loved ones, it will lose much, as we shall see, but if strengthened by prayer and helped by silence, much future sorrow to all concerned may be avoided. We are never so much our brother's keeper as when he is passing through Gethsemane, and it is one of our greatest opportunities for serving him and laying up heavenly treasure for ourselves.

The Need for a Science of Death

We have studied the phenomenon of birth, and have evolved a SCIENCE OF BIRTH. We have qualified obstetricians and trained nurses to minister in the best possible manner to both mother and child to make them comfortable, but we are sadly, very sadly, in need of a SCIENCE OF DEATH. When a child is coming into the world we bustle about in intelligent endeavor; when a lifelong friend is about to leave us we stand helplessly about, ignorant of how to aid, or worse, worse than all, we bungle, and cause suffering instead of helping.

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Physical science knows that whatever the power which moves the heart, it does not come from without, but is inside the heart. The occult scientist sees a chamber in the left ventricle, near the apex, where a little atom swims in a sea of the highest ether. The force in that atom, like the forces in all other atoms is THE UNDIFFERENTIATED LIFE OF GOD; without that force the mineral could not form matter into crystals, the plant, animal, and human kingdoms would be unable to form their bodies. The deeper we go the plainer it becomes to us how fundamentally true it is that in God we live, move, and have our being.

The Seed Atom and the Silver Cord

That atom is called the "seed-atom." The force within it moves the heart and keeps the organism alive. All the other atoms in the whole body must vibrate in tune with this atom. The forces of the seed-atom have been immanent in every dense body ever possessed by the particular Ego to whom it is attached, and upon its plastic tablet are inscribed all the experiences of that particular Ego in all its lives. When we return to God, when we shall all have become one in God once more, that record, which is peculiarly God's record, will still remain, and thus we shall retain our individuality. Our experiences we transmute, as will be described, into faculties; the evil is transmuted into good and the good we retain as power for higher good, but THE RECORD of the experiences is OF God, and IN God, in the most intimate sense.

The "silver cord" which unites the higher and lower vehicles terminates at the seed-atom in the heart. When material life comes to an end in the natural manner the forces in the seed-atom disengage themselves, pass outward along the pneumogastric nerve, the back of the head and along the silver cord together with the higher vehicles. It is this rupture in the heart which marks physical death, but the connecting silver cord is not broken at once, in some cases not for several days.

The vital body is the vehicle of sense-perception. As that remains with the body of feeling and the etheric cord connects them with the discarded dense body, it will be evident that until the cord is severed there must be a certain amount of feeling experienced by the Ego when its dense body is molested. Thus, it causes pain when the blood is extracted and embalming fluid injected, when the body is opened for postmortem examination, and when the body is cremated.

A case was told the writer where a surgeon amputated three toes from a (living) person under anesthetics. He threw the severed toes into a bright coal fire, and immediately the patient commenced to scream, for the rapid disintegration of the material toes caused an equally rapid disintegration of the etheric toes, which were connected with the higher vehicles. In like manner molestations affect the discarnate Spirit from a few hours to three and one-half days after death. Then all connection is severed, and the body begins to decay.

Therefore great care should be taken not to cause the passing Spirit discomfort by such measures. If laws or other circumstances prevent keeping the body quietly in the room where death took place for a few days, it can at least be interred for that length of time and then treated in any desired way. Quiet and prayer are of enormous benefit at that time, and if we love the departed Spirit wisely we shall be able to earn its lasting gratitude by following the above instructions.

The Life Panorama

In a past lecture we saw that the vital body is the storehouse of both the conscious and subconscious memory; upon the vital body is branded indelibly every act and experience of the past life, as the scenery upon an exposed photographic plate. When the Ego has withdrawn it from the dense body, the whole life, as registered by the subconscious memory, is laid open to the eye of mind. It is the partial loosening of the vital body which causes a drowning person to see his whole past life, but then it is only like a flash, preceding unconsciousness; the silver cord remains intact, or there could be no resuscitation. In the case of a Spirit passing out at death, the movement is slower; the man stands as a spectator while the pictures succeed one another in the order from death to birth, so

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that he sees first the happenings just prior to death, then the years of manhood or womanhood unroll themselves; youth, childhood and infancy follow, until it terminates at birth. The man, however, has no feeling about them at that time, the object is merely to etch the panorama into the desire body, which is the seat of feeling, and from that impress the feeling will be realized when the Ego enters the Desire World, but we may note here that the INTENSITY OF FEELING REALIZED DEPENDS UPON THE LENGTH OF TIME CONSUMED IN THE PROCESS OF ETCHING, AND THE ATTENTION GIVEN THERETO BY THE MAN. IF HE WAS UNDISTURBED FOR A LONG PERIOD, BY NOISE AND HYSTERIA, A DEEP, CLEAR-CUT IMPRESS WILL BE MADE UPON THE DESIRE BODY. HE WILL FEEL THE WRONG HE DID MORE KEENLY IN PURGATORY, AND BE MORE ABUNDANTLY STRENGTHENED IN HIS GOOD QUALITIES IN HEAVEN, and though the experience will be lost in a future life, THE FEELINGS WILL REMAIN, as the "still, small voice." Where the feelings have been strongly indented upon the desire body of an Ego, this voice will speak in no vague and uncertain terms. It will impel him beyond gainsaying, forcing him to desist from that which caused pain in the life before, and compel him to yield to that which is good. Therefore the panorama passes BACKWARDS, so that the Ego sees first the effects, and then the underlying causes.

As to what determines the length of the panorama, we remember that it was the collapse of the vital body which forced the higher vehicles to withdraw; so after death, when the vital body collapses, the Ego has to withdraw, and thus the panorama comes to an end. The duration of the panorama depends, therefore, upon the time the person could remain awake if necessary. Some people can remain awake only a few hours, others can endure for a few days, depending upon the strength of their vital body.

When the Ego has left the vital body, the latter gravitates back to the dense body, remaining hovering above the grave, decaying as the dense body does, and it is indeed a noisome sight to the clairvoyant to pass through a cemetery and behold all those vital bodies whose state of decay clearly indicates the state of decomposition of the remains in the grave. If there were more clairvoyants, incineration would soon be adopted as a measure of protection to our feelings, if not for sanitary reasons.

The Ego in the Desire World

When the Ego has freed itself from the vital body, its last tie with the physical world is broken, and it enters the Desire World. The ovoid form of the desire body now changes its form, assuming the likeness of the discarded dense body. There is, however, a peculiar arrangement of the materials out of which it is formed, that has great significance in regard to the kind of life the departed will lead there.

The desire body of man is composed of matter from all the seven regions of the Desire World, as a dense body is build of the solids, liquids, and gases of this world. But the quantity of matter from each region in the desire body of a man depends upon the nature of the desires which he cherishes. Coarse desires are built of the coarsest desire stuff, which belongs to the lowest region of the Desire World. If a man has such, he is building a coarse desire body, where the matter from the lowest regions predominates. If he persistently puts coarse desires away from himself, yielding only to the pure and the good, his desire body will be formed of the materials of the higher regions.

At present no man is wholly evil, and none wholly good; we are all mixtures of both; but there may be and is a difference in our make-up. In the desire bodies of some there is a preponderance of coarse and in others of fine desire stuff; and that makes all the difference in the environment and status of the man when he enters the Desire World after death, for then the matter of his desire body, while taking on the likeness of the discarded dense body, at the same time arranges itself so that the subtlest matter which belongs to the higher regions of the Desire World forms the center of the vehicle, and the matter from the three densest regions is on the outside. When the Ego's earth life is ended it exerts centrifugal force to free itself from its vehicles. Following out the same law which causes a planet to throw that part of itself which is most dense and crystallized out into space, it first discards its dense body. When it enters the Desire World this centrifugal force also acts so as to throw the coarsest matter in

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the desire body outwards, and thus man is forced to stay in the lower regions until he has been purged of the coarser desires which were embodied in the densest desire matter. The coarsest desire matter is therefore always on the outside of his desire body while he is passing through Purgatory, and is gradually eliminated by the purging centrifugal force; the force of Repulsion, which tears the evil out of man and then allows him to pass upwards into the First Heaven in the upper part of the Desire World, where the Force of Attraction alone holds sway and builds the good of the past life into the Ego as soul power. The discarded part of the desire body is left as an empty "shell."

The Soul-less "Shell"

When the Ego has left its dense body, that dies QUICKLY. Physical matter becomes inert the moment it is deprived of the quickening, life-giving energy; it dissolves as a form. Not so with the matter of the Desire World; once life has been communicated to it, that energy will subsist for a considerable time after the influx of life has ceased, varying as to the strength of the impulse. The result is that after the Ego has left them these "shells" subsist for a longer or a shorter time. They live an independent life, and if that Ego to which they belonged was very much given to worldly desires, perhaps cut off in the prime of life, with strong and unsatisfied ambitions, this soul-less shell will often make the most desperate efforts to get back to the Physical World, and much of the phenomena of spiritualistic seances are due to the actions of these shells. The fact that the communications received from many of these so-called "Spirits" are utterly devoid of sense is easily accounted for when we realize that they are not Spirits at all, but only a soul-less part of the garment of the departed Spirit, and therefore without intelligence. They have a memory of the past life, owing to the panorama which was etched after death, which often enables them to impose upon relatives by stating incidents not known to others, but the fact remains that they are but the cast-off garment of the Ego, endowed with an independent life for the time being.

Elementals

It is not always, however, that these shells remain soul-less, for there are different classes of beings in the Desire World, whose evolution naturally belongs there. They are good and bad, as are human beings. Generally they are classed under one heading as "elementals," although differing vastly in appearance, intelligence and characteristics. We will only deal with them so far as their influence touches the postmortem state of man.

It sometimes happens, especially where a man has been in the habit of invoking Spirits, that these beings take possession of his dense body in earth life and make him an irresponsible medium. They generally lure him at first with seemingly high teachings, but by degrees lead to gross immorality, and worst of all, they may take possession of his desire body after he has left it and ascended into heaven. As the impulses contained in the desire body are the basis of the life in heaven, and also the springs of action which cause man to reincarnate for renewed growth, this is indeed a very serious matter, for the whole evolution of a man may be stopped for ages, before the elemental releases his desire body.

It is these elements who are the originators of many of the spiritualistic phenomena where more intelligence is displayed than can be accounted for by the action of soul-less shells, particularly at materializations, at least. Though shells may take part, phenomena are always directed by a being with intelligence. The difference between a materializing medium and an ordinary person is that the connection between the dense body can be withdrawn, and also some of the gases and even liquids of the medium's dense body may be used to form the bodies of apparitions. This withdrawal and the process of clothing the shells is generally performed by the elemental who extracts the vital body of the medium out through the spleen. As a rule, the body of the medium shrinks horribly in consequence. When the dense body is thus deprived of its vital principle, it becomes terribly exhausted and unfortunately the medium often seeks to restore the equilibrium by strong drink, becoming a confirmed drunkard.

Dangers of Hypnotism

In a past lecture it was pointed out how dangerous it is to allow a hypnotist to dominate our will and deprive us of our liberty, but in that case the victim can at least see, and may form an opinion of the hypnotist who controls him. In the case of the medium the danger is multiplied a thousand-fold, for the dominating influence cannot be seen. The death of the hypnotist releases his victims, but the gravest danger to the medium is after death. Therefore, a negative state in which the whole body or even the hand of a person is used automatically, apart from the individual's own volition, is hazardous. It is not denied that sometimes there are genuine communications from a departed Spirit, or that there are cases of benevolent communications from beings outside our volition, but our purpose is to point out the dangers to those who meddle with that they know not. Philanthropists do not grow on every bush in the Desire World any more than here. They are positively not great and good beings, angels, who enjoy knocking a man's hat over his ears, spilling water down his neck, or doing any other of the foolish tricks exhibited at the ordinary spiritualistic seance; those are emphatically either the soul-less shells of scapegraces, or elementals on a prank.

The Persistence of Character

When a man wakes up in the Desire World he is with one exception the very same man in every respect as before death. Anyone seeing him there would know him if they had known him here. There is no transforming power in death; the man's character has not changed, the vicious man and the drunkard are vicious and dissipated still, the miser is a miser still, the thief is as dishonest as ever, but there is one great and important change in them all--they have all lost their dense body, and THAT MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE IN REGARD TO THE GRATIFICATION OF THEIR VARIOUS DESIRES.

The drunkard cannot drink; he lacks the stomach, and though he may and at first often does, get into the whiskey casks of the saloons, it is no satisfaction to him, for whiskey in a cask does not give out fumes as it does during chemical combustion in the alimentary canal. He then tries the effect of getting into the dense body of drunkards on earth. He succeeds easily for the desire body is so constituted that it is no inconvenience to occupy the same space with another person. "Dead" people, at first, are often annoyed when their friends sit down in the chair they are occupying, but after a while they learn that it is not necessary to hurry out of their seat because a friend yet in earth life is approaching to sit down. It does not hurt the desire body "to be sat on"; both persons can occupy the same chair without inconveniencing each other's movements. So the drunkard enters into the body of people who are drinking, but even there he receives no real satisfaction, and in consequence he suffers the tortures of Tantalus, until at last the desire burns itself out for want of gratification, as all desires do, even in physical life.

The Purging of Bad Habits

This is "PURGATORY," and we note that it is not an avenging deity who measures out the suffering, or a devil who executes the judgment, but the evil desires cultivated in earth life, incapable of gratification in the Desire World, that cause the suffering, until in time they burn out. Thus the suffering is strictly proportionate to the strength of the evil habit. Take the case of the miser; he loves gold as dearly after death as before, but cannot gather any more; he has no physical hand wherewith to grasp, and worst of all, cannot protect what he had. He may sit watching in front of his safe, but the heirs may come and put their hands right through him, take away his cherished gold, perhaps laughing at the "stingy old fool" while he is nearly in a spasm with rage and mortification. He suffers terribly because unable to check them. At last, however, he learns to content himself; he is automatically purged of grasping, as was the drunkard of drink, by the Law of Consequence, which eradicates from each person his faults IN AN IMPERSONAL WAY. There is in truth no punishment, all suffering is entirely due to our self-acquired habits, is strictly proportionate to them. Benevolently it rids us of our faults, so that in consequence of purgation we are born innocent and may more easily acquire virtue when tempted anew, by listening to the voice that warns. Each evil act, at least, is therefore an act of free will.

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While our EVIL HABITS are dealt with in this general way, our SPECIFIC EVIL ACTIONS in the past life are dealt with in the same automatic manner by means of the life panorama which was etched into the desire body. That panorama begins to unfold BACKWARDS from death to birth, upon our entrance into the Desire World. It unfolds backwards at the rate of about three times the speed of the physical life, so that a man who was 60 years of age at the time of death would live over his past life in the Desire World in about twenty years.

Suffering

We remember that when viewing this panorama just after death he had no feeling at all about it, standing there merely AS A SPECTATOR, looking at the pictures as they unrolled. Not so when they appear in his consciousness in Purgatory. There the good makes no impression, but all the evil reacts upon him in such a way that in the scenes where he had made another suffer he himself feels as the injured one. He suffers all the pain and anguish his victim felt in life, and as the speed of the life is tripled, so is the suffering. It is even more acute, for the dense body is so slow of vibration that it dulls even suffering, but in the Desire World, where we are minus physical vehicles, suffering is more acute, and THE MORE CLEAR CUT THE PANORAMIC IMPRESSION OF THE PAST LIFE WAS ETCHED INTO THE DESIRE BODY AT THE TIME OF DEATH THE MORE THE MAN SUFFERS AND THE MORE CLEARLY HE WILL FEEL IN AFTER LIVES THAT TRANSGRESSION IS TO BE AVOIDED.

There is a peculiar phase of this suffering, which also adds to its disagreeable character. If in life a man had injured two men AT THE SAME TIME, and one is living in Maine, the other in California, at the time when their tormentor is undergoing his purgatorial realization of the sufferings he caused them, HE WILL FEEL HIMSELF AS PRESENT WITH BOTH at the same time, as if one part were in Maine and the other in California. It gives him a peculiar but indescribable feeling of being torn to pieces.

The Suicide

There are two classes of people for whom the purgative process does not commence at once, namely, the suicide and victim of murder. In the case of the suicide it does not commence until the time when the body would have died in the course of natural events, but in the meantime he suffers for his act in a way that is as dreadful as it is peculiar. He has a feeling of being hollowed out, as it were, and of inhabiting an aching void, due to the continued activity of the archetype of his form in the region of Concrete Thought. In the case of people, young or old, who die naturally or by accident, archetypal activity ceases; the higher vehicles undergo a modification at death, so that the loss of the dense body in itself gives no feeling of discomfort; but the suicide experiences no such change until the archetype of his body ceases to work, at the time when death would have naturally occurred. The space where his dense body ought to have been is empty, because the archetype is hollow, and it hurts indescribably. Thus he also learns that it is not possible to play truant from the school of life without bringing about unpleasant consequences, and in later lives when the way seems hard he will remember in his soul that the cowardly attempt to escape by suicide only brings added suffering.

There are people who commit suicide for unselfish reasons, to rid others of a burden, and they of course have their reward in another way, but do not escape the suffering of the suicide, any more than the man who enters a burning building to save others is immune from burns.

The Victim of Murder

The victim of murder escapes this suffering because he is in a comatose state as a rule, until the time when natural death should have occurred, and is taken care of in that respect, like the victims of so-called accidents, but the latter are always conscious at once or shortly after death. If the murderer is executed between the time of the murder and the time when his victim would naturally have died, the comatose desire body of the latter floats to its

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slayer by magnetic attraction following him wherever he goes, without a moment's respite. The picture of the murder is always before him, causing him to feel the suffering and anguish which must inevitably accompany this incessant reenactment of his crime in all its horrible details. This goes on for a time corresponding to the period of life of which he deprived his victim. If the murderer escaped hanging, so that his victim has passed beyond Purgatory before he dies, the "shell" of his victim remains to act the part of Nemesis in the drama of reenactment of the crime.

Thus the Ego is purged of evil of every kind, by the impersonal action of the Law of Consequence, made fit to enter heaven and become strengthened in good, as it has been discouraged in evil.

CHAPTER VI

Life and Activity in Heaven

We saw in another lecture how the evil acts of life and our undesirable habits are dealt with by the impersonal law of consequence, and make for good in future lives, and to illustrate we noted its operation in such cases as those of the murderer, suicide, drunkard, and miser. These are extreme cases, however, and there are many people who have lived good moral lives, tainted more by petty selfishness, which is the besetting sin of our age, than by actual pronounced evil, and for them the stay in the purgatorial regions of the Desire World is of course correspondingly shortened and the suffering incidental is lightened. Thus in time all pass to the upper regions of the Desire World where the First Heaven is located.

The First Heaven

This is the "Summerland" of the Spiritualists. Of the matter of this region the thoughts and fancies of people during life build the actual forms they see in their imagination. It is a characteristic of the inner worlds that the matter in them is readily molded by thought and will, and all these fantastic forms created by people go about, ensouled by elementals and enduring as long as the thought or desire which formed them endures. Around Christmas time, for instance, Santa Claus actually lives and rides around in his sleigh. There are all sorts of variety of him, and he remains in vigorous health for a month or more until the desires of the children who created him cease to flow in that direction, then he fades away till he is recreated next year. The New Jerusalem, with its pearly streets and sea of glass, and all the other pious and moral fancies of the church people are there also. Purgatory has its thought-form devil, with horns and cloven hoof, created by the thoughts of people, but in this upper part of the Desire World we find only that which is good and desirable in human aspirations. Here the student revels in libraries and is able to pursue his studies in a much more effective way than while confined to the dense body. If he desires a book, presto, it is there. The artist by his imagination shapes his models perfectly, he paints with living fiery colors instead of with the dead and dull pigments of earth, which are the physical artist's despair, for here in Earth-life it is impossible for him to reproduce the tints he sees with his inner vision, but the Desire World is the world of color par excellence, and therefore he obtains his heart's desire in the First Heaven, and receives inspiration and power to continue his work in future lives.

The sculptor likewise finds this part of the postmortem state a joy and an upliftment; he shapes with facility the plastic materials of this world into the statues he dreamt of in Earth-life. The musician is also benefited, but he is not yet in the true world of tone. That ocean of harmony, where the heavenly "music of the spheres" is heard, is in the part of the Region of Concrete Thought which, in the esoteric Christian religion, we call the second heaven; and so the musician only hears the echoes of the celestial strains; yet they are sweeter than any he ever heard on Earth, and his soul revels in their exquisite harmony, the earnest of better things to come.

Why Children Die and Where They Go

Here we also find all the little children, who go directly to this place after passing out, and if their friends could see them, there would be no mourning, for theirs is rather an enviable life. They are always met by some relative or friend who has previously passed out, and are taken care of in every respect. There are people who lay up a great deal of treasure for themselves by giving much of their time to the invention of plays and toys for the little ones, and thus life in this First Heaven is spent in the most beautiful way by the children, nor is their instruction neglected. They are brought together in classes, not only according to age and capability, but according to temperament, and are particularly instructed in the effects of desires and emotions, which can so easily be done in a world where those things can be objectively demonstrated. Thus they are taught by object-lessons the benefit of

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cultivating good and altruistic desires, and many a soul who lives a moral life now, owes it to such a cause as the death in infancy and fifteen or twenty years in the First Heaven before a new incarnation was entered upon. It is often asked why children die. There are many causes, one is death under the dreadful strain of accident, by fire, or on the battlefield in a previous life, for under such circumstances the departing Ego could not properly concentrate upon the panoramic view of its past life. This is also the case where loud lamentations of relatives hinder. The result is of course a weak imprint of the life-experiences upon the desire body, with an insipid purgatorial and First Heaven life.

In such cases the Ego does not reap what it has sown, and so it might commit the same follies or sins life after life. To prevent such a contingency the new desire body which the Ego gathers before its next birth must be impressed with the needed lesson. The Ego is always unconscious on its way to rebirth, blinded by the matter it draws around itself, as we are blinded when we enter a house on a sunny day. Only after birth does the consciousness return in a measure. Then, when by death it passes into the First Heaven it is taught objectively in a different way the lesson it should have learned on its outward passage in the former life. When that lesson has been mastered and impressed upon the still unborn desire body the Ego is reborn on Earth and goes on in the ordinary manner.

Children who die before the seventh year have only been born so far as the dense and vital bodies are concerned and are not responsible to the Law of Consequence. Even up to twelve or fourteen years the desire body is in process of gestation, as will be more fully explained in another lecture, and as that which has not been quickened cannot die, the dense and vital bodies alone go to decay when a child dies. It retains its desire body and mind to the next birth. Therefore it does not go around the whole path which the Ego usually traverses in a life cycle, but only ascends to the First Heaven to learn needed lessons, and after a wait of from one to twenty years it is reborn, often in the same family as a younger child.

The Panorama as Postmortem Arbiter

It is a mistake to think that heaven is a place of unalloyed happiness for all. No one can reap any more happiness than what he sowed on Earth. The measure of our joy there will be the good deeds we did in Earth-life. The panorama of life etched into our desire-bodies just after death forms the basis of our enjoyment in heaven, as it was the decreer of our suffering in purgatory.

We remember, that as the panorama of the past life unrolled in Purgatory, only the scenes in which we had injured people operated to produce suffering. In the First Heaven only the good desires and unselfish acts are productive of feeling. When we behold a scene where we helped someone, soothing their sorrow and alleviating their suffering, we not only feel the most intense personal satisfaction, but in addition we feel all that the recipient of our favor felt in ease of body, of mental relief and gratitude to the helper. It does not matter whether he knew who helped him or not, the feeling he poured out to us when we helped him will be realized there, independent of other circumstances. On the other hand, if we have ourselves been grateful to our benefactors, we will feel the same feeling of relief from distress and gratitude for the help over again. As all these feelings and desires are built into the Ego by the spiritual alchemical forces generated when they are being realized there, and as they undergo a transmutation into faculties, usable in future incarnations, it is easily seen HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO OUR OWN SOUL-GROWTH THAT WE SHOULD FEEL AND EXPRESS OUR GRATITUDE FOR FAVORS SHOWN US, for thus we lay the foundation for the receipt of new favors both in this and future lives. It is said that the Lord loves a cheerful giver; it is equally true that the "Law" (of Consequence) loves an appreciative heart.

The Ethics of Giving

When "GIVING" is under consideration let us beware of the fallacious idea that only the moneyed man can give. Indiscriminate gifts of money are a curse to both the giver and the recipient. Only when the giver bestows thought and heart also may gold be of value. But what is gold carelessly given compared to sympathy? Expression

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of faith in a man may give him the courage to go in and win; stirring his ambition we help him to help himself, where financial aid would render him helplessly dependent on our bounty. When we give, let us give OURSELVES first.

The ethics of giving, with the effect on the giver as a spiritual lesson, are most beautifully shown in Lowell's THE VISION OF SIR LAUNFAL. The young and ambitious knight, Sir Launfal, clad in shining armor and astride a splendid charger, is setting out from his castle to seek The Holy Grail. On his shield gleams the cross, the symbol of the benignity and tenderness of Our Savior, the meek and lowly One, but the knight's heart is filled with pride and haughty disdain for the poor and needy. He meets a leper asking alms and with a contemptuous frown throws him a coin, as one might cast a bone to a hungry cur, but--

The leper raised not the gold from the dust:
"Better to me the poor man's crust,
Better the blessing of the poor,
Though I turn me empty from his door;
That is no true alms which the hand can hold;
He gives nothing but worthless gold
Who gives from a sense of duty;
But he who gives but a slender mite,
And gives to that which is out of sight,
That thread of the all-sustaining Beauty
Which runs through all and doth all unite--
The hand cannot clasp the whole of his alms,
The heart outstretches its eager palms,
For a god goes with it and makes it store
To the soul that was starving in darkness before."

On his return Sir Launfal finds another in possession of his castle, and is driven from the gate.

An old, bent man, worn out and frail,
He came back from seeking the Holy Grail;
Little he recked of his earldom's loss,
No more on his surcoat was blazoned the cross,
But deep in his soul the sign he wore,
The badge of the suffering and the poor.

Again he meets the leper, who again asks alms. This time the knight responds differently.

And Sir Launfal said, "I behold in thee
An image of Him who dies on the tree;
Thou also hast had thy crown of thorns,--
Thou also hast had the world's buffets and scorns,--
And to thy life were not denied
The wounds in the hands and feet and side;
Mild Mary's Son, acknowledge me;
Behold, through him, I give to Thee!"

A look in the leper's eye brings remembrance and recognition, and

The heart within him was ashes and dust;
He parted in twain his single crust,
He broke the ice on the streamlet's brink,
And gave the leper to eat and drink.

A transformation takes place:

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The leper no longer crouched at his side,
But stood before him glorified,

And the Voice that was calmer than silence said,
"Lo it is I, be not afraid!
In many climes, without avail,
Thou hast spent thy life for the Holy Grail;
Behold, it is here,--this cup which thou
Didst fill at the streamlet for me but now;
This crust is my body broken for thee,
This water His blood that died on the tree;
The Holy Supper is kept, indeed,
In whatso we share with another's need;
Not what we give, but what we share--
For the gift without the giver is bare;
Who gives himself with his alms feeds three--
Himself, his hungering neighbor, and Me."

Postmortem Experience of the Materialist

There are two classes for whom postmortem existence is particularly blank and monotonous: the materialist and the man who was so absorbed in his material business that he never gave a thought to the spiritual worlds. The reason is not far to seek. They led good, moral lives as a rule, indulged in none of the vices of the lower Desire World, but neither have they done any good such as would find its fruition in feelings of joy in the First Heaven. To have given even large sums of money for the building of churches, libraries, or parks will help nothing there, unless the giver took particular interest in his gift, and thus gave himself with the money. Merely to give money will bring affluence in a future life, but to give ONESELF is more than money, it is soul-growth. The materialistic business man therefore goes to the fourth region, which is a sort of Borderland between Purgatory and the First Heaven. He is too good to suffer in Purgatory and not good enough to have a First Heaven life. He has still a keen longing for business. With no interests, save desires that cannot be gratified there, his life is an unenviable monotony, though he suffers in no other way.

The out-and-out materialist, who denies God and has the idea that death is annihilation, is in the worst of straits. He sees his mistake, yet having so dissociated himself from spiritual ideas, he often cannot believe but that this is a prelude to annihilation. The dreadful suspense wears terribly on such people, and it is not an uncommon sight to see them going about murmuring to themselves: Is it not soon the end? And, worst of all, if anyone who is instructed tries to inform them they will deny the existence of spirit there as much as they did in Earth-life, calling him visionary for thinking that there is anything beyond.

The natural tendency of the desire body is to harden and consolidate all it comes into contact with. Materialistic thought accentuates this tendency to such an extent that it very often results, in succeeding lives, in that dread disease, consumption, which is a hardening of the lungs. These should remain soft and elastic. It also sometimes happens that the desire body crushes the vital body in the next life, so that it fails altogether to counteract the hardening process, and then we have quick consumption. In some cases materialism makes the desire body brittle, as it were; then it cannot perform its proper hardening work on the dense body, and as a result we have "rachitis," where the bones soften. So we see what dangers we run by entertaining materialistic tendencies: either HARDENING of the soft parts of the body, as in CONSUMPTION, or SOFTENING of the hard bony parts, as in RACHITIS. Of course not every case of consumption shows that the sufferer was a materialist in a former life,

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but it is the teaching of occult science that such a result often follows materialism. There is another cause for the prevalence of this dread disease back in the Middle Ages.

The Second Heaven

In the course of time every man makes ready to ascend into the Second Heaven, which is located in the Region of Concrete Thought. All good aspirations and desires of the past life are etched into and branded upon the mind, which then contains all that is of permanent value. The Ego withdraws from the desire body, which is then but an empty shell, and clothed only in the mind, it ascends into the Second Heaven.

We remember, that after the termination of the panorama, just subsequent to death, when the Ego withdrew from the vital body, it went through a period of unconsciousness before it awoke in the Desire World. There is also an interval between the withdrawal from the desire body in the First Heaven to the awakening in the Second Heaven. But this time there is no unconsciousness; every faculty is keenly on the alert, there is a state of hyperconsciousness, as the Spirit passes through this interval, which is called "The Great Silence." No matter how materialistic a man may have been on Earth, that state of mind has now vanished, and the man KNOWS that he is inherently divine when he reaches this Great Silence which is the portal to his heavenly home. It is as when one awakens after a dreadful dream, and draws a deep sigh of relief at finding that the occurrences of the dream were not realities. So the Ego, when it enters this Great Silence, awakes from the delusions and illusions of Earth-life with a sense of infinite relief, is filled with a feeling of impregnable security, feels anew the restful repose of being in the everlasting arms of the Great Universal Spirit.

Music of the Spheres

Presently there break upon the Ego's ear the indescribable harmonies of celestial music which fills this Region incessantly. It is no figment of the fancy when celestial music is spoken of, although it is untrue that the dead people who had little or no sense for music during Earth-life have suddenly developed a passion for and the faculty of expressing music at death. The fact of the matter is, that the World of Thought, where the Second Heaven is located, is also the realm of tone, as the Desire World is the world of light and color, and the Physical World is the world of form. The artist gets his color-schemes and his light-effects from the Desire World, but the musician must draw upon the more subtle World of Thought for his inspirations, and in this fact we have the reason why music is the highest art we possess. The painter draws upon a world closer at hand, and is therefore able to fix his creation once for all upon canvas, there to be seen by all who have eyes at any time. Music cannot be thus fixed; it is more elusive, it must be recreated each time, and at once vanishes into silence. In return, however, it has so much greater power to speak to us than even the greatest painting, for it comes directly from the heaven world, fresh and fragrant with echoes from the home of the Ego, awakening memories of and putting us in touch with that which we so often forget in our material existence. Therefore music, above all other human arts, alone has power to still the savage breast and affect us in a way that nothing else can.

Goethe was an initiate, and in his "Faust" emphasizes twice the fact that in the heavenly realms all things are reducible to terms of sound. The opening scene is laid in heaven, and the Archangel Raphael is represented as saying:

"The sun intones his ancient SONG,
'Mid rival CHANT of brother-spheres.
His prescribed course he speeds along,
In thunderous way throughout the years."

Again, in the second part:

"SOUND unto the spirit-ear
Proclaims the coming day is near.

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Rocky gates are creaking, rattling,
Phoebus' wheels are rolling, singing--
What intense SOUND the light is bringing."

Pythagoras' "music of the spheres" is a fact in the Second Heaven, and to some musicians this is not at all a far-fetched idea, for they know that every city, every lake and forest has its own peculiar tone. The babbling brook and the summer zephyr which stirs the young leaves in the wood speak the language of the Universal Soul. The true musician hears its grand, majestic voice in the mountain torrent and in the storm upon the great deep. No mere intellectual conception of God, life and superphysical things can ever reach the sublime heights achieved by him, for he knows.

In Purgatory the evil habits and acts of life produced suffering which was transmuted into RIGHT FEELING in the First Heaven. The good in the past life was extracted in the First Heaven, and when the Ego enters the Second Heaven it broods over the good in such a way as to transmute it into RIGHT THOUGHT to act as a guide in future lives on Earth. Thus at every new birth the Ego brings with it, as capital, the accumulated wisdom derived from the experiences of all its past lives, which is its capital or stock in trade. The experience in each new life is interest, which in the Second Heaven is added to the capital.

Activity in the Region of Concrete Thought

Man there is also preparing himself for his next dip into matter, qualifying himself for the new battle with ignorance in the coming life-day in God's great school. If any worthy ambitions had failed of realization, he sees where the fault lay, and learns to carry out next time his designs on improved lines. The musician takes with him grander melodies when he returns, to gladden the heart of man in his exile to Earth conditions. The painter brings new aspirations, for it must not be supposed that the Second Heaven is devoid of color because it was called the region of tone. Both color and form are there, just as in the Physical World, but TONE is the predominating feature of the World of Thought. COLOR is most accentuated in the Desire World and FORM in the Physical World, although it is also true that the colors and forms of the Second Heaven are much more beautiful than in either of the two other worlds.

We have spoken of this process of brooding and assimilation of the good and lasting part extracted from the experiences of the past life as if it were a negative process, and many students have the idea that existence in the Second Heaven is a dreamy, illusory experience. Nothing could be more erroneous, for the actual activities of life in heaven are manifold. Man not only reviews or lives his past, but he is also actively preparing his future.

We are wont to speak of evolution, but do we ever analyze what it is that makes evolution, why it does not stop in stagnation? If we do, we must realize that there are forces back of the visible which make the alteration in the flora and fauna, the climatic and topographical changes which are constantly going on; and it is then but a natural question, What or who are the forces or agents in evolution?

Of course, we are well aware that scientists give certain mechanical explanations. They deserve great credit; they have accomplished much, when we take into consideration that science is but an infant and has only five senses and ingenious instruments at its command. Its deductions are marvelously true, but that does not say that there may not be underlying causes which it cannot, as yet, perceive, but which give a more thorough understanding of the matter than the mere mechanical explanation affords. An illustration will elucidate the point.

Two men are conversing, when suddenly one knocks the other down. There we have an occurrence, a fact, and we may explain it in a mechanical way by saying: "I saw one man contract the muscles of his arm, direct a blow at the other, and knock him down." That is a true version, so far as it goes, but the occult scientist would see also the angry thought which inspired the blow, and would be giving a more complete version if he said that the man was knocked down by a thought, for the clenched fist was but the irresponsible instrument of aggression. Failing

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the impelling force of the angry thought, the hand would have remained inert and the blow would never have been struck.

Thus the occult scientist refers all causes to the Region of Concrete Thought, and tells how they are generated there by human and superhuman Spirits.

Creative Archetypes

Remembering that the creative archetypes of everything we see in the visible world are in the World of Thought, which is the realm of tone, we are prepared to understand that the archetypal forces are constantly playing through these archetypes which then emit a certain tone, or, where a number of them have massed to create a species of plant, animal, or human FORMS, the different sounds blend into one grand chord. That single tone or chord, as the case may be, is then the keynote of the form thus created, and as long as it sounds, the form or the species endures; when it ceases the single form dies or the species dies out.

A jumble of sound is not music any more than words massed together haphazardly are a sentence, but ORDERLY RHYTHMIC SOUND is the builder of all that is, as John says in the first verses of his gospel, "In the beginning was the WORD, . . . and without it was not anything made"; also "the Word was made flesh."

Thus we see that sound is the creator and sustainer of all form, and in the Second Heaven the Ego becomes one with the nature forces. With them he works upon the archetypes of land and sea, on flora and fauna, to bring about the changes which gradually alter the appearance and condition of the Earth, and thus afford a new environment, MADE BY HIMSELF, in which he may reap new experience.

He is directed in his work by great teachers belonging to the Creative Hierarchies, which are called Angels, Archangels, and other names, who are God's ministers. They instruct him then consciously in the divine art of creation, both as to the world and the objects in it. They teach him how to build a FORM for himself, giving him the so-called "nature-spirits" as helpers, and thus man is serving his apprenticeship to become a creator each time he goes to the Second Heaven. There he builds the archetype of the form which he later externalizes at birth.

In a previous lecture we spoke about the four ethers, and we said the forces of assimilation work in the chemical ether. The Egos in the heaven world are those forces and thus the very people whom we call dead are the ones who build our bodies and help us to live. We may also note that no one can have a better dense body than he can build. If they make mistakes in heaven, they find it out when they come to use such a defective body on Earth, and thereby learn to correct the fault next time.

This brings to mind an interesting phase of the Law of Consequence, as in the case of Egos who require a body of peculiar construction, like musicians, where not only the hand, but also the ear has to be specially adjusted, so that the three semicircular canals point as accurately as possible to the three dimensions of space, and the fibers of Corti have to be unusually delicate; such an instrument cannot be formed out of raw materials, and therefore such an Ego must be born in a family where others have built along similar lines, and that is not always to be found.

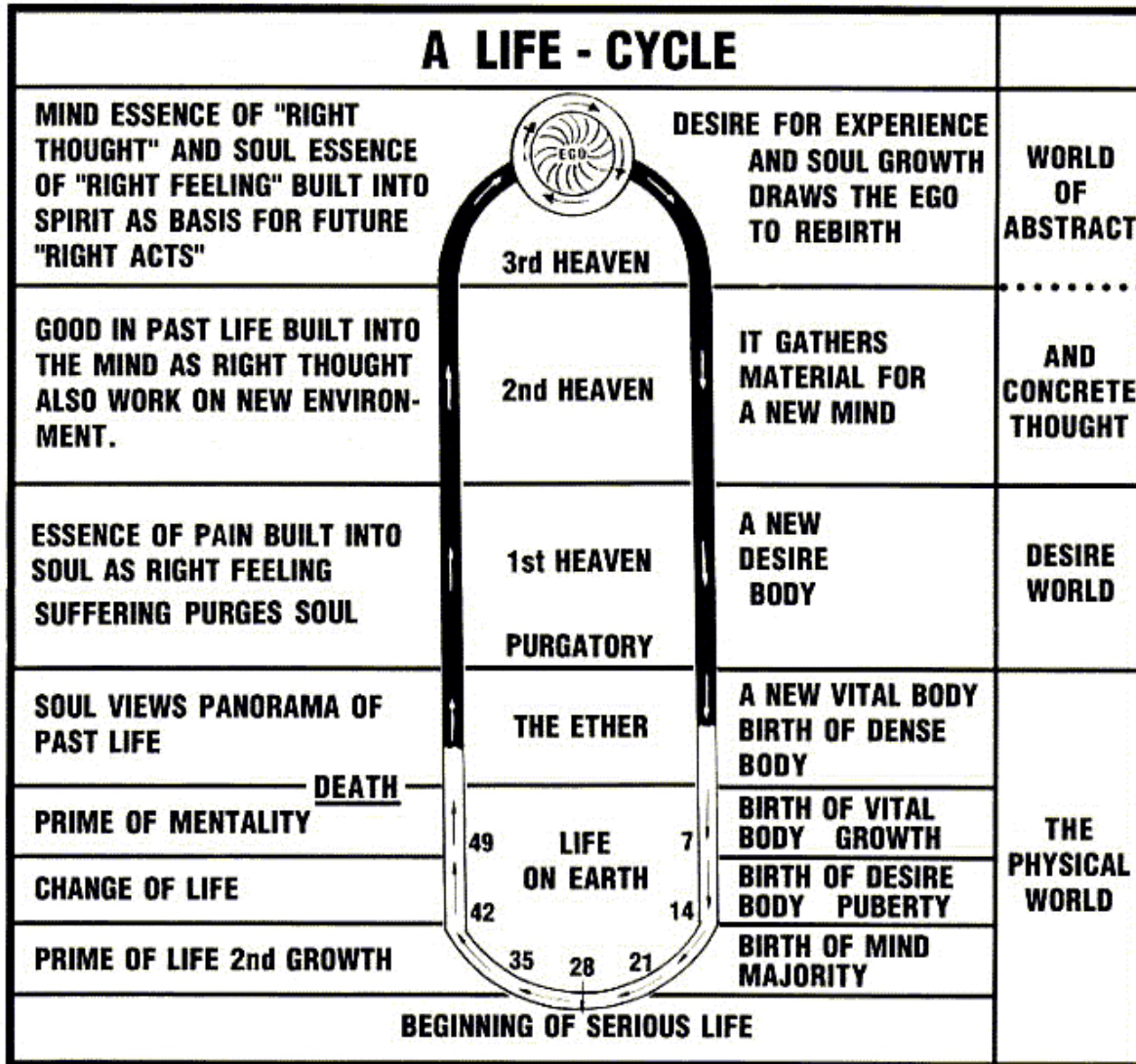


DIAGRAM 5B

Supposing, then, that an occasion offers 100 years before the time such an Ego should be normally reborn, and that the Recording Angels who have charge of the administrations of the Law of Consequence, see that another opportunity will not occur for perhaps 300 years, that Ego may then be brought into birth 100 years ahead of time, and the loss of time in heaven made up at another time. Thus we see that the living and the so-called dead are constantly acting and reacting upon each other while traveling onwards along the path of evolution.

Having thus progressed through the Second Heaven, the Ego at last withdraws from the sheath of mind, which was its garment there, and thus entirely free and untrammelled enters the Third Heaven, which is the highest point attainable by man at his present stage of development.

CHAPTER VII

The Rosicrucian Method of Caring for the Dead

Purpose of Sleep

During life in the physical world, the human Ego works through its four vehicles: namely, the physical, vital, desire, and mental bodies, all of which are connected to one another by the silver cord. At night the Ego withdraws into the inner worlds taking with it the mental and desire bodies, leaving the physical body, together with the vital body, lying on the bed. The Ego first brings about harmonious rhythm of the mind and desire bodies. These bodies work upon the vital body; the vital body then commences to restore the tired and worn out physical atoms to health and vitality.

This restoration can only be done during the time the desire body and mind are removed, for it is their activities which use up the physical energy during the day, and in order that the vital body may be freed to rebuild this exhausted physical vehicle, the Ego and the two higher vehicles (the desire and mental bodies) separate from the two lower vehicles, but remain tied by the silver cord. At death, when the physical body can no longer hold on to its higher vehicles, when disintegration must ensue, the Ego is forced to vacate its house, made of clay, which it has built and used for an allotted length of time, and in which it has learned many helpful and soul-building lessons. It has now reached a period on the path of evolution where the Ego must take time for the assimilation of the lessons which were learned while functioning in the world of matter. Death is to the soul what sleep is to the physical body: a time of rest and recuperation so that the spirit may draw from these experiences greater soul power.

At death, the Ego leaves the physical body by way of the parietal-occipital sutures, but instead of the vital body remaining with the physical body as is the case during sleep, it also leaves the physical body, together with the desire and mental bodies, for the spirit's work in the physical body is finished for this Earth life. The vital body has now a different work to do; it is no longer called upon to keep the physical atoms in health.

Physical Seed Atom

At death, the vital, desire, and mental bodies are seen to leave the physical body through the head. The spirit, which is leaving its earthly prison house to decay, takes with it its most cherished belonging, the seed atom, the only part of the physical which cannot die and which it brings back with it at each Earth life. During Earth life, there is a tiny atom in the apex of the left ventricle of the heart which is called the permanent seed atom. This seed atom of the physical vehicle has been used as a nucleus for a physical body ever since the spirit possessed a physical vehicle. When we speak of a permanent seed atom, we do not mean that the physical atom is used, but the forces which flow through it. These forces remain with the Ego through rebirth after rebirth, or until this particular spirit has finished its evolution in the physical world. Then these forces will be transferred to the seed atom of the vital body which will become the permanent seed atom of the next life.

Going back to our discussion of the Ego as it leaves its physical body at what is termed death, we find that the spirit is passing through a very vital and extremely important period. Friends and relatives should be most careful that their loved one is left free from excitement, grief, and disturbances of any kind: the body should not be mutilated and embalming fluids should not be used until 84 hours after the spirit has ceased functioning in the body. The reason for this is as follows:

Silver Cord

At death there is a rupturing of the silver cord which the Bible speaks of in the 12th chapter of Ecclesiastes. This cord holds the higher and lower vehicles together and, at death, the rupture takes place in the heart, which causes this organ to cease beating. When this occurs, the Ego with its three bodies, namely, the vital, desire, and mental bodies, is seen by the clairvoyant floating above the head of the physical body for three and one-half days. During this period, the spirit is engaged in reviewing the scenes of its past life which have been impressed on the permanent seed atom in the heart. These impressions have been left on this seed atom by the blood. We are also taught from the Bible that the spirit is in the blood. The blood is the direct vehicle of the spirit.

The Panorama

The heart and lungs are the only organs through which all the blood in man's body passes in every cycle and the heart is the stronghold of the human Ego. As the blood courses through the heart, the scenes of every passing moment are carried in the blood and engraved on the tiny seed atom. This seed atom is also impregnated with the experiences of all past lives, and from it many impressions come to man. These teach him the difference between good and evil, and thus they become his conscience.

Now the reason we hold it is necessary that quietness reign in the house of death is as follows: The vital body is the vehicle used immediately after death to transfer the impressions of the seed atom in the heart to the seed atom of the desire body. During this time of work the silver cord is ruptured, but not broken. The Ego is still conscious of its vehicles, feeling and suffering to some extent, when the body is mutilated. When the spirit is disturbed during the transfer, the impressions are dimly etched, and the spirit in returning to rebirth in the next embodiment does not bring with it as keen a sense of conscience as it would have done if the etching had been clear-cut, because in the Desire World it was not able to feel remorse for wrong doings nor joy over good actions as keenly as it would have if it had not been disturbed.

When the panorama has been fully etched into the desire body, the silver cord breaks and the Ego is free of its earthly house. The body should then be cremated since cremation frees the spirit quickly. It also offers a more sanitary method of body disposal.

Let us hope that humanity will soon be awake to the proper care of its dead, and that we will have a science of death as well as a science of birth. It is important that the person who is aware of the damage ensuing from improper handling of the body in the event of death should have in writing the instructions he or she desires to have carried out for himself.

A form is available, explaining the Rosicrucian methods for the care of the body immediately following death. It gives the procedure which the follower of the Western Wisdom Teachings accepts as necessary for the proper transition to the afterlife (see below).

CHAPTER VIII

In Case of Being Released from the Physical Body

IN CASE OF DEATH, I, _____ of

_____ ,

make it MY LAST REQUEST that the procedure of The Rosicrucian Fellowship be carried out in the disposition of my body. This request is made because of MY BELIEF IN THE ROSICRUCIAN TEACHINGS. If death occurs among strangers, they will kindly communicate at once with the following persons, who are requested to carry out these instructions as to method:

Signed _____

Attested by _____

Date _____

METHOD: The body is to be placed in a cool place or in an ice chamber for preservation during a period of 3 1/2 days (84 hours) after death. Embalming is absolutely **NOT** to be performed. The body is to be left in a perfect quiet, away from all disturbing noises during this period. No postmortem operations are to be performed previous to the expiration of the three and one-half days. At the end of this period the body is to be cremated. Particular care is to be exercised that cremation is **NOT** performed previous to the 84 hours after death for the reason that during this time the spirit still maintains connection with the body and pain from burning is felt if cremation or embalming is permitted.

MORTICIAN: _____

CHAPTER IX

The Effects of Suicide

The suicide, who tries to get away from life, only finds that he is as much alive as ever, and is in a most pitiable plight. He is able to watch those whom he has disappointed and perhaps disgraced by his act, and worst of all, he has an unspeakable feeling of being "hollowed out." The reason for this is as follows:

The Creative Archetype

When the Ego is coming down to rebirth, it is helped by the Creative Hierarchies to build the archetype for its coming body, and it instills in that archetype a life that will last for the number of years that the person normally should live. This archetype has a singing, vibratory motion which draws the material of the physical world into it, and sets all the atoms in the body to vibrating in tune with a little atom in the heart called the seed atom, which, like a tuning fork, gives the pitch to all the rest of the material in the body. At the time when the full life has been lived on earth, the vibrations in the archetype cease, the seed atom is withdrawn, the dense body begins to decompose, and the desire body, wherein the Ego functions in Purgatory and the First Heaven, takes upon itself the shape of the physical body. Then the man commences his work of expiating his negative habits and deeds in Purgatory, and assimilating the good of his life in the First Heaven.

The "Hollowed-out" Feeling

The foregoing describes the ordinary conditions when the course of nature is undisturbed, but the case of the suicide is different. He has taken away the seed atom, but the archetype still keeps on vibrating. Therefore he feels as if he were "hollowed out" and experiences a gnawing feeling inside that can best be likened to the pangs of intense hunger, or to toothache over the whole body. Material for the building of a dense body is all around him, but seeing that he lacks the gauge of the seed atom it is impossible for him to assimilate that matter and build it into a body. This dreadful "hollowed out" feeling lasts as long as his ordinary life should have lasted.

Law of Cause and Effect

Thus the law of cause and effect teaches him that it is wrong to play truant from the school of life and that it cannot be done with impunity. Then in the next life, when difficulties beset his path, the sufferings resulting from his former suicide will prevent a recurrence and enable him to go through the experiences of life that make for his soul growth.

CHAPTER X

Euthanasia

At first blush and from the standpoint of people not versed in the teachings of occultism, euthanasia would seem to have considerable claim to commendation. Most people on seeing an animal suffering agonies and beyond hope of recovery would feel prompted by humane instincts to put it out of its misery and the questions, "Why should we not do as much for our fellow men and women! Why should we keep them alive in excruciating suffering maybe for months or years when we know they have no chance of regaining their health and that they are looking and longing for death to put them out of pain?" seem, from the common point of view, to call for acquiescence. However, when we have a knowledge of the law of consequence and are sure that what we sow we reap, if not in this life then in some future existence, the matter appears in a different light.

The Lessons of Suffering

We cannot escape our just dues. The suffering that comes to us is needed to teach us a lesson or mellow our character. The only way to shorten such suffering is by an endeavor to understand why we are in the condition that brings us pain. If it is cancer of the stomach, then how have we abused that organ? By overindulgence of food of a nature not suited to our system? Have we been "feeding" our consciousness with selfish emotions or negative thinking? Is our heart causing us problems? How many times have we lost our tempers and raged like mad, putting tremendous strain on this part of the body? Or are other organs of our system weak and debilitated? We may be sure that, either in this life or a previous one, we have lived in a way that the effects find manifestation in our particular physical ailments. Otherwise we would not now be suffering, and the sooner we take the lesson to heart and commence to live a better life, more in harmony with the laws of nature we have broken, the sooner our suffering will cease.

Cosmic Law is not Mocked

It is always in our own grasp to alter conditions, though of course we cannot remedy in a day what it has taken years or lives to break down, but certainly there is no other way in which a permanent cure can be effected. Even if now, by the enactment of a law condoning euthanasia (or what is erroneously called "mercy killing"), the suffering is shortened, we may be sure that when the person so released from his body is reborn his new vehicle will have the tendency to develop the same disease from which he escaped in such an untoward manner.

Archetype of the Physical Body

Besides, as has been thoroughly explained in The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception, this physical body of ours is fashioned in the World of Thought as an invisible mold or template, which is called the archetype, and so long as that archetype persists our physical body remains alive. When death occurs from natural causes, or even in the so-called accidents, (which usually are not accidents at all but events used to terminate a life according to the design of the invisible guardians of human affairs) the archetype is disrupted and the Spirit is released. A suicide, however, is different. In this case the archetype persists after death for a number of years until death should have occurred according to natural events, and being unable to draw to itself the physical atoms, it imparts to the suicide during those years of his postmortem existence a continuous aching feeling, something like a gnawing hunger, or a dull but exceedingly painful, whole-body toothache. If euthanasia became a law and people were allowed to obtain the services of others to commit suicide (for that is what it really amounts to), there is no doubt that they would suffer in their postmortem existence in the same manner as the suicide who prescribed his own poison, or cut his own throat. Legalization of euthanasia would also be dangerous in other respects, and we trust no such practice will be sanctioned by law.

The Light Beyond Death

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