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**REINCARNATION,
OR, LIFE RETURNS UNCEASINGLY**

RENDOL SNELL

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Reincarnation, Or, Life Returns Unceasingly by Rendol Snell.

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I. Re-incarnation

The old conception of the Creator as a big, superior kind of man, who spoke face to face with wise men of old, telling them the plan of creation and destiny of the world, has been outgrown, so that it is the privilege of any person to investigate for himself the great problem, "What am I?"

Science has been making great strides to solve the mysteries of nature but there yet remain many problems unsolved. One of these is the origin and nature of life and the important question of life after death. The few pages of this book will be devoted to explaining the theory or, better, hypothesis of re-incarnation and some problems connected therewith.

To put the matter in simple words, the writer believes that life returns again and again on the earth. Not only human life but all life.

This theory, under the name "transmigration," was taught by Buddhism in a crude form and is believed in by at least one-third of the population of the earth, who are more or less under the influence of Buddhist teaching. Like all great fundamental ideas, there are perhaps few parts of the earth where the idea has not been present in some dim fashion.

According to the old accepted theory, I was at birth a new creation and at death I am transferred to another part of the universe. No other life except that of man was considered worthy of being continued, hence at death, ceased entirely. Even man's position was precarious, for only the good could look forward with hope.

Some scientists push evolution to an extreme limit and maintain that even the soul of man is but an offshoot from the souls of his parents. According to them, the life of every organic individual is but a part of the parental life, and, being only a link in a connected chain of matter and motion (substance), ceases at death. They maintain that life is eternal only in the fact that the race continues.

Re-incarnation claims that life is just as eternal as matter, that it has existed before and will exist through all time. At birth there is not a new creation, but an old life returning. On the very face of it, re-incarnation looks reasonable. It bears the scientific test as no other theory will.

Everywhere you look in nature you see a constant return of things to what they were before. This morning I sat beside the rapids of the river watching the logs dash over the rocks, throwing spray into a cloud of mist. The water rushes down into Lake Ontario, on through the St. Lawrence to the Atlantic. Gone forever, one would think, for how can it hope to return against the iron force of gravity now pulling it with such mighty force? But sooner or later it is evaporated into mist and carried by winds until it falls in rain and again passes through rivers and lakes to the ocean. Even if caught by biting frost, changed to hard solid ice and imprisoned among the rocks of the mountains, the warm sunshine at length melts it and it pursues its course to the ocean.

Water eternally moves in a circle and the motion keeps it pure and wholesome.

How about those logs dashing over the rapids? Some of them are indeed monsters. They cannot hope to return, you naturally think. Let us follow them. Farther down the stream they are sawed into lumber and used in building houses. The houses stand for fifty years, when one day they catch fire and are gone. Where have they gone? The oxygen of the air has by a process called "fire," united chemically with the carbon of the wood—its chief element—and

formed carbonic acid gas. Carbonic acid is invisible and totally different in every way from either carbon or oxygen. It mixes with the air and floats about everywhere. Again completely gone you would think. This poisonous, invisible gas has no chance to ever become a log again! But nature is a wonder worker. The carbonic acid gas, floating about, enters the leaves of trees and is separated into carbon and oxygen. The carbon is stored up in tree growth. In a few decades the tree is cut down and again floats down a river to be sawed into lumber or to be burned for fuel. While this may not be the actual history of the logs I saw, the process is accurately described. For, whether it be by fire or the slower process of decay, the result is the same. No particle of carbon can be destroyed. It is ever changing. Sometimes it is in one chemical compound, sometimes in another, but, eventually, returning to its original carbon form.

If a particle of water or a particle of carbon is never destroyed, but returns to former conditions, is it not reasonable to suppose that "Life" cannot be destroyed and that, no matter what wonderful changes it undergoes, will return to its former condition? When wood is burned its chances of again becoming wood look less possible than that the life of a man will return even though his dead body is being laid to rest under the cold and silent earth.

Much of the food we eat is composed of carbon. It enters the blood and builds up the tissue of the body. Gradually this tissue is worn out and is carried to the lungs. Here it comes in contact with the oxygen breathed in and unites with it to form carbonic acid which is then breathed out. Carbon that entered the body in the form of food is now floating about in the form of carbonic acid gas. The growing grains and fruits of harvest inhale this gas and eliminate the carbon to cause growth. When the ripening process is complete the carbon is again eaten as grain or fruit. Another proof that things in nature, though undergoing marvellous changes, return to a similar condition.

Nitrogen, silica, potassium, sodium, and a host of other materials are used up in plant growth and are, upon decay, again returned to the soil. A case of "that which came from out the boundless deep returns again home." Dust returns to dust.

Now let us take the case in a more general and scientific way: Any substance like iron, gold, carbon, etc., which cannot by any known chemical or other process be broken up into other substances is called an element. Water is not an element, for, by means of electricity, it can be broken up into two gases, viz., oxygen and hydrogen. Elements have an affinity for one another, which is a sort of liking as it were. For instance, carbon and oxygen, these cling to each other and form carbonic acid, a process that can be seen where fire is burning. Oxygen has an affinity for iron and unites with it to form oxide of iron, commonly called rust. When elements unite they form what is called a chemical compound. Examples of compounds are, water acids, sugar, lime, alcohol, etc., etc. On every side, about us and within us, chemical changes are taking place. Compounds are being formed from elements or simpler compounds, or else compounds are breaking up into elements or simpler compounds. The smallest possible particle of any substance is called a molecule. If a molecule is broken up it no longer remains the same substance but becomes the elements. For example, when a molecule of water is broken up by electricity, it changes to two atoms of hydrogen and one of oxygen. If collected in tubes, which is easily done, they may, by touching a match to them, be reformed into water. That these chemical changes are most wonderful is seen from the fact that oxygen and hydrogen are each an invisible gas; hydrogen burns readily and oxygen is necessary for fire; but combined they form a liquid that extinguishes fire, viz., water.

I mention these things to show that matter is indestructible and that there is a cycle of change in nature. They also show that the case of a tree, an animal, or a man dying and in the future living again is not stranger nor more wonderful than these simple chemical changes.

We have then, in nature, chemical changes forever going on. To-day an element is part of one compound, to-morrow part of another, again back to an element, on then to a compound and so on indefinitely. Nothing can be lost. There is no actual death. Substances are lost to our feeble mortal sight, but they nevertheless exist and go forward forever in the processes of nature.

Christ repeatedly used simple things in nature to illustrate truths more profound. He pointed to the beauty of the lilies to show that God would much more look after man. Well, if the atoms of inanimate substances cannot be destroyed, but forever go forward in one compound or another, or in the elemental form, is it not reasonable to think that the far more important thing "Life," whatever it may be, is never actually lost or destroyed? Must we not conclude that "Life" goes ever forward and, though out of mortal sight at times, reappears in other places and in other forms?

Science has demonstrated the importance of small things. More and more are mysteries of microbes, molecules, atoms, light rays, etc., revealing the deep things of nature. Things that were incomprehensible a few centuries ago, are now clear as day. Take diseases for example. Originally disease was considered as a sort of evil spirit sent for punishment of the sinful. Some tribes still look upon disease in that simple manner. The microscope has made it possible to see the very microbes which cause many diseases. Disease is found to be something real and tangible—a material thing. Because these microbes are microscopically small, in no way makes their significance slight. Robert Burns was once asked why the Lord had made a certain woman so large and another so little. To this he replied:

Ask why God made the gem so small,
An' why so huge the granite?
Because God meant mankind should set
The higher value on it.

You can hardly contrast small and large any more, so important have small things become. They are simply terms relating to the very limited range of our senses.

A molecule is so small that there are said to be as many molecules in a drop of water as there are in the earth pieces the size of an apple, or over 600,000,000,000,000,000. There are 300,000,000,000,000,000,000 molecules of copper in a pin head of a brass pin. Never let figures frighten you. Yet one of these molecules may be almost as wonderful as a whole planet. Were our brains of electric speed, instead of the ordinary speed of a trotting horse, we might make marvellous discoveries in a single molecule; might see oceans and continents, immense distances, wonderful laws, the secrets of much that are now mysteries.

Would it be unreasonable to suppose that "Life" is a mysterious special kind of molecule? Or, if not a molecule, an indestructible something almost infinitely small? If such were the case, re-incarnation of life becomes very simple—just as simple as that of a molecule of carbon passing from one condition to another. Let us suppose that the life of the body is a special molecule which we shall call the ego of the body and that the real man himself—his soul—is another special molecule which we shall call the ego of the soul. Re-incarnation could take place in the following among many ways:

John Hope dies. The ego of his soul, perhaps located in the brain, is buried with him. In course of time the body decays and gradually mixes with the soil. At length the ego passes out through the soil floating in a tiny stream. The ego lodges at the root of a wheat stalk and enters the grain. The grain is ground into flour, made into bread which Mrs. Shaw, a young woman, eats and swallows with it the ego of John Hope. This ego lodges in the ovum which, being fructified, reappears as the soul of the infant born and is known as Joe or Jane Shaw.

Or, the ego of John Hope might have come to Mrs. Shaw in scores of other ways. It might have been floating in the air along with the odor of the new-mown hay and been breathed in by her when driving over to her mother-in-law's. It might have been swallowed at a taffy-pull. The ways are many and varied.

The ego of John Hope's body may have taken a different course altogether and been born again as the architect of the body of the infant Bill Brown.

I am certain this will seem to many readers very fantastic. The chances for egos to return seem too difficult you think? Even if it be difficult, the Power that works through nature is a wonder worker. Here is what the Light of Asia says of this wonderful Power:

Lower than hell,
Higher than heaven, outside the utmost stars,
Farther than Brahm doth dwell,
Before beginning, and without an end,
As space eternal and as surety sure,
Is fixed a Power divine which moves to good,
Only its laws endure.

This is its touch upon the blossomed rose,
The fashion of its hand shaped lotus-leaves;
In dark soil and the silence of the seeds
The robe of spring it weaves;

This is its painting on the glorious clouds,
And these its emeralds on the peacock's train:
It hath its stations in the stars; its slaves
In lightning, wind and rain.

Out of the dark it wrought the heart of man,
Out of dull shells the pheasant's pencilled neck;
Ever at toil, it brings to loveliness
All ancient wrath and wreck.

It is not marred nor stayed in any use,
All liketh it; the sweet white milk it brings
To mother's breasts; it brings the white drops, too,
Wherewith the young snake stings.

See the infinite kindness and boundless hope of this re-incarnation theory. For not only is man's life eternal, but all life is eternal. The ego of your faithful dog becomes the ego of another dog. Every animal dies to re-appear as an animal. Every plant that dies but liberates its ego to become the architect of another similar plant. The wood of the tree at my window is more ancient than the Roman eagle. It has existed since time began. Then, why not think that a more important thing—the ego of the tree—too, is ancient likewise? If nature can bring inanimate molecules into use myriads of times, why cannot it bring "Life" likewise?

That "Life" is something like a molecule was only a supposition in the previous paragraphs. We do not know that it is. For, as Tennyson says, "Knowledge, is of things we see." Life egos have not been seen. Like electricity, their nature is not fully comprehended.

Perhaps it is well that they are not for it leaves one more problem to solve. It would never do to have no discoveries left for the human mind to make. But neither is evolution an established fact. It remains a theory. But that does not lessen its value. Why, that there is a

God is known only by “faith.” You are simply asked to “believe” it. Let us see if our theory of life molecules—egos—and their constant return to organized life forms explains all facts and conditions with which it is confronted. If it does nothing better can be done than to accept it.

That the soul of man is small is quite evident from the fact that man develops from an egg cell 1-600th of an inch in diameter. All the people of the continent of North America, in their first stage of life, could have been placed in a cubic inch and have room enough left for all the people of Europe. Yet this egg cell contains not only the soul of man but is his whole being. But, when you consider the size of a molecule, it is not difficult to see that even so small an egg cell could contain great marvels, as in fact it does.

Everything has a dynamic centre, or a centre of gravity. It is reasonable enough to suppose that at the centre of gravity of the human body, to make it conscious, is the ego of the body, and that at the centre of our thoughts, emotions, hopes, etc., is a conscious something which we shall call the ego of the soul.

You look at a palace and admire its beauty. Next day it is torn down by the mob or destroyed by an earthquake. Lost forever, you think. Not so, for behind this beautiful structure is the architect. The palace exists in his brain. He can rebuild it, and because of former experience, even improve on it somewhat. So, too, with the body. Somewhere there must be an architect that planned and fashioned it. That architect is the little body ego. Even if the body dies and is laid away to moulder into ashes, the indestructible ego is capable of building a similar and, because of past experience, a better body.

The kindness, the helpfulness, the sympathy, the inspiration of your friend is at an end, you think, because he is dead. All these beautiful qualities gone forever? Not so. The architect of his soul—the ego— can reproduce them, can improve on them because of past experience.

If every birth be a new creation, there is certainly great diversity shown. One child at a very early age reaches up to the piano and plays in a remarkable manner for one so young. To him music is simple and delightfully pleasant to learn. He yearns towards it. Other children learn music, if at all, with great difficulty. According to the re-incarnation theory the difference in their musical aptitudes is explained very simply. As the soul reappears with all the capabilities it had at the previous death, the soul of a good musician reappears with great aptitude for music. Once anything is in the soul, not even death can destroy it. Again, one child will find mathematics easy. He delights in solving difficult problems. It is because he was a mathematician in his previous life. Some women make good nurses, because they have sympathy. They get near to the hearts of their patients. This may be because they have in previous lives been afflicted with disease. Having experienced suffering they have that refinement of sympathy which makes them successful nurses now. Again you will wonder why a certain man is such a temperance crank. He exhausts the dictionary in his efforts to get strong enough words to condemn alcohol and all who deal in it. No doubt in some past life he was a drunkard or in some way sorely afflicted from alcohol. Hence he guards against it now instinctively. His whole soul is aroused because his soul has suffered sorely. I, myself, have almost a craze for liberty, I not only hate paternal legislation, but am particularly unsympathetic with those who advocate such legislation. In the past I must have been under a tyrant and, knowing the galling nature of the experience, I can now scent the merest suspicion of tyranny.

We reap what we sow. Every effort put forth in this present life will mean so much better a start in our next life. The good we do will bring blessings, the evil will breed pain and

sorrow. The great law of cause and effect works on eternally. Do not cheat yourself with the idea that you can escape.

Christ said that Elias had already come and His disciples knew that he meant John Baptist. These men were enough alike to have been the same person. Shakespeare may have been Homer, Napoleon may have been Alexander the Great, Darwin may have been Aristotle, and so on and so on.

Details of this theory are quite interesting and some of them profoundly beautiful. Most people are so perplexed over the mysteries of life and death. Here is a golden key that unlocks such a new and harmonious world. You see a loving old mother weeping away the little of vitality left her over a son who has sacrificed his life to strong drink. She never can smile again because her philosophy of life holds out no hope for him in the great eternity beyond. What could be sadder! But she need not despair, neither need her friends grieve. The son shall live again and take advantage of the experience and avoid former mistakes. Truly, as the poet said, "Life is too much with us." Our imaginations are so stupid that we cannot think of the vastness of time and, therefore, of the opportunities that lie before us. One short life isn't all. Other opportunities will surely come.

How comforting too, to know that all the myriad animals are not born to be annihilated. The wonder is that anybody ever could have believed such a cruel philosophy—that of life as one long-drawn agony, closing in death that ends all. But no, the animals live again and progress upward in the evolution of life. Persons who err must suffer but not eternally. They will have myriad chances to weed out the thorns and poison stuff and plant instead beautiful flowers and golden grain. The weak ones may plod along and reach the heights in their own slow, quiet fashion. Fate is stern but not arbitrarily cruel. Always a chance to mend, always reward for every kind of good effort. There is a reason for everything and most trivial things count. The beautiful face you admired in passing is the result of something harmonious in past lives. The good luck is the result of good deeds done, the ills of evils in a past life.

You admire your lover all the more because you can trace her back through countless ages. That light springing step is a remnant from the time she roamed the forest the swiftest and noblest of the animal tribes. It did not come by mere chance. Neither did her courage and noble bearing. A queen in your eyes now, because in past ages she was a queen ruling the tribes of the forest with power and dignity. Be sure no gifts come merely by chance but from merit. If the ages gone by have brought her up from lower forms of life to that of a noble woman, what will she be in ages hence? And is not this prospect of advancement sufficient to satisfy any reasonable longings we may have? You loved her at first sight because you loved her before and your souls recognize each other. Love itself may be the promptings of egos 'within the youth or maiden seeking admittance again to human life.

Evolution shows that differences in structure have developed very slowly. It took ages for man to learn to walk erect. A language develops very slowly. What can you point to of value that has not taken ages to produce? Is it not reasonable to suppose that soul qualities, which are the highest things, are the result of ages? Can you believe that the soul of Shakespeare or Newton developed from but one short life of a few years? It would be contrary to all the teachings of science. The British constitution is a wonderful development, but it took centuries to perfect it. The British constitution is lifeless and insignificant in comparison with a human soul, is in fact a product of the human soul. Can you believe, then, that the soul is a product of a few short years? Is it not reasonable to suppose that the soul is the result of long ages of development?

Re-incarnation gives a reasonable explanation why children as a rule are so much different from either parent. The parents of most great men were quite ordinary people. How else do you account for the proverbial “black sheep” that are said to afflict every family? The black sheep is black because his past life was black largely independent of his parents. The brilliant son is brilliant because of past lives of faithful effort towards advancement and through the fairness of destiny in rewarding good deeds done. There is no doubt that parents have an influence on the individual character of their children but this is far from being the chief factor.

Re-incarnation explains the significance of many dreams. Who has not had the “falling” dream? Explained as a faint recollection of the catastrophes we had when living in the trees in times when we were ape-like men or men-like apes. A friend of mine used to be punished when a boy for relating strange dreams and for believing that he had lived before. One night he dreamed he was living in the time of Boadicea among the Britons. He rode on a wonderful chariot to a druid sacrifice. The victim was bound hands and feet and, with great ceremony and gesticulation, sacrificed. He had never read of such an incident. No doubt in a past life he had been sacrificed and now, when the body is passive in sleep, his ego recalls the tragic events of its past lives. Is it not reasonable to suppose that, if a person goes through some specially tragic event, that his soul would recall it in the future? Another friend sees a strange “dream town” totally different from modern towns. He also dreams of ancient battles where the commands were given in a now forgotten language. I, myself, have a very peculiar dream that has recurred time and again, which is no doubt one of the tragic events of my past lives. It is too gruesome to describe here. Truth is stranger than fiction and there may be a good deal of truth in these strange dreams. Kipling relates some wonderful dreams and more recently Jack London has made dreams of prehistoric times the subject of a cleverly written story. Some maintain that these dreams are brought about by certain molecules derived from our ancestors. This is very difficult to believe because of their completeness and the insignificance of any fragments of matter remaining in us that were derived from remote ancestors.

Akin to dreams are some peculiar feelings that come over us in our waking hours. A totally new bit of scenery may have a strange fascination for us and deeply impress us as a place that seems familiar. Wild nature has a peculiar charm for most people—mountains, lagoons, haunts of wild animals. This is quite natural enough, if it is true that we have lived before and spent ages among the wilds in prehistoric times. There come to all of us calls of the wild. Occasionally a chord will be struck in our natures that we did not know existed. The truer men we are the greater is our love for everything that lives, and a kinship springs up for all life. Why not, when all life is so linked together through an eternity of time?

Then, again, I think every person feels a power within him that is greater than his conscious self and to which he cannot give satisfactory expression. Our egos are then striving to express their experiences or inward life. At times our soul ego decides questions for us. For how often do we do this or that yet scarcely know why, but with certain conviction? Many life problems seem to be worked out for us while asleep and we awake fully decided. No doubt our egos would do more for us if we were more inclined to listen to their still small voices. Earth’s greatest philosophers were prone to silent meditation.

Change and rest seem necessary in the order of nature. Man and animals have their daily periods of rest in sleep. Constant change makes the scenes of earth interesting. Sunshine alternates with shadow, heat with cold. The waves rise and fall, the tides ebb and flow. With life it is the same. Sleep refreshes and invigorates. So, too, the sleep of death seems necessary for carrying out nature’s design. A long rest no doubt invigorates the egos and the

disintegration of the body may be necessary so that the molecules of which it is composed may pass out into nature and thus take a part in carrying out such laws as justice, fate, and destiny.

It may be that the more intelligent our egos are the better are they qualified to direct their course back to human life, and the more human and loving they are the more will they desire to get back. Some egos may return after such long periods of time that they find the earth too far advanced to catch up. Such would be fools or idiots. Prodigies may be those who returned too quickly or those who in successive lives have followed one strong bent. The man who commits suicide because of love has a dangerous development of feeling which will be difficult to satisfy in future lives. Early deaths may be partly due to egos being dissatisfied with conditions in which they find themselves. The fact that we do not remember having lived before is quite simple. It is because the soul ego is not again connected with the same body ego.

Many claim that the earth is not good enough for future life. That they are not sincere in this is seen in the strenuous efforts they make to remain here. Then, too, the earth and the problems of earth are beautiful, wonderful, and inexhaustible. The shame is that so many go through life with such unseeing eyes, such unappreciative souls. Why they wish for a lovelier spot when they ignore loveliness now, shows that it is an idle dream.

Many crave to know their friends and loved ones in the future. They want to hold all the old ties throughout eternity. Perhaps, if people broadened out to look upon everybody as a father, a mother, a brother, or a sister, they would be less selfish in the matter, and leave their loved ones to do good in whatever lives they again touch. It is not impossible, though, to love the same ones again.

The third chapter of this book deals with Buddhism. The founder of this wonderful religion, after a profound study of nature, sees in transmigration, the great law of life. In that chapter the reader will find further arguments to substantiate the claims for re-incarnation. That ancient philosopher, from general observation, saw re-incarnation. The more modern and minute investigations of scientists find the same thing.

This cannot be said for many an old theory. Ask the ordinary Christian you meet where and how he obtained his soul and he can give you no answer at all. He is illogical to an extreme. He cannot quite think a new soul is given by the Creator at every birth nor has he courage enough to assert that souls are stored up for the storks to select. Ask him does he believe the soul of a child is derived from the souls of the parents and his denial is emphatic. The old idea of the soul being a kind of gaseous man is unthinkable, besides the discoveries of biologists that man develops from a simple cell makes such an idea untenable. So, if the reader feels inclined to laugh at re-incarnation, what theory has he that is not wholly ridiculous?

Study nature and her laws, investigate evolution, study human life, study higher criticism, look into other great religions than your own and the more you do this the greater will be your respect and admiration for the theory of re-incarnation.

II. Evolution

The Evolution Theory is now accepted by most scholars even including theologians. There is, however, among less educated classes and especially among women, a perfect horror of the very word. Their whole idea of this comprehensive theory is the matter of man being descended from apes. For, how could their relatives, who are such good bakers, farmers, tailors or blacksmiths, ever have been descended from these hairy little creatures! Is it not a most encouraging thing that in fifty thousand years there have developed from an ape-condition such men as Shakespeare, Goethe, Darwin, and the like? It gives hope for the progress of humanity in fifty thousand years to come. You honor a man who rises from a lowly state to a position of honor; why not be encouraged with the thought that man generally has climbed upward from the humble condition of an animal?

A most casual study of nature shows there has been progress. The world was not created in the same condition it is in to-day. The rock strata show that mighty changes have taken place. In the animal and vegetable world too there have been vast changes. In the history of nations, in art, in religion, in everything, there has been steady progress upward from humbler conditions. It remained for Charles Darwin to discover the great law underlying this progress.

Darwin spent several years in the country near London where he observed breeders improving stock by means of careful selection of sires and dams. From the wonders wrought in species of domestic animals by means of selection he looked about in nature for some similar *natural* means of selection. He discovered it and established his discovery beyond doubt. This law of natural selection is generally known as "Survival of the Fittest." Here is a law or force that is everywhere constantly at work. For example, take the oak tree. The acorns it produces are many times more in number than have any chance of growing into oak trees. Hence there arises a strife for which shall survive and, generally speaking, the "fittest survives"—the strongest and healthiest. Now follow up through centuries this breeding of oak trees from the best seed and there cannot help being an improvement in the trees themselves. In the animal world there is constant strife. The swiftest deer escape the wolves. Their offspring are swift from heredity. The strife continues and the swiftest of these again survive, and their offspring become swifter still—survival of the fittest, which in this case is the swiftest. The males have to fight for the favor of the females and mastery of the flock. In this struggle the "fittest survives" and the offspring inherit the superior qualities of the parents. This law you will find working everywhere in nature.

Well, if through this law there has been gradual progress, you have to go back only a few centuries to find very humble conditions. Every branch of science confirms the Evolution Theory.

The astronomer sees evolution. In the heavens he sees every stage of world making from the nebula to other nebula that have advanced a stage and are partly solid with a whirling motion; others still are condensed to suns with rings around them, the rings being the first step in planet making.

The geologist sees evolution in his study of the rocks. For these rocks contain wonderful records. Petrified remains of animals and plants are discovered everywhere. They are not found mixed, but the older the rocks are the simpler are the forms of life embedded in them.

The anatomist in his investigations finds evolution the correct theory. All higher animals have five fingers with four bones each except the thumb. Sometimes these are but slightly

developed. But the fact shows relationship. Man has, in a modified form, the pouch of marsupials. Men and apes have the same number of vertebrae, muscles, and nerves. Why so if they are not related? All back-boned animals and man are built on the same general bone structure.

Study embryology and you will be still further convinced of the Evolution Theory. Every being including man, develops from an egg. The embryos pass through stages and odd shapes that are an abridgement of the life history of the ancestors far back. The embryos of a child and an ape at one time have three gills like newts, then a fine fur over the body, a tail that looks like that of a dog. These disappear before birth. At certain stages you cannot distinguish the embryos of man, dog, chicken, turtle, etc.

Rudimentary organs are convincing proofs of evolution. These are organs found in bodies for which there is no purpose for their existence. These used to give orthodox scholars no end of trouble to explain. They held them to be created for the purpose of symmetry but that does not satisfy candid minds. There are scores of these rudimentary organs.

Only a few will here be mentioned. Man has muscles to shake the skin of the head and ears which he never uses. They survive from the time when to use them was necessary. Though fallen into disuse they yet remain.

The vermiform process is absolutely useless to man in his present state, though surgeons find them good “fee-producers” in operations for appendicitis. There is a soft, fine hair over the body which is purposeless also. So is the remnant of a tail—the coccyx. Fore-teeth, or incisors, are found in the mid-bone of the upper jaw of the embryos of cattle. These never develop, hence serve no purpose. The embryos of whales have teeth which never develop. Man has muscles in the cartilage of the ear for “pricking up the ears,” but they have fallen into disuse. Our ancestors, apes, semi-apes, and pouched animals, needed them. Many varieties of dogs and rabbits, under the influence of civilized life, have lost the habit of “pricking up” their ears. Man has in the inner corner of the eye the rudiments of a third eyelid which is useless. His remote ancestors used this eye lid. Sharks can cover their eyes with these membranes, the so-called “plica semilunaris.” Many animals, such as species of moles, mice, serpents, lizards, beetles, crabs, worms, etc., have eyes, but cannot see. Whales have in their bodies superfluous bones, which are remnants of undeveloped hind legs (fins). Some lizards have perfect shoulder apparatus but no fore-legs. Rudimentary organs, as every botanist knows, are quite common in the flowers of plants.

Some interesting missing links have been discovered.

The horse has been traced back in fossils to two-toed, three-toed, four-toed, and five-toed ancestors. Birds have been found with teeth and lizard tails. The dinosaurians have characteristics of lizards, frogs and mammals mixed. How do you account for this except by the Evolution Theory?

Some deductions have given interesting proof of the Evolution Theory. For instance: In all mammals at an early stage of the embryonic development, a bladder-shaped allantois is formed. In man alone this had not been observed. In Ernst Haeckel’s “Anthropogeny,” published in 1874, he maintained its existence in man also. He was accused of “falsifying science.” But in 1875 it was really observed, and proved the soundness of the deduction. If man is different from other creatures, if he is in a distinct class by himself, how is it that deductions from observations of mammals prove true in regard to him?

Seeing there was no possible resistance to the Evolution Theory many orthodox scholars struck what they thought a brilliant idea, that man’s physical nature came about through evolution, but that his intellectual and spiritual nature was a special creation. This idea, too, is

doomed to failure. It is well established that the intellectual and physical natures are not distinct in any sense. They are inseparable. There is every reason to believe that the psychical nature resulted from an evolutionary process just as surely as did the physical, the highest developed animals are more intelligent than the lowest tribes of men. The *will* is as distinctly developed in higher animals as in men. The *affections* of higher animals are just as tender and warm as those of men. Animals exhibit in a marked degree such soul qualities as fidelity, devotion, maternal love and conjugal love. There is no doubt whatever that animals are capable of thought, and thought, too, of no low order. Animals, too, have a sense of right and wrong. Man, to be sure, has developed far beyond the animals, but the difference is one of degree which is easily explained by the Evolution Theory. Look at the immense difference in men themselves. Compare for instance, Isaac Newton with the ape-like negro tribes on the Upper Nile. These tribes are absolutely devoid of affection and are far lower than intelligent animals. They can count only to three or four, have no abstract terms in their speech whatever. Missionaries have pronounced it hopeless to try to improve these tribes, and some of them refuse to believe they are “men and brothers.” Is it not reasonable to believe that to bridge the chasm between animals of highest intelligence and men of lowest state is easier than to bridge the chasm between men of lowest and men of highest attainments?

Following is a probable genealogy of man:

1. Man, chimpanzee, orang, gorilla, descended from apes, three species, 50,000 years ago.
2. Apes from Lemurs, eight species, 200,000 years.
3. Lemurs from other mammals, twenty-five species, 600,000 years.
4. Mammals from extinct dinosaurians, ninety species, 1,000,000 years.
5. Dinosaurians from batrachians (frog family), sixty species, 400,000 years.
6. Batrachians from fishes, fifty species, 300,000 years.
7. Fishes from lampreys, ten species, 3,000,000 years.
8. Lampreys from molluscs, forty species, 8,000,000 years.
9. Molluscs from amoebae and monerae, 100 species, 15,000,000 years.

Reasoning by Analogy.

10. Amoebae from albuminous compounds, 100 species, 20,000,000 years.
11. Albuminous compounds from minerals, 3,000,000 years.

Most marvellous have been the effects of the grand Darwinian theory. You can read few modern writers without seeing distinct traces of evolution, so much have men’s minds been affected by this marvellous discovery. It has added fresh life to the whole intellectual world. Perhaps its chief glory has been this broadening and deepening of intellectual pursuits. For the intellectual world it has been what the discovery of America was to the physical world. Evolution has broadened man’s conceptions of the universe. It has perfected his culture. It has given nobler conceptions of the Creator, bringing Him near to hand, at work in everything about us.

What is there to prevent this grand theory from becoming popular with the masses?

Simply this: In by-gone ages men had poetic dreams, and among others, dreams of Creation. The intellectual was not far enough advanced to know, so they made brilliant guesses. Every ancient people had their creation stories and, among others, the Hebrews. It has been well established by scholars that the Hebrews, while in captivity in Babylon, learned of the

Babylonian theory of creation and, upon their return, incorporated it into the Book of Genesis. As ages went by men were taught to believe that the Bible is infallible, divinely inspired, and, therefore, inerrant. This view has become almost second nature to most people of Europe and America. It is easy enough to see with what tenacity people would hold to views recorded in this sacred book. Hence the Genesis account of creation is still clung to by unthinking people.

A glance at the creation story of Genesis shows how utterly untrustworthy it is either as history or science.

In the first place the time of creation, according to Genesis, is far too short. It is known that man has inhabited the earth for at least 50,000 years and scientists hold that the world is at least 100,000,000 years old.

Genesis claims that light was created before the sun, that day and night were divided before the sun was created, and that the earth was created before the sun and stars, all of which is manifestly absurd. The sky was conceived as a glass firmament separating the waters above from the waters beneath, and the earth was supposed to be floating in water. Plants were created before the sun and before the animals, all of which is unscientific. These are but a few of the misconceptions of the author of the Genesis record.

Laying the Genesis record aside, as a beautiful dream or myth, and the Evolution Theory at once appeals to your reason.

The Theory of Re-incarnation harmonizes beautifully with evolution. Evolution teaches progress. Re-incarnation points out that life returning to begin where it left off, is a reason for that progress. Therefore, Re-incarnation is reasonable, natural and scientific.

III. Buddhism

This ancient religion is a veritable gold mine containing much precious metal, but mixed with a good deal of low grade quartz and country rock. A wise miner is well content, though, so long as the veins are continuous with “good pay” ore. Recent scientific discoveries like “evolution” have increased the respect of scholars for the philosophy of Prince Gautama of India, the founder of Buddhism. This great faith of Asia has existed twenty-four centuries and now has more followers than any other form or creed. The mark of Gautama's sublime teaching is stamped on a mighty empire of Belief.

In his preface to the Light of Asia, Arnold says: “Discordant in frequent particulars, and sorely overlaid by corruptions, inventions, and misconceptions, the Buddhistical books yet agree in the one point of recording nothing—no single act or word—which mars the perfect purity and tenderness of this Indian teacher, who united the truest princely qualities with the intellect of a sage and the passionate devotion of a martyr. * * * * In point of age, therefore, most other creeds are youthful compared with this venerable religion, which has in it the eternity of a universal hope, the immortality of a boundless love, an indestructible element of faith in final good, and the proudest assertion ever made of human freedom.”

The following is a brief summary of Arnold's Light of Asia. I take Arnold because I think he interprets the true meaning of Buddhist teaching.

The birth of Gautama is surrounded by beautiful legends such as gather about great teachers of mankind. When an infant he is taken in the arms of a grey haired saint, Asita, who proclaims the child “Buddh,” who is to save the world. At the age of eight years, his father, the king, sent him to the most learned teachers to be educated. So wonderfully clever was the youth that in reverence the teachers ask to learn of him. In speech he was gentle, yet so wise, princely of mien, yet softly mannered, modest, deferent, tender-hearted, though of fearless courage. His compassion for everything that lives was early shown in an incident over a swan that had fallen wounded by a hunter. The prince would not return the bird to the hunter. The king's counsellors decided that Gautama had best claim to the bird because “the saviour of life owns more the living thing than he who seeks to slay.” In chasing the gay gazelles, he would stop suddenly because the horses breathed heavily. Once his father took him out to see the gladness of springtime. The thoughtful young fellow soon perceived the galling labor of the oxen in the fields and the fierce warfare of animals against one another in the struggle for existence. He sat down for hours to meditate upon the deep disease of life. Such was his passion to heal pain, so great his love for living things that his soul passed to ecstasy, which purged his soul from mortal taint of sense and self.

So moody he became in his meditations that the king took counsel of his advisers and it was decided that the Prince must fall in love. To accomplish this a national festival was held where the maidens of the realm competed in beauty. The last one to appear before the Prince for a prize was the beautiful Princess Yasodhara-At sight of her he was startled, their eyes mixed and from their look sprang love. The books go on to relate how they had been lovers many times before in their past lives, even when he was a fierce tiger and she a tigress. To win her hand it was necessary to compete in contests of strength and skill with the greatest athletes of his time. In all these contests he came off victor and was happily married to the Princess.

They lived in beautiful palaces built for them by the king. Their surroundings were more beautiful than a poet's dream. No mention of pain or sorrow or death was ever allowed. The

King thought by this the Prince would grow to a superior kind of mortal. But, notwithstanding every precaution, Gautama's spirit is restless, and the wind whispers strange things to him of the world outside.

He asked to ride out to see the city. Whereupon the king gave commands that every unwholesome sight should be removed. At the outskirts of the city an old haggard man asked alms. The Prince couldn't understand the meaning of such wretchedness, and when told of the existence of sickness, age and death, his heart was nearly broken. He couldn't bear to think that Yasodhara would grow old and that their love should end in hateful death. His life became troubled. In sleep he would rouse up and cry, "My world! Oh, world! I hear, I know, I come!" At such time his look was awful and his visage like a god's. Next time he asks to go forth unknown. Then he learned of the world's suffering and woe and death.

His passion to save the world grew apace and at last he left his beautiful palaces, his ease and delights, his sweet queen and their babe, to make fervent search for the secret cause of the world's woe, and the remedy by which it could be saved.

For seven years Gautama dwelt among the hills alone, living on alms gratefully given by the kind-hearted people. These years were spent in profoundest study.

There are many interesting incidents recorded of him during these years. At one time he is disputing with hermits who held that to mortify the body is helpful to the soul, to which he meditates, that men lust so to live they are afraid to love life, but plague it with fierce penances as if that would please the gods who deny pleasure to man; as if hell could be balked by self-made hells. He then turned to the flowers of the field and birds of the air as examples of perfect living, for they despoil neither their happiness nor their beauty, yet are contented always.

At another time he followed a flock of goats and sheep which are being taken to a king's palace for sacrifice. One young lamb was bruised and bleeding, so he carried it in his arms. Arriving at the palace, he pleads in pathetic terms to stop the sacrifice. He spoke of life, which all can take but none can give; life which all creatures love and strive to keep, wonderful, dear, and pleasant even to the meanest. He pointed out that man prays for mercy to the gods, but is merciless to animals to whom he is a god; that all life is linked and kin, and what we slay have given meek tribute of milk and wool and have set fast trust upon the hands that murder them. Nor can innocent beasts bear one hair's weight of the answer, all must give for things done amiss or wrongfully. Alone, each for himself, must submit to the fixed arithmetic of the universe and receive good for good and ill for ill. The result was the king passed an edict forbidding sacrifice.

Reports say that Buddha's heart was so piteous that in a former life he met in time of drouth a famished tigress and cub, and, seeing no other means of help, gave himself to her for food. His reason for so doing was that none could lose but himself and that love cannot lose doing of its kind to the uttermost.

At the close of the seventh year, worn out with searching, the light dawned upon him. All night he withstood fiercest temptations. Ten chief sins wrestled with him in most subtle fashion. These were: Sin of Self, Doubt, False Faith, False Love, Hate, Lust of Life, Lust of Fame, Pride, Self-Righteousness, and Ignorance. In the third watch of the night he triumphed over the hellish legion and attained Samm-sambuddh. He saw the line of all his lives from the humblest beginnings, higher and higher. Also he saw that new life reaps what the old life sowed; how where its march breaks off its march begins and how good begets more good, evil fresh evil.

In the middle watch he attained Abhidjñā—insight vast beyond this sphere to the highest spheres, system on system, countless worlds and suns moving in splendid measures. He saw the Lords of Light who hold the worlds by bonds invisible and how these circle round mightiest orbs. Saw all the radiant life of higher spheres. Times immeasurable depths and heights he passed transported through the infinitudes. Saw the Central Power which rules the universe.

In the fourth watch came the secret cause of Sorrow. Then the steps up to Nirvana—sinless, stirless rest.

From this time forward he went about teaching his great philosophy—the law, as it is called. The following is a brief summary of his teaching:

Look not for Brahm (the Supreme God) for no gazer shall see him with mortal eye or any searcher know by mortal mind. Veil after veil will be lifted but veil after veil will remain. The proper study is not the Unknowable, but life, and woe, and cause, and sequence and the course of time and life's ceaseless tide.

Life, like a river, ever-changing, runs fast or slow from its fountain to the sea, where it is sent back in vapor to trickle again down the hills through the river to the sea (Transmigration)—a mighty whirling wheel of strife and stress which none can stay or stem.

Pray not, the darkness will not brighten because you ask it. Ask nothing of the silence for it cannot speak. Vex not your mournful minds with pious pains! Seek naught from the helpless gods by means of offerings, or hymns, or sacrifices. The universe is run by fixed laws which will not be changed for any man.

Seek deliverance in yourselves, for each man makes his own fate. With man, as with powers above, and with everything that lives, acts make joy or woe. What has been brings what is and shall be—worse—better. The angels of the glad heavens reap fruits of a holy past: the devils in the under worlds wear out effects of deeds that were wicked in a by-gone age. Nothing endures permanently: virtues waste with time and foul sins grow purged through time. A toiling slave may live again a prince because of gentleness, worth and merit; a king may return to earth a beggar because of evil deeds.

Nothing binds us absolutely. If it did, the heart of Being were a curse. The soul of things is sweet, the Heart of Being is celestial rest. Will is stronger than woe. The good may grow to better.

Laugh and be glad for there is Liberty! Ye who suffer! Know ye suffer from yourselves, nothing compels you. Lower than hell, higher than heaven, farther than Brahm dwells, before beginning and without an end, as eternal as space, and sure as surety is fixed a Power which moves to good. Only its laws endure. This Power is seen in the wonders of nature, in the human heart, in love, in death, in pain. What it has wrought is better than what had been. Slowly and steadily evolution progresses. Whoever thwarts this Power, loses; Whoever serves it, gains. It pays the hidden good with peace and bliss, the hidden evil with sorrow. Do right—it recompenses! Do one wrong—equal retribution sooner or later must be made. This Power knows neither anger nor mercy. Utterly true it measures. Time to it makes no difference, for soon or late it will repay. By this power the slayer's knife stabs himself; the unjust judge loses his own defender; the liar is punished by his own lies. Such is the Power that moves to righteousness. The heart of it is Love, the end of it is Peace and consummation Sweet. Obey!

Each man's life is the outcome of his former life. What you sow you must reap, and just as wheat seed grows into wheat and corn into corn. Sow wrongs and you reap sorrows and

woes; sow right and you reap bliss. Life comes back reaping the things sowed, either golden grain or foul weeds. If a man strives to do right by doing good deeds, enduring patiently, striving to pay fully for evil deeds, if he lives always in love and truth, if he thoroughly purge falsehood and selfishness from his nature, suffering meekly, returning grace and good for evil, if he is always merciful, holy, and just and kind and true, if he tears love of life out of his blood by the roots; he—dying—never needs to live again the earthly life for he has finished the very purpose of life. He goes to Nirvana—the dewdrop (life) slips into the shining sea (Nirvana).

Only when the dross of sin is gone, only when life like a flame is spent—the oil gone—deaths cease.

Of the noble four-fold Truths, the first is Sorrow. Life is long-drawn agony, its pleasures flee, its pains abide. Ache of birth, ache of helpless days, ache of hot youth and ache of manhood's prime; ache of old age and choking death, these occupy our lives. Love is sweet, but the grave hides the breasts which pillow and the lips which cling; vultures pick the joints of gallant, warlike chiefs and kings. The earth is beautiful, but all the forest broods plot mutual murder. Ask the sick, the mourners, the old and feeble, and they will say the babe is wise that weeps when born.

The Second Truth is Sorrow's Cause. No grief springs of itself but from Desire. Senses and things mingle and light to flame the passions. Eagerly we cling to shadows, dote on dreams. We plant in our midst a false self and a world which seems. Because of this everything is perceived in a false light and we are blind to the true life. So, strifes and lusts, passions, envies, angers, hates, grow. The drugged soul departs and returns sense-struck to live another sodden life.

The Third Truth is Sorrow's Ceasing. Peace is obtained by conquering love of self and lust of life, by tearing passion from the breast and stilling the inward strife. Clasp eternal beauty close. Be Lord of Self. Live beyond the gods. Lay up lasting treasure of perfect service rendered, duties done in charity, soft speech and stainless days. Neither life nor death can rob you of these riches. Then sorrow ends, just as lamps flicker when the oil is gone.

The Fourth Truth is the Way. It is wide and plain, easy and near, the Noble Eightfold Path which goes straight to peace and refuge. This path is like those up the Himalayas. They are many. The weak may climb the gentler slopes; the strong may dare the steep and rugged roads, soaring and perilous. So is the path to peace. The stout soul hastens, the weaker tarries longer. All will reach the summit.

Those who take the gentler slopes will find Four Good Levels.

The First is right Doctrine. Walk in fear of Dharma, shunning all offence; in heed of Karma, which makes man's fate. Keep lordship over sense.

The Second Level is Right Purpose. Have good-will to every living thing, letting unkindness die and greed and wrath, so that your life will be like sweet airs passing by.

The Third Level is Right Discourse, Govern the lips as they were palace-doors, the king within; tranquil and fair and courteous be all words.

The Fourth Level is Right Behaviour. Let each act assoil a fault or help a merit grow. Let love show through all deeds as does a silver thread through crystal beads.

Those who take the rugged road will find Four Higher Roadways. To tread these one must renounce earthly things. They are, Right Purity, Right Thought, Right Loneliness, Right Rapture.

Ten sins lie in dust along the pathway like foes slain by a warrior. They are, Love of Self, False Faith, Doubt, Hatred, Lust, Love of Life on earth, Desire for heaven, Self-Praise, Error and Pride.

Enter the path! There is no grief like hate! No pains like passion, no deceit like sense! Enter the path! far hath he gone whose foot treads down one fond offence.

Enter the path! There spring the healing streams quenching all thirst! There bloom th' immortal flowers carpeting all the way with joy! there throng

Swiftest and sweetest hours!

More is the treasure of the Law than gems;
Sweeter than comb its sweetness; its delights
Delightful past compare, thereby to live
Hear the Five Rules aright:

Kill not—for pity's sake—and lest ye slay
The meanest thing upon its upward way.

Give freely and receive, but take from none
By greed, or force or fraud, what is his own.

Bear not false witness, slander not, nor lie;
Truth is the speech of inward purity.

Shun drugs and drinks, which work the wit abuse;
Clear minds, clean bodies, need no Soma juice.

Touch not thy neighbor's wife, neither commit
Sins of the flesh unlawful and unfit.

IV. Justice

Justice is the principle which demands for every action an exact equivalent of back-action (reaction): or that every cause must have an equal effect. Justice is not the action or the back-action, it is the principle which demands their equality and final satisfaction. There may be small hidden fractions of old actions and back-actions which produce many of the mysterious "accidents" of luck, ill luck, misery, abundance. We can reach perfection only when justice is perfectly satisfied.

The world is gradually finding out that the universe is run on fixed principles or laws that are unchangeable, and that do not vary in the minutest degree. We can think of nothing to give such an accurate idea of unchangeableness as nature's laws. Gravitation will serve as an example. This law was discovered by Newton. It explains why objects drop towards the earth, why everything has weight, the attraction of the earth. That we cannot conceive of a ball being thrown up and not fall, shows our "absolute faith" in Nature's laws. The motions of the planets are according to law and, so perfect is this motion, that astronomers can figure eclipses for thousands of years ahead without a "shadow" of error. More and more are these secret laws of the universe being discovered until now it is believed everything is controlled in that way. We may not be able to explain everything in nature but, so much has been made clear and plain, that the conclusion is fixed upon us, that everything works under the sway of fixed laws.

Justice, too, must be and is founded on a very common law, that of cause and effect. No scientist can imagine such a thing as an occurrence in nature that was not caused by something and had no result (effect). The old Frenchman's notion that, in drilling rock, the part where the drill went down was pounded into "nothing," is no more foolish than the idea some people have that their actions through life "may not" have any good or evil effect. Yes, they do. Nothing can escape. Just as the burnt wood, though lost to sight, is every particle still in existence somewhere, so every act of ours in life will sometime have its effect. Justice sees to it that the effect will be exactly equal to the cause. Many have a faint idea of the truth of this, but few realize how minutely and remorselessly it works out. Not the millionth part of the minutest shadow of wrong or right can escape its effect.

A man is a coward who would wish it otherwise. True, it takes a brave heart to submit to justice but men should be brave; bravery should be the most common trait in human character. Justice appeals strongly to a man's sense of right. It is eternally right. The great redeeming feature in it all is its fairness. We reap exactly what we sow. Wouldn't it be foolish to expect otherwise? And we do not reap what we do not sow. We get credit for every good, we escape no evil. There is no favoritism, no respect for persons, no royal roads, no snags, no chances, no dodging. In justice we are never slighted, never misunderstood, never passed by. This appeals to a sensible man as good. The ball thrown up does come down.

One often hears this principle upheld by those who think their rewards and punishments come in this present life. But once assume that life is eternal and there is plenty of room for justice to work out even mathematically correct. The seeming fortune one gets now may be the result of good done in past lives. The evils now seemingly unpunished will certainly be fully paid, if not now, in the future. The beautiful face, the bright intellect, the kindly heart, the noble soul, the wealth, the position, in fact all the blessings of life are but results of a past life of good. On the other hand the sorrows, the ill luck, the failures, the ills of life generally are, too, results of the past—a past of wrong and evil. It must be so or else the universe is chaotic.

Only slight reflection will show what a beautiful principle this is. How often it is pointed out how seemingly unscathed the man comes off who betrays an innocent maiden. He seems to go perfectly free without hardly a disturbing thought. How just it would be in the next life for him to be one of those very maidens, or a slave or something else that to the millionth part made him suffer equal to what he caused? How eminently just and fair that he who lived a life full of good deeds and noble effort should in the next life be a prince? And so on even in the most trivial acts. The unkind heart may be the result of cruelty in the past. The pains of diseases may be results of pains we have caused. The pang we cause, even to innocent little animals, we too may have to feel.

In discussing this with a gentleman some time ago he pointed out that this placed life on a low plane. It made reward and punishment our motive of action. Looking at it casually, the objection seems reasonable. It seems quite sensible that one should not look for reward, but the reason is that rewards have been thought of as "outside extras," not the inherent good. The student expects "Education" as the reward for toil. The farmer expects a harvest from the labor spent. The natural rewards and punishments, those that are inherent in the act itself, must seem right and good. What ideal can be higher?

Justice makes man the master of his fate. He works out his own salvation, as the Scriptures say he should do. He rises to future life according as he left off this one. He wears no angel's wings that he did not strive for. His every merit is recognized. By living a life of gentleness, planting beautiful grain where weeds would have grown, he can rest assured that the future has only good for him.

At the death bed all shams are brushed aside. In that supreme moment the dying deal in great essentials. Nothing is so powerful in the mind of the dying as justice. "Have I wronged anyone?" is the last universal cry, if not of the tongue, of the very being. This shows that justice is the thing of supremest importance in life.

Justice is not a stern thing, as is often supposed. All true lasting pleasure is built upon true justice. It may have added to it the emotions of love, hatred, friendship, indifference. By allying ourselves most strongly to justice we cannot possibly go wrong: by not making it our slave, submitting it to our selfishness, family feelings, patriotism, religion and morals.

V. Death

Death is a universal principle. Without it there cannot be any life, for life is a moving force, a building force. But in order to build up there must be material with which to build. This material that life works upon is the product of death—disintegration. The farmer cannot raise a crop unless in the soil and in the air are substances the products of decay. You cannot build a building without scaffolding. Certain animals must have shells in which to develop. Death gives us the scaffolding, the shell from which life springs and develops. It is the birth place of life. Without death the world would come to a stand still. All living things would be as lifeless as waxwork or marble statues.

And there cannot be any exceptions. The minute you eliminate death at the same instant action ceases, life becomes useless.

Look into the starry heavens and you see worlds forming and progressing. Evolution there. Force always at work. Motion never ceasing. Look to the earth and you will see the same thing. It is necessary for the progress of the world, even as a whole, that forces continue to act. Life is a part of this grand motion, of force. But life is only possible through death. Therefore death is a grand principle towards the evolution of the earth as a planet. A child may wish to go with his parents but is dreadfully frightened of the train. He must submit to go or lose his parents. The world is progressing not only in its parts but as a whole. It can progress only through force—motion—life, to which death—disintegration—is necessary. Why then think or feel that death is a dreadful thing?

An intelligent, progressive person cannot dread death. He cannot help but trust the principle that is so powerful in its operations towards sublime progress.

Evolution teaches some inspiring things in regard to death. The great law of the Survival of the Fittest has death for its very foundation stone. How can there be “survival” unless there is something to survive? Death is what is survived. If there were no death the deer need not learn to run, the wild duck need not have acute eyes and ears and splendid strength for flight. Without death birds need not sing nor flowers bloom. In a word, without death there is no progress.

The school boy works a problem on his slate, then rubs it off. The figures are gone but the boy has developed his intellect a little. So is it with death. Life, action, are necessary for progress. In the process death is necessary. Progress is the result. It may be impossible to show the advantages of certain forms of life and their ruthless destruction but, as all follow a general law, there must be some hidden good in it.

See, too, the progress the human species has made because of death—disintegration. Because of it we have the grand science of medicine, the refinement of soul through sympathy. Man’s struggles have made him what he is. Death is at the root of much of this struggle and indirectly the cause of most of it.

True enough death has caused a good deal of sorrow and misery and hardships of various kinds. Still much of it is due to false conceptions and narrow views of things. You cannot expect great universal laws to change just to suit people's sentiment in the matter.

Even if the hope of heaven is becoming dim and even though science at present holds out little hope of life hereafter, still one should take a broad view of the universe and trust in the laws that are so necessary and so universal.

To those who believe in re-incarnation, death should be looked forward to just as hopefully as if taking a sleep. Life will give you pleasure in the strife to so act that you will come again to reap fruits of good deeds, of noble efforts. You will die knowing that a long period of rest is necessary, and that you will awake fresh and happy in an age that is more progressive and that will be a keen interest to you. The fact that this lengthens out the future is hopeful enough because it contents one with slow development.

VI. The Old And The New

I shall not go into details of Bible Criticism because the subject is so large and any truth-loving person can find books on the subject in plenty. Neither is it my purpose to criticise for the mere sake of criticism, but that I think it necessary in strengthening my previous argument, for there yet remain many uninformed persons who look upon the Bible as a book inspired by God and inerrant. Few theologians are bold enough any longer to make such a claim, but they are careful not to express their convictions openly. They, no doubt, have nothing better to offer and therefore prefer their adherents to continue in poetic dreams.

The Bible is a collection of books that portray the life of the Hebrew people. Some of it is true, profound, beautiful and helpful. Much of it is contradictory, low in moral tone and narrow in its teaching. It cannot be disputed that the Bible contains scores of straight contradictions, such as 2 Sam. 24 : 10, and 1 Kings 15 : 5 —Gen. 22 : 1 and James 1 : 13— Psalm 104 : 5 and 2 Peter 3 : 10 or Heb. 1 : 11—2 Kings 2 : 11 and John 3 : 13—1 John 3 : 9 and Eccl. 7 : 20—Compare Job 34 : 22 with Gen. 3 : 8; 2 Sam. 8 : 4 with 1 Chron. 18 : 4; 2 Sam. 6 : 23 with 2 Sam. 21 : 8; Acts 9 : 7 with Acts 22 : 9; Gen. 32 : 30 with 1 John 4 : 12, and scores of others.

The Ten Commandments are given in three different places and in two different forms. This is quite strange when they were supposed to have been handed to Moses direct from God.

The statements that woman was made from a man's rib, that the serpent talked, that God made coats of skin, that God walked in the garden in the cool of the evening, Jonah living three days within a whale, Joshua making the sun stand still, the giants, the age of nine centuries for the patriarchs, Nebuchadnezzar eating grass, an ass talking, the tower of Babel, are all absurd.

There are numerous historical and scientific errors— Genesis is a specially conspicuous example.

Exaggerations are common. The account in 2 Chron. 13 of the Jewish army is greatly exaggerated. So also, 1 Sam. 6 : 19, where 50,070 men of one village were slaughtered for daring to look in the ark. In connection with Exodus are enormous exaggerations.

Also the moral tone of the Old Testament is in parts very low. God hardened Pharaoh's heart that he should not let the Children of Israel go and then punished him most terribly for not letting them go. God ordered Moses to lie to Pharaoh concerning the purpose of his three days' journey into the wilderness. Again, it is recorded that God commanded Joshua to murder the people of a certain list of cities, even the innocent women and children, so that Joshua could have their lands. Think of the cruelty in the command to slay all the guiltless first born of the Egyptians, of God's approval of hewing Agog to pieces, of the butchery of the prophets of Baal and of sending a lying spirit to betray King Ahab to his ruin. Polygamy and slavery are sanctioned. Death was ordained for witchcraft. Who believes in witchcraft now? In Deuteronomy is a command to stone to death unruly and disobedient children and, in another passage (14 : 21) meat of anything that died is not to be eaten but given to strangers. In Psalm 109 is a prayer for dire calamities upon his enemy and his children and Psalm 137 exclaims, "Happy shall he be who taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones!"

The God of Genesis is anthropomorphic and the deity of a patriarchal family. The God of Exodus, Joshua and Judges is intensely tribal in his nature, warlike and cruel. The spirit of many of the Psalms is far from gentle. There is not much tenderness and affection in any of

the Old Testament. Of the prophecies of Jesus in the Old Testament criticism has entirely disposed.

Neither has the New Testament stood the critical test. About all of it that can be relied upon is its portrayal of the spotless character of Christ and His teaching of the Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man. These alone have been the great moulding forces of spiritual life. Most of the other parts of the Bible either emphasize this or have been detrimental to man's progress.

The Resurrection of Christ, for instance, cannot be considered proven. The "Encyclopaedia Biblica" treats of the Resurrection as a vision. This was edited by a Canon of the Anglican Church and professor of Theology in Oxford University. So important an event should have undoubted proof. Instead the narratives are anonymous; their authorship is unknown and of uncertain date; they are hopelessly at variance with one another; and are connected with such prodigies as miraculous darkness, rending of the veil of the temple and apparitions of the dead in the streets of Jerusalem. Such startling events would have left traces in history.

The "Fall of Man" is also disproved, for science clearly shows man never fell.

Many of the miracles are difficult to believe, such as casting devils out of men into swine. They are plainly legendary.

The four chief documents of the New Testament—the Gospels—were selected out of a host of contradictory and forged manuscripts of the first three centuries after Christ by the three hundred and eighteen bishops who assembled at the Council of Nicaea in A.D. 327. The entire list of gospels numbered forty. According to the Synodicon of Pappus, the contending bishops put all the books underneath the altar, and prayed that the apocryphal books of human origin might remain there, and the genuine, inspired books might be miraculously placed on the table of the Lord. And that, says tradition, really occurred!

Many will look with consternation upon the decay of old beliefs. This is inevitable. Still, only good will be the result. That which was best of the old system will remain. This is the principle of love of man towards man. The systems of theology which gathered about Christianity tended to hide its best features. Christianity makes exaggerated claims. For while it has fought the advance of Science at every step, even with persecution and bloodshed it now turns round, and claims for Christian civilization the very things that in large measure were introduced by science. It is not true that the advancement of Western civilization is due to Christianity. This is only partly true. Still, it is undeniable that Christianity has done much for man. But a close study of it will show that the good has been chiefly in the spiritual life developed from the brotherhood teaching of Christ and not in the whole system of doctrines established.

Nor should Christianity be held to account for all the bloody wars and persecutions connected with it. For man is not a perfect creature. There's a good deal of the persecuting and bloody spirit in him that nothing but time could eradicate.

Many people are pessimistic over religious conditions that prevail at the present time. They point sorrowfully to the decay of religion. This is due to a false conception of the matter. That man is retrograding spiritually is very doubtful. Men are imbued with ideals obtained from former times. They do not keep up to the advanced spirit of the age. It is quite true that dogmas interest men far less than formerly, as do also belief in the supernatural and the myths and traditions connected with Christianity. But the spirit of brotherhood seems steadily growing. This is the thing most helpful and most worthy to retain. Science has introduced the great law of the survival of the fittest which has caused a more reasonable interpretation of the law of love laid down by Christianity.

Life is ever freeing itself from the yoke of the past. In this process much remains to be accomplished.

It will take some time before the clergy are given perfect freedom to express truth as they see it and untrammelled by cast iron creeds, doctrines, and beliefs. There should be perfect intellectual liberty. Nothing would do more to advance man intellectually. Under present conditions he is asked to base his very soul's salvation on much that is error, and consequently, his life grows towards false ideals and his moral condition must be faulty. Standards are changing. The Bible is no longer an infallible guide. How can life be measured accurately with a faulty standard of measurement?

Our social system is largely influenced by religious ideals. Hence it is not strange to find much in social life that needs modernizing. In the past nothing was considered good unless it was bound tight as cast iron. Infants, when born, were wrapped in swaddling clothes. "Thou shalt not" was greatly in evidence. It was never dreamed that mild punishments could be effective. Social life had much in it, has much in it still, that is stern, cruel, and forbidding. The human mind is slow to free itself from old worn out notions. How many people adopt old silly proverbs as guides to right living? How many people still think sacrificing is good for their souls? They are afraid real pleasure will bring punishment. The sad, sober face is still considered becoming. Sundays are kept as quiet as graveyards in many countries. As if God were pleased to see His children idle and lazy.

Life needs much more of pleasure. There is need for more diversity of pursuits. There is a dull monotony of life in America that reacts on the minds of the people to their injury. No wonder insane asylums are crowded. Why not broaden out? Houses need not all look alike. All farms need not be similar. Villages and towns need not have school houses looking like jails, nor need gymnasiums, opera houses, parks, bands, and the like be generally conspicuous by their absence.

A love for nature is too little cultivated. How many spend the greater portion of Sundays in narrow churches thinking them "sacred places," but forgetting that nature is filled with the good, the true and the beautiful? Nature, to the vast majority, is a wonder book that is never opened. They see not, they hear not, they feel not, nor do they understand. Truth, unadulterated, is only found in the temple of nature, and the method is critical observation and reflection. To find the goddess of truth we must turn to the green fields, the hills and mountains, the starry heavens.

In past ages the present life was considered worthless except as a preparation for an eternal life beyond. Hence men were taught to actually turn their eyes from the life here below, from all that is beautiful and of real value. What little art was cultivated by the churches served only to still more strongly turn the mind to superstition. The future promises much in the question of beauty. A new aesthetic sense is being cultivated that promises good effects on human life. Life will be lived for its present value.

The study of nature will have a refining effect on man making him more gentle. Animals will share in this blessing. Perhaps the time may come when every wild creature will cease to flee in dread from the face of man. Buddhism may go too far in not killing any animal, but it is certainly refined and in very large measure could be adopted with great benefit to mankind. If killing must be done let it be strictly confined to useful purposes.

Education, in the past, has in most part consisted in the study of man, especially the study of his language. In the future nature will be the chief study. Children will learn a correct idea of the world. More attention will also be paid to physical exercise, for the body is to be no longer despised.

Faith in humanity has always been too weak. Hence arises that desire of man to prop it up from without by laying down laws and rules of conduct for his fellow man. It is all too rare to see a man willing to let others live their own lives in their own way. Consequently there is a constant agitation for paternal legislation of all kinds. The age of perfect liberty is still far distant. Our statute books teem with legislation of the paternal type—trespassing upon personal liberty. There remains much of slavery of the soul to public opinion of an unenlightened type. Walk in the narrow groove laid down for you or suffer the pangs of a martyr. You may not, as of old, be killed outright but your persecutions will be galling. Every man should fight for his personal rights to the last ditch.

Women are slowly evolving from an inferior position to that of man. This is a movement that will grow and expand until she is in every respect man's equal before the law. The franchise is but one of many rights to be extended to her. Why not?

While marriage is no doubt a noble institution it is far from being wholly so. Perhaps this is because man is such an imperfect being. He may be to blame, not the institution. But marriage is shockingly a cloak to cover intemperance and excesses that in large measure are the ruination of the race. The study of nature should be welcomed in this connection. For sex is the divinest thing in nature. A man can hardly observe the temperance of the hitherto despised animal world in regard to sex and continue in a course of excess that has no parallel among the beasts. And, is not this very fact of intemperance a strong argument for just divorce laws? Surely a woman is not to be forced to give up her very soul, as so many do, for some traditional notion that marriage is of heavenly origin. I never have been able to understand why a person is forced to submit to a complete failure of life because he is married to one with whom it is impossible to live in harmony. The thing is preposterous.

Life has within it a saving force of its own—a vitality that should lead to continued progress upward. The outer world is beautiful and wonderful. God dwells in nature. What theory is so hopeful as that of re-incarnation which in giving an eternity of time for development provides nature—a perfectly suitable place—for this development?

THE END

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