

MASTER KEYS
OF
LIFE & DEATH

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The Sign Posts.

The inhabitants of a certain country have always been travellers who journey towards a distant city. The roads are many, and numbers lose their way and perish.

By orders of the King, a broad and easy road was therefore constructed, sign posts erected, an army of official guides trained to instruct and prevent wayfarers lagging or going astray. Originally these guides understood their work, and to avoid unnecessary delay, taught the energetic shorter routes; but as time passed on knowledge of the more difficult paths was gradually lost.

In order to keep the road easy, so that the weakest might progress, the road makes wide detours, often going many miles in quite the wrong direction to avoid some obstacle, for the country is rugged and difficult.

The sign posts belonging to this easy road are all painted the same colour called “ orthodox,” the people being taught to look to these and the official guides for directions, a very good plan for the sickly and feeble, but irksome to the more robust, who find the easy gradients and windings tedious and progress towards the goal extremely slow, since the official guides no longer possess information about short cuts for the energetic.

A few years ago some of the travellers, hearing of the existence of an old road which is more direct, but for that reason more difficult, investigated for themselves, and finding how rapidly they got on, returned to tell their friends and to put up sign posts for this quicker route.

A few of the official guides welcomed this rediscovery and gladly passed it on to the others, saying: Why spend all your lives travelling, when by this direct path, that may be entered from any point of the easy road we have all trodden, you can by strong endeavour quickly reach the Golden City?

The majority of the officials, however, refuse to investigate the new route, and continue to do all in their power to prevent others doing so, disparaging the hopeful reports and giving out that “ the easy road is the only route,” and that these new ways must be avoided, for the following reasons:

First, and most important - they say - the “ sign posts” are not lettered with our alphabet! Secondly, although we must admit that personally we do not know anything of the people who erected them, we assure you that they are deceivers and of evil character!

CHAPTER I - The Dawn of Truth

After Darkness comes the Dawn - then Daybreak - and the glory of the Rising Sun.

For many centuries Europe has been in spiritual darkness, but there are signs of a spiritual dawn now being perceived by people in all parts of the world; for though the majority may shut their intelligence to these signs, and refuse to see them, this does not prevent the light increasing.

The sailor knows that in the dim and uncertain light of dawn mistakes are possible, that too great reliance must not be placed on what is seen. Still the navigator does not refuse the assistance of the dawn; on the contrary, he hails it with gratitude, putting all his attention into making the most use of it for the safety of his vessel. In addition to what he can see for himself, he listens to the reports of others, and before acting applies every test suggested by his knowledge, experience and common sense.

We should have a poor opinion of the captain of a ship who, on receiving reports, said: “ No, I see nothing, your imagination is running away with you, it is absurd to pretend to see things which I do not see myself,” and who paid no attention to the warning, or who on the other hand, when an unexpected light was reported, immediately jumped to the conclusion that it indicated danger and altered course to avoid what a little investigation would have shown to be the glimmer of a friendly lighthouse warning him that he is out of his reckoning.

Yet this attitude of mind is similar to that of those who refuse to listen to the experiences of others, or to consider the new light that is being shed on things spiritual.

For ages in Europe it has been said that it is impossible to know from whence comes the Spirit of Man - whither it goes - what it is - or anything practical about its existence before birth or after earth life. We find many of the spiritual teachers still saying, “ These things are unknown. They are not intended to be known. It is impious to try to find out.” To would-be questioners they reply: Do not ask questions. Do not think for yourselves. Do not reason. Be content to believe that at birth your Soul was created, and that at death, after judgment, you will either be rewarded in Heaven or punished in Hell, for all eternity, according as in this life you have believed, or not believed, the simple faith we teach. As to the untold millions who have lived or are now living in other parts of the world without this knowledge, they are lost souls. Only you who live in this favoured part of the world, and attend to our teaching, are the elect of the Creator.”

To these spiritual pilots, as well as to other men, come the reports of the Dawn. Science, through specially trained scientists, working with her physical methods of investigation, reports that in certain particular experiments she finds forces acting for which she cannot account, unless Spirit is the agent that produces the phenomena.

Many leaders of the Church, seeing the approach of the Dawn of Truth, now express their belief in a conscious and active life after the death change. “ Man is the same five minutes after death as he was before so far as his character is concerned” (Bishop of London).

Psychical Research, through specialists in such matters, reports cases, as well authenticated as is possible by human evidence, of the acts of ghosts or the spirits of dead people.

Theosophy and Spiritualism, through special sensitives and seers, report to the careful inquirer of the continued life of Man, or rather of the Spirit of Man, after the change called death, and give from the so-called dead teaching concerning how to live and prepare for the wider life that begins at death. They also furnish cases of direct communication between the living and those who have passed over to the next life.

Both of these teach the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God, the universal brotherhood of humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour. They offer explanations of many little-known laws of nature and our being, and besides stating the qualities and characteristics necessary for spiritual life, indicate how to obtain them.

As these schools of thought search only for truth, they cannot be against or destructive to religion, but reveal the spirit and life contained in the various creeds, and throw illumination on the religions of the world. Through clairvoyants and trained investigators they report, with full and scientifically arranged details, facts concerning the life of the spirit, the purpose and use of all the various conditions of human life; as well as giving logical and convincing explanations to many puzzling questions.

The reception these reports meet with is curious; many simply refuse to listen, others, without making any investigation, say “It is of the Devil.” No doubt the explanation for this is to be found in that

queer trait in human nature of objecting strongly to new ideas, merely because they are new, many minds being so accustomed to run in grooves that when a new fact is presented to them they are for a long time unable to consider it rationally.

When trains were first invented one reads that people, well educated and very intelligent on other subjects, said that to go in a train was to fly in the face of Providence; that we were never intended to tear about the world in such a fashion, and that the invention was of the Evil One.

The report of the invention of the telephone was at first laughed at, for it seemed incredible that an instrument could be made into which one could speak, and the voice in some wonderful way be transmitted along a wire miles in length and then be reproduced audibly at the distant end.

Perhaps one should not, therefore, be surprised to see the same attitude of mind towards new information of progress in matters spiritual, and since so many of the orthodox leaders of the Church, whose religious training should have made them specially capable of dealing with these reports, refuse to consider, or even listen; it is left to ordinary people to investigate the matter for themselves.

But one may say, Why should ordinary people trouble about these questions, since at death they will discover the facts? Three good reasons occur out of many.

1. It must be remembered that in each our spiritual nature grows to the extent it is cultivated by thought and attention; all who take the trouble to train in this way will at death find themselves possessed

of developed and useful spiritual vehicles. But if during life our attention is concentrated only on physical matters and spiritual affairs are neglected, then the development of the higher vehicles is retarded, incapacity and darkness resulting for a while after the incident of death.

2. If in this ordinary life it were known that at some future date a journey would have to be undertaken to a distant country where one would have to live quite cut off from the previous life, would it not be wise to make some preparation by finding out as much as possible from books and travellers about that distant country, and prepare one's mind by study for the sort of work one would expect to find on arrival?

Is it not obvious that the man who has taken this trouble will be in a much better position than the foolish fellow who has made no preparation, but has contented himself with saying, “ Oh, I shall find out all about it when I get there” ?

3. There is in the present day a world-wide belief that a great Teacher is very shortly coming to the earth.

About 2,000 years ago there was a similar expectation of the Messiah, and we read that the orthodox Church of that day expected, in accordance with its interpretation of the Scriptures, that He would come as a Great King, who would establish a perfect kingdom and slay its enemies. To day the Church expects the Second Coming of Christ and teaches that He will come with power and great glory, and the Scriptures are taken to mean that Christ will literally descend to Earth from the sky, surrounded with angels, to establish a material kingdom on Earth, destroying all who oppose.

We now see that the Church of 2,000 years ago misunderstood, and, owing to its narrow-minded way of reading the Scriptures literally, missed the true spiritual meaning, and could not recognize the Christ when He came as a spiritual Teacher instead of the earthly King it expected; nor could it accept the teaching He brought of a higher standard of life to that which it had set up as sufficient for salvation.

If Christ should now again come to the world not as a King surrounded by angels, but as a spiritual Teacher, bringing revelations of a higher standard of life than is taught by the Church of to-day, is there not danger that the Church will fail to accept Him, and refuse to listen?

And is there not also danger to ordinary people, if they have not thought about these questions and personally studied what I have called the “ Reports of the Dawn,” that they, too, may fail to acknowledge the Coming One?

It therefore seems wise for each of us to consider these most important subjects, and to make use of our brains and intelligence, remembering that on ordinary matters one does not acquire knowledge worth having without effort and study; also that until one has considerable knowledge, a too positive frame of mind is unwise, for we are only in the Dawn of spiritual truth.

Clearly those who so act, besides gaining the advantage of understanding life and losing all fear of death, will be in a most favourable position to recognize the Great Teacher should he come, whilst those who decline to take the trouble to consider these matters, may find themselves in the position of one who, coming

suddenly from darkness into sunlight, is so dazzled by the light that for all practical purposes he remains blind.

CHAPTER II - Karmic Law - The Spiritual Law of Cause and Effect

THE KEY TO HAPPINESS

“ Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” - Gal. vi. 7.

There are many persons who consider life to be like a game of cards, the player having at birth dealt out to him haphazard advantages and disadvantages, such as position, fortune, good or bad health, which are modified later on by luck and the individual's exertions. They consider the practical and successful man is he who, by skilful use of these cards, pushes himself to the front in the battle of life, and attains the largest amount of wealth and position.

The student of psychic law and spiritual philosophy takes a different view. He looks on this earth as a great school existing not for the acquirement of riches, but for the training of immortal spirits, who are clothed in human form during earth life. He knows that the world is a school in which there are a variety of courses of training, the pupil being placed at birth in that class for which his previous existence, actions, and capabilities fit him, in fact in the position where he will get the lessons he is most in need of for his spiritual progress. And that in addition to the human there are also sub-human classes and courses of training, where spirit, less evolved, is slowly educated, the object of all being spiritual evolution to higher states of consciousness.

Science tells us that the earth has evolved in the course of long ages from a ball of fire mist to its present solid condition; that the origin

of vegetation and animal life can be traced back to the elementary state called protoplasm. As Man had no hand in the evolution from that state, it is clear that it proceeds under Divine laws. In addition to this immense Physical evolution advancing under physical laws there has been, and still continues, a spiritual evolution or unfoldment under the spiritual laws that govern the progress of improvement in all forms of life, not only in the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms, but also in the higher race of spirits now occupying human bodies. They have evolved through long ages, so naturally there is a great difference in the spiritual advancement made by individuals, who are therefore now born in this world, with different capacities and talents, to continue their education.

The comprehension of these laws broadens one's views of life, and one ceases to believe in " Luck," " Chance," or " Accident," because even in well-arranged human business such things are not permitted. How much less could they occur in a world designed, organized and ruled by the All-wise Creator. It is in truth a perfect world, little as it may sometimes so appear to superficial observers, who seeing plagues, explosions and other disasters, ignorantly exclaim, " Accident," or " Chance."

A few years ago one often came across the expression " Visitation of God" in connection with death, when the cause was obscure; now with more knowledge we should in similar instances give some scientific explanation; the student of Spiritual Laws, with still greater knowledge, would believe that the real cause of death was that it was the Karma of the individual concerned to die in that particular manner (Karma, or the Law of " Cause and Effect," being one of the Divine laws of the great School in which we live).

In discussing this subject, I propose to make some comparisons between the well-known natural laws and the spiritual laws, including Karmic Law, so little understood in this country.

The word Karma is taken from the Sanskrit, and literally translated means “ action.” It is used in our language in two senses, one when we speak of a personal Karma, referring to events that have happened or are going to happen to an individual and which are due to Karmic law; the other is when we speak of the Law of Karma, a spiritual law of Cause and Effect, which operates so that there is no such thing as Luck or Chance or Accident. Everything that happens occurs only in accordance with such law, and is the inevitable outcome of previous causes, this world being ruled by Divine justice. That all suffering, and what is commonly called “ Luck “ and “ Accident,” are the result of actions in the past – all selfish or unkind actions being repaid sooner or later to the uttermost farthing.

To understand the working of this Law, one must bear in mind the object of human life, viz., the training of immortal spirits.

Now we do not educate a child by making everything pleasant and easy from the child's point of view. On the contrary, it is arranged that the breaking of rules causes punishment, and we know that it is kinder that the child should suffer and so gain knowledge and the good sense not again to go against the regulations.

An outsider, seeing only the punishment, might say, “ How unjust!” or “ What bad luck!” but that would only be said from seeing the result, without being aware of the child's previous

actions, which, being contrary to the rules of the School, inevitably led up to the punishment.

In Scripture this law is summed up in the sentence, “ Whatsoever, a man soweth that shall he reap.” All kindly and unselfish actions produce good Karma, not always immediately, but quite certainly; all unkind and selfish acts store up bad Karma; both sorts, good and bad, being repaid at some time or other, not necessarily in the same kind of events; for instance, if to-day we ill-treat some one, it does not mean that at some future date we shall receive exactly similar ill-treatment, but that the quantity of pain or pleasure we meted out will be meted to ourselves. In the words of Sir Edwin Arnold:

It knows not wrath nor pardon, utter true
Its measures mete, its faultless balance weighs.
Times are as naught, to-morrow it will judge,
Or after many days.

By this the slayer's knife did stab himself;
The unjust judge hath lost his own defender;
The false tongue dooms its lie, the creeping thief

And spoiler rob to render.

Such is the Law that moves to Righteousness,
Which none at last can turn aside or stay;
The heart of it is Love, the end of it
Is Peace and Consummation sweet. Obey!

All actions cause as it were a Karmic debt, which may be paid to us either in a lump sum, or perhaps in small amounts spread over a period of years. Kindly acts for many years might be repaid in some piece of good fortune, or sudden recovery from illness, or perhaps in freedom from small worries, or in good general health. The Karma of cruelty might necessitate the loss of a limb or constant ill-health. The important point is that all misfortune, ill-health, and unhappiness is caused by the working of laws set in motion of our own free will, by our own thoughts and actions, and that an end can be put to all this misery when we choose. New Karma can be created which will balance against old Karma of the opposite sort.

If this were the whole of the Law, it might produce the feeling that we are in the grip of fatality; but it is not so, there is the good Karma due to unselfishness and kind thought and action to be considered, for by a most merciful arrangement the Karma due to these is greater than the Karma due to their opposite because Good, acting in the finer matter of higher planes, has more effect than Evil, which works in heavier and lower planes.

We know from science that if a projectile is discharged from a properly aimed gun, it will hit the object aimed at, unless in the interval between leaving the gun and reaching the target, it is interfered with by some new force, such for instance as another projectile striking and diverting or perhaps stopping it altogether. Or, to take another example, if a stone is thrown straight up in the air, then, after an interval (provided it is not acted on by some fresh forces) it will return and strike the thrower with exactly the same amount of force as was expended in throwing it. One of the

laws of Science states that “ action and reaction” are equal and opposite.

Similarly the spiritual “ cause and effect” of selfish or unkind thought and action is equal and opposite. For any action causing pain to others entails that an equal amount of pain will return to the actor at some future time, unless in the interval other forces are brought to bear on the matter.

Suppose that after wrong action, the man sees his error, and does all in his power to mitigate the wrong, then the bad Karma, due to the original act, would be very much modified if not entirely counterbalanced by good Karma of the latter actions.

All actions, then, are the cause of our happiness or misfortunes and unhappiness, the Karma generated being placed to our account, totalled up and paid off, either in the present or in some future life. When this occurs in the present life, the world looking on, and seeing only the final act of the transaction, says, “ What luck!” “ How fortunate is so-and-so!” or “ He is born lucky!” Now any one who understands the law can, by right action, to a great extent arrange his future. It is true he does not know what bad Karma, due to the past, still remains recorded against him, but he can make sure that he generates no fresh bad Karma in the present. When sickness or suffering reaches him he knows that he is but paying some old debt, and that if he is patient under the trouble, that particular account may be finally settled.

During revolutions, it always happens that numbers of innocent people living harmless lives are suddenly seized, ill-treated, and cruelly put to death. Again, in legal records there are instances

where it has been discovered, too late, that innocent persons had been condemned and executed for crimes which they had not committed, and though this sort of blunder is less common in the present day than formerly, yet apparent injustice frequently happens in our ordinary disasters, as, for instance, when in a railway smash people are pinned in the wreckage and slowly burned to death, in collisions at sea, in fires, etc.

Now all these cases must either be “accident,” or events happening in accordance with God's will. If “accident,” then one is forced to believe that the All-Wise, All-Loving, All-Powerful Creator does not care, or does not always trouble to rescue individuals involved in catastrophes which one can only suppose He had not foreseen, or was powerless to prevent. Is it not a relief to turn from such ideas to the logical and reasonable explanation offered by consideration of Karmic law?

The tangle at once straightens out, and one realizes that the victims under consideration were foredoomed to their violent deaths, not by an unjust or careless God, but by their own individual deeds, and by the way they had in the past ill-treated or caused suffering to others. Retribution, certainly; but justice acting under a Divine law which makes no mistakes in its awards or punishments.

It might now be said, if everything that happens is due to Karma, then there is no need to take any precautions for safety in everyday life, for one might fearlessly walk into the midst of the traffic in a London street or uselessly expose oneself to bullets in battle; then if it was not one's Karma to die a sudden death or to receive injury,

one could not be hurt; if on the other hand death or injury were owing, it would be as well to get it over and have done with it.

Such ideas would be erroneous in the extreme. It must be remembered that although we are continually making Karma by our actions, yet the totalling up of accounts, and deciding when and how reward or punishment shall be meted out, is not in our hands, but arranged by Higher Powers. To carelessly walk into traffic or otherwise tempt Providence (as the phrase goes) might provoke a small cycle of Karma, the cause, the idiotic action, the effect - death or injury.

Any one who behaved in such manner would justly be said to be a fool, richly deserving all that happened to him. But if before crossing the street, the usual common-sense precautions had been taken, and then injury or death occurred, that would be Karma.

The right understanding of this law produces a very tranquil state of mind, because it is realized that although our duty under all circumstances is to perform “ Right action” regardless of personal risk or inconvenience, we must remember that the result of such action is not in our hands.

The Law is absolutely just and is administered by higher powers; if therefore our unselfish endeavours to assist others do not meet with success, we should not be discouraged. Our action in rendering help to the best of our ability was absolutely right and our duty, but it may be that the individual we tried to help has some bad Karma the working out of which necessitates his present misfortunes, or even loss of life.

There is no need, however, to strain oneself in considering whether or not to give help, for fear of interfering with the Karma of others. Do what you feel to be right, and leave the result to God.

Viewed by the illumination of the Divine Law of Karma, several orders recorded in the New Testament which are generally ignored as not practicable, become clear.

It is written (St. Matthew v. 44, 45, and St. Luke vi. 27, 31) “ Love your enemies,” “ Pray for them that persecute you,” “ As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.” Directions quite contrary to our methods of dealing with our fellowman. But in view of the Law of Karma, what wiser advice could be given; for going to war with your enemy must be the greatest folly, since by the working of the Law, all the pain and misery so caused will be recorded and will in due course return home to those responsible for causing it.

So it is wiser to find some other way out of difficulties, no easy task, but becoming more and more possible as Federation, Arbitration, and other common-sense methods are seen to be preferable to the expense and discomfort of killing, and so come into more general use.

Now the ordinary man or woman may think, “ I personally have nothing to do with the great questions on which hang the decisions of Peace or War.” But is not this an error? for it is the thought of the people that influences the leaders, and so directs their decisions; therefore it is necessary, if one wishes to avoid making bad Karma, to have clear and good thought on these subjects.

This spiritual law of Karma is one of Nature's laws; it is one of the laws made by the Creator, just as He has made the physical laws - such as the laws ruling the forces of electricity, fire, or water. So when one is asked, "How do you know of this law?" "What is your authority?" "How do you know if it is true?" the answer is much the same as if one were asked the same questions about some physical law, when the reply would be that the law was discovered by men who gave time and study to the subject. To investigate, you can either go to some place where the science is studied and put to practical use, or you can learn from books or teachers and experiment for yourself. If, in your experiments, the result always comes out in harmony with the law, you may feel assured that the Law is truly stated: In the same way the truth of this spiritual law can be tested.

It is often stated that spiritual matters are mysteries which are not intended for comprehension, and so they are not studied. It is not many years ago that the same was said about physical science-that we are not intended to understand physical laws, and that it is wrong to pry into the secrets of Nature. Many, therefore, looked on scientific investigation as a dangerous playing with the forces of evil.

Yet physical science has gone ahead, and the idea that we must not investigate is now seen to be nonsense. So also it will be with spiritual science. In the East the subject has been studied for centuries, where there is a mass of most interesting information, much of which can be tested by observation; in this way various spiritual laws have been formulated. The law of Karma is one of these.

We must remember that when a scientific man speaks of a scientific law, he does not mean that our knowledge of the law is perfect. He accepts it provisionally, always on the look-out to modify it when new facts are discovered.

Our scientific definitions are only human attempts to put into words as accurate a statement as possible of what we have discovered about certain laws, and they are always open to revision. For instance, the laws of Chemistry have been modified since the discovery of radium, and, as our knowledge increases, scientific laws are brought nearer and nearer to the truth. So with the law of Karma, as knowledge increases, modifications in the details of our human interpretation of it will occur.

It is very important to *understand* natural laws, because understanding brings power and safety in everyday life, as well as increased confidence and comfort. Instead of fearing the forces of Nature, they are diverted to our convenience, and we utilize these forces, as in steam power, motors, electric light. “ Knowledge gives power.” Ignorant people fear the forces of Nature. Savages, seeing an eclipse, are terrified, and attribute the phenomenon to the action of evil spirits; but educated people have no fear, because they understand the cause and the law which is manifested.

So with Karmic law: ignorant people live in a state of fear; they fear accident, bad luck, misfortune to themselves, relations or friends, and when these things happen consider them inexplicable - “ a bolt from the blue.”

In the leading article of a daily newspaper, speaking of the Titanic disaster, it was said, “ The mystery of evil is a problem that has

exercised vainly the greatest intellects of all ages. . . . In despair, we moderns have mostly given up the puzzle.” This is how people speak and think in a country which, though well versed in natural law, is ignorant of spiritual laws. Those, on the contrary, who have studied Karmic law understand and make use of their knowledge to avoid setting in motion the forces that produce disasters.

The questions now come: “ What is the good of these laws?” “ What their purpose?” “ Why has the All-loving Creator placed us here surrounded by, but ignorant of, the workings of such dangerous forces?” Let me take an analogy from ship life in the Navy.

In a ship there are many rules and regulations. A youngster joins and finds himself amongst strange and unfamiliar surroundings; he is ignorant of ship discipline, until he learns it by the bitter experience of running up against the rules and regulations. The object of the regulations is not to provide the officers with the opportunity of serving out punishments, but to make these young blue-jackets think before acting, and so train them into useful seamen.

The objects of the laws of Nature and of Karma are not that the higher powers may find pleasure in punishing people, but to make us think, and to train and evolve our spiritual faculties. What is the best way to train any one in any branch of life? Is it a good plan for the teacher to stand near the pupil and continually say: “ Do not do this,” “ Do not do that,” and to be for ever correcting him in time to prevent mistakes? Practical people know that such a scheme is useless, because the pupil gets into the habit of relying on the warnings, and never learns to think and act on his own initiative.

Ship life elucidates the point. In a ship where the executive officer interferes continually with the details of every one's work, the result is that after a while no one in the ship will act on his own responsibility, and she becomes "slack," inefficient and useless for training purposes.

The best result is where the executive officer lays down good general orders, leaving individuals free action, followed by praise or promotion for good work, and punishment for bad work. This system produces reliable officers, and men accustomed to think for themselves.

In one ship in which I served, the officer whose duty it was to administer summary justice in the small everyday cases used the following plan. After affixing the blame, he would ask the culprit what was the punishment due to him, and when the man said he did not know, would express astonishment that any sensible person should have broken ship rules without calculating the punishment due in case that he were found out. Having rubbed that idea in, and ordered the full punishment prescribed by the regulations for the offence, he would then inquire if the man thought it sufficiently severe to prevent his again breaking that particular rule.

This plan worked well, the men getting to see that punishment was not due to the officers, but simply the natural effect of breaking rules. And it is a like scheme, on an infinitely grander scale, that you find in Nature. The Creator has arranged natural and spiritual laws; all ill-health and events we call accident, bad luck, ill-fortune, are penalties due to our having broken certain laws in the past,

which could have been calculated and avoided if we had had the wisdom to discover and obey the laws under which we live.

When we see an unexpected explosion, we say “ accident,” but that is a mistake, there is no such thing as “ accident.” The explosion has happened strictly in accordance with physical laws, and had we sufficient scientific knowledge we could have foreseen the forces which were about to produce it, and, of course, by suitable means might have prevented the “ accident.”

Similarly as regards the immortal spirits that inhabited the bodies injured by the explosion, did we possess the power to read the past, we might find that each of these had (not necessarily in this earth-life) done some act or actions which, by the law of Cause and Effect, necessitated the suffering of injury or death of the body at that time: and, as in the case of the child punished at school, the lesson is of benefit to the immortal spirit.

The word “ accident “ is a misnomer, for there can be no such thing in a world ruled by Divine wisdom. All Science demonstrates that nowhere in Nature is there accident; all is order. Nowhere is there irregularity of action; fire does not cause heat one day and cold another.

We who live in the West have learnt much of physical laws, and as a result many things that were once termed accident do not now occur, or if they do are attributed to the true causes. In the East, where so much has been discovered of spiritual law, many events unintelligible to us are accounted for.

In the case of the Titanic - if that were an “ accident,” could not the All-loving Creator have sent another ship to the spot to prevent the loss of life? How easy for Him to have caused a slight alteration of wind or of current, and so prevented the collision with the ice, or simply arranged for another vessel to be nearby to rescue every one.

That He did not do so is a proof that the disaster was not what is called “ accident,” but an event that happened in accordance with the working of Divine laws, both physical and spiritual, which cannot be evaded. To understand the loss of life and all the suffering entailed one must search the Karmic laws, and for a full explanation it would be necessary to know the complete details of each separate life and perhaps of previous lives, until the actions that now produced this Karmic result were ascertained.

Though this is impossible, we may see that an explanation of every detail could be found along these lines for this particular disaster, and for all those that darken the pages of history.

I must point out some characteristics of physical and spiritual laws.

1. All are invariable in their action. This renders their comprehension possible.
2. Both physical and spiritual laws express great forces which act without sentiment. In physical law the motive does not count, nor in any way affect the result. In spiritual law motive is most important, for it sets in action the appropriate spiritual force.
3. The laws exist in all countries, whether the inhabitants are aware of them or not. The physical laws are always in action in Nature,

and so are the spiritual laws. Every day we make good or bad Karma.

4. Physical law is beneficent if worked with, but destructive if neglected or worked against, and effect follows immediately on cause.

Steam is a good servant provided the laws of steam pressure and the strength of boilers are followed; but if these laws are neglected, an explosion follows. Wireless telegraphy is useful, but if the operator disregards or is ignorant of the laws of electricity he may be struck dead.

5. Karmic or any other spiritual law is beneficent if worked with, but if we neglect it the results are disastrous, as seen in the enormous amount of misery and unhappiness in the world. Yet a beneficent arrangement in the working of Karmic law usually provides a considerable interval of time between cause and effect, which allows opportunity for thought and the undoing of wrong action.

In considering ship life we saw that the rules and regulations of a ship are to make the sailors think before acting. The physical and spiritual laws of this world are also to make people think and act wisely. The object of their ship life was to train the blue-jackets into useful sailors; the object of life on this planet is also to train us. God's plan for us is Evolution - physical evolution under the pressure of physical laws spiritual evolution under the pressure of spiritual laws. Right conduct is in all cases that which works harmoniously with these laws.

It is easier to understand Karmic law if we accept the doctrine of Reincarnation, which provides a logical and reasonable explanation for so much that is otherwise unintelligible and apparently cruel and unjust.

It is to the effect that each of our earthly lives is but a short period in the much larger life of the human spirit, that we come here for a course of training, and after an interval (at the end of each life) spent in higher worlds, return again and again to this planet, wearing different bodies each time, and living under different conditions, in different parts of the world, until our training is complete, and there is no more need for terrestrial birth and death - when we shall be sufficiently evolved to exist in higher spheres elsewhere.

The scheme is often compared to the training of a boy at school who returns term after term until his education is complete, and he is fit to take his place in the larger life of the outer world. The laws of Reincarnation and Karma, taken together, explain the extraordinary diversity of conditions of human life because our immortal spirits being in different stages of development and training require different lessons. Thus are accounted for in children genius, great intellectual powers, idiocy, or ill-formed bodies from birth, these being cases of Karmic results from former lives, and not instances of favouritism. The child born a genius is probably one who formerly studied and acquired talent; the body deformed from birth may be the dwelling of a spirit who in a previous incarnation acted with cruelty or lack of sympathy toward others.

The obvious objection to Reincarnation is: If it be a fact, why do we not remember former lives? And the simplest answer to that question is that we are not yet fit to remember; because we are not sufficiently evolved to be trusted with that power of memory. For if we did remember, how many of us are strong enough to treat well and kindly those who in a former life ill-treated us, when now in this life placed in our power? What chance would the criminal have of making a fresh start, if at birth he were recognized and all his previous misdeeds were remembered against him? Is not the arrangement that a sponge is, as it were, wiped over the slate of memory, a merciful and beneficial one? Later on, when more evolved and likely to turn our knowledge to good use, we probably shall remember.

In countries where these spiritual laws of Reincarnation and Karma are generally understood, there is found amongst the population a very much greater contentment and acceptance of the conditions of life, and a much happier frame of mind than the restlessness and discontent to which we are accustomed.

In Europe, where Karmic law is unknown, the greatest fear is the fear of death, which is looked on as the greatest misfortune possible. This is proved in everyday conversation, in our newspapers, and in the way we speak of the departed and of death.

Eastern people have the same love of life as ourselves, but do not dread death. The Japanese showed this in many cases in the Russo-Japanese war, where men went cheerfully to what they knew was certain death. “ Patriotism ” certainly, but with the addition, I think, of the knowledge that death is merely the passing

of the spirit to new conditions, and that if the Karma of the life has been good, the motives unselfish, and life's duty done, then the next existence must be happy, and death not a matter for dread, but promotion to a higher life.

Some one may ask whether (if everything depends on Karma) the Creator personally attends to every little event of life, adjudging the reward or punishment? My answer is “ No.” He has laid down laws, and there are great Intelligences who administer these laws, who decide how much of what is owing shall be settled during a life, in what form and when the reward or punishment shall be awarded. In sea life the Admiralty or some high authority lays down rules and regulations, to be administered by officers of various ranks; the regulations decree a certain reward or punishment, but the officers determine the exact amount and form, and when and where it shall take place.

Now there are some people who think that everything may be attributed to Kismet or Fate, and there is a good deal in the idea if rightly understood, for we must remember that an individual's Karma may be divided into two parts.

1. The Karma he is *born with*, due to previous lives, which turns up in character and the conditions in which he is born, and in some of the happenings of life. This, as in our present state of evolution we do not remember former lives, may be considered as Kismet or Fate, originally fixed by ourselves, but now beyond our control.

2. The Karma that is made from day to day by thoughts and actions. As this amounts to about three-fourths of the Karma that happens,

and is quite under our control, it is of the greatest importance that we should understand about it - because it not only affects our *present* life, but also will turn up in *future* lives as good or bad Karma, exactly as we now act.

And so we reach the practical question. How are we to control our Karma? Karma is caused by our actions. Our actions are caused by our thoughts. Therefore if we control our thoughts, we shall control our Karma. Any one who understands Karmic law and wishes to put in practice what he has learnt, must first take in hand his thoughts and himself, for if thought is right it will be an easy matter to make action right and the Karma good.

To some people the idea that what one thinks matters, or that thoughts can be controlled, is new; but directly the subject is studied it is seen that it must be so. For example, the building in which the reader is seated, existed first in the thought of the architect, and without that thought it could not have been built; it would have been no use to supply bricks and materials to the workmen without the plans and directions; if the thought had been faulty and incomplete, the building also would have been faulty and incomplete. It is the same in all our industries.

The person who does not control his thoughts, may be compared to an ill-disciplined ship firing her guns, discharging projectiles without aim or method in all directions, wasting ammunition, and a danger to every one. Whereas the battleship with discipline and control fires only carefully aimed and selected projectiles, and, knowing the range, every shot hits the target.

To control this discharge of thought forms requires time, trouble and patience; one has to be continually pulling up in one's thinking and asking oneself is this thought going to do any one good? If not, it must be dismissed, and a useful thought substituted, and the habit of selecting the things that one chooses to think about must be formed.

Actions, also, must be continually scrutinized to see if they are in accordance with Spiritual law. If not, the action must be altered; not an easy matter in the case of long-established habits, but it can be done with perseverance. And so, by control of thought and action, we gradually learn to control our Karma.

Now after studying these spiritual laws one looks for some personal habit to experiment upon. Is temper under control? Are we quite truthful? Do we always play the game? Do we treat others considerately and kindly? Do we try to help others? Are our motives unselfish and kindly?

In applying this law to everyday life, Motive, as already pointed out, is most important, because “Motive builds character” as well as setting in action Spiritual laws. An improved character will not result if every happening is considered from the point of view of: “What profit can I Karmically make out of this, what good Karma can I store up?” Such an attitude would cause deterioration of character, as well as creating bad Karma. For spiritual advancement and happiness cannot be bargained for.

The motives of our actions must be impersonal; we must do things that are right, merely because they are in accordance with right and truth, without any regard to personal loss or inconvenience.

This attitude must become so much a habit and part of our character that we always and without effort choose to do what is right as a matter of course.

The great use in understanding the working of Karmic law is that it makes intelligible events which otherwise seem cruel and undeserved, it restores the sense of justice in God's dealings with us, and with other Spiritual laws provides a ready test by which in all cases we may decide with certainty the right course of action.

It is easy to find many fields for work in altering for the better our thoughts, actions, and motives - thus bringing our lives more and more in line with Spiritual law, and in so doing not only evolving our own faculties, finding happiness as well as making good Karma, but actually taking part in the Divine work of Evolution.

CHAPTER III - The Improvement of our Bodies and their Aura.

THE KEY OF LIFE

“ The highest way goes he who shuts the gates of all his senses, locks desire safe in his heart.” - Arnold.

In considering the human body the first thing is to get rid of the idea that the physical body is the self, for many identify themselves with and think that they are the body. That is entirely a mistake. One must grasp the fact that the body is only a dwelling place or vehicle inhabited for a life period by the real self, the immortal spirit that could not otherwise come into contact with this world and get the experiences of human life which are necessary for spiritual evolution.

One should think of the body as a machine that is suitable and convenient to enable one to live on this planet; whether it is a piece of machinery in good order, or one that is in a continual state of breaking down and requiring repairs, is naturally a matter that concerns the owner more than any one else.

It is useful to try to understand the laws of health, because every one would like to have as good a body as is possible; and it is astonishing what enormous improvement can be made by a little study and the application of common sense to everyday life.

The particular body that each one is born into depends on the stage of evolution reached by the real self, that is, on the qualities gained by the spirit in previous existences. Each individual being placed at birth in a body that will have the hereditary physical tendencies

that are deserved, and that suits these faculties; also in a family and country which, besides providing the conditions (and perhaps limitations) required in accordance with the Divine laws of “ Cause and Effect,” will also supply the surroundings where events most suitable will be met for giving opportunities to the individual for further progress.

On these lines the great diversity of the conditions of human life can be rationally explained. Many social reformers make the mistake of thinking that the conditions into which we are born are accidental, “ that all at birth are spiritually, mentally and emotionally equal” ; but it is not so, the immortal spirits that inhabit physical bodies are at widely different stages of evolution, some being far more advanced than others, therefore an infinite variety of conditions are provided in order that each soul may have the very best opportunity for improvement.

It is several years before a child has any influence over its environment, for the spirit, imprisoned or rather gradually becoming absorbed in and learning to function through the physical body, has to accept the physical conditions in which it finds itself, slowly learning by effort and experiment how it may modify and alter them. It seems probable that it is not only the body but also the surroundings of our early years that are “ Cause and Effect” results of past existences. Does not the fact of genius in some children clearly point to the conclusion that the life now entered on has had previous experiences and development?

Later in life (as the body matures), the individual usually becomes gradually freed from these good or bad influences, and passing

from the more or less sheltered home-life, takes entire control of his own life and future destiny. It is this full-grown body, which has arrived at the age that it is fully under the direction of the indwelling spirit that I am going to consider.

The everyday life of a human being may be briefly summed up under three headings - Actions, Emotions and Thoughts, which cover the whole of the activities of each of us, and instead of considering these as resulting from, or being controlled by, different parts of the brain, I am going to try and describe the invisible machinery possessed by and more or less controlled by each individual, which is the real cause that sets the matter of the brain in action.

For this purpose I must divide the body into its three parts - the physical body, the body of actions. Next, the invisible, astral or emotional body, which before birth has been shaped to a great extent by prenatal conditions, such as the thoughts and emotions and physical conditions of the mother, and which is much modified during child life by the upbringing and surroundings. Whether we are aware of this or not, we continually alter and rebuild the astral body during the whole of earth life. Thirdly, the mental body, the body of thought, that varies so greatly in children, due of course to how much they have previously progressed, and on which each works during the whole of physical and astral life, and afterwards uses as a vehicle in the Heaven life.

During earth life these three bodies form together the temple of the spirit. The physical body grows under the influence of physical conditions, becoming coarse or refined according as we treat and

control it. The emotional body, commencing with the tendencies it contains, grows and changes under the influence of the emotions we cultivate and most frequently permit, and so becomes gross and chaotic, or refined and well arranged.

The mental body grows by use, and under the influence of our thoughts, their quality, and how much we select and control them, and during life either becomes greatly improved or stagnates. All through earth life these three bodies act and react on each other. If one is controlled and refined, forces are set in motion that tend to refine and facilitate the control of the other two; if one is allowed to coarsen or get out of control, conditions are provided that damage the others.

To understand how this comes about let us consider these three vehicles separately: First the physical body and the scientific explanation about its growth. Science tells us that the minute particles of which it is composed are always in a state of change, old particles, that is the minute cells, break up and are turned out of the system, new matter being taken in to form fresh cells to replace the waste, so that in seven years every portion of the body is completely renewed.

Now the composition of the stream of material from which the new cells are made rests with the individual, for it obviously depends on what he chooses to put into his body. If he allows only the correct amount of pure food and drink to enter, and offers no obstruction to the riddance of old particles, his body must in time become pure and refined; therefore the source of supply and the selection of the new particles that are allowed to enter is most important. Equally

so is the getting rid of old particles, and that we know depends on attention to hygienic laws, such as correct breathing, fresh air, exercise, etc.

Now before examining the source of supply of the different foods, we must settle what sort of a body it is that we wish to possess, just as before building a house plans must be made of what is wanted and a supply of suitable material collected. If we wish to have a coarse, insensitive body (thick-skinned expresses the idea) which shall be unrefined, and easily respond to coarse emotions, then we must select materials with these characteristics. But if it is desired to build a beautiful palace, if the body is to be refined and sensitive, a fit dwelling for an evolving spirit, we must select the very best materials obtainable.

The particles composing solid and liquid food vary just as much as do individual men, for the similar reason that some are more evolved than others, and these little specks of matter, though invisible to us, are not by any means dead material, but each is a little life, or rather contains a life, very little progressed, no doubt, but going through its ordered course of evolution in forming a part of physical forms in Nature's kingdoms.

For further illustration I would like to compare the physical body of a man to a regiment of soldiers, each soldier representing one physical particle of the body, the Colonel who commands the regiment representing the immortal spirit that dwells in and controls the body.

Although the regiment is a permanent organization, yet the individuals composing it are always in a state of change, time-

expired men being continually discharged, as well as any that are sick or injured, an equal number of fresh recruits being taken in, so that the size or the “ strength of the regiment,” as it is called, remains unaltered. So it is with the body, old particles are discharged and new ones admitted.

The tone of the regiment depends on to what extent the Colonel is able to influence the men under his orders. The tone of the body depends on the spirit that owns it, on the orders he gives, and on how much he sees them carried out. The efficiency of the regiment depends largely in the first place on the type and standard of mental and physical fitness of the recruits. The possibility of building a very refined human body depends on the quality of the particles that are used to build it ; therefore the food and drink are for the body just as important as the supply of good recruits for the regiment.

Suppose that it were possible to get recruits from two sources; first, old soldiers from other but very inferior regiments that are being broken up and disbanded. This at first sight would seem an excellent plan, but if these regiments are known to be ill-disciplined and mutinous, it is certain the Colonel would give orders that under no conditions should a man from them be admitted to his regiment. He would prefer recruits

from the second source of supply, young fellows with a good record, who have not passed through any military training.

These two classes of recruits correspond approximately to the two classes of food materials available for building the human body. The old soldiers represent particles taken from creatures of the

animal kingdom slaughtered for food. The other class particles available from the vegetable kingdom.

If the first-mentioned class are admitted to the regiment, it is true that they would save the Colonel and his officers a certain amount of trouble in some ways, as they would be accustomed to the details of regimental life. On the other hand, they would certainly be a source of ill-discipline, always wanting undesirable things on the argument that such things were permitted in their last regiment; it would be a constant source of trouble to break them of their old ways, and the whole tone of the regiment would deteriorate. This corresponds to nourishing the body with particles of food from dead creatures; these have lately formed a part of various animals, who may have been savage, evil tempered, or stupid and sluggish, so the particles have become accustomed to respond easily to these emotions, and when built into the human body cause a very strong tendency to vibrate readily to animal sensations. A body of this kind will be most comfortable when it receives these vibrations, and though quite suitable for the expression of animal passions, is not adapted for anything higher. The possibility of the indwelling spirit obtaining control over such incongruous elements is remote, because the particles coming from animals, where during life control from within did not exist, do not at all understand the obedience now required by the spirit, the lord of the body.

The flesh-eater therefore builds for himself a body with strong and undesirable tendencies, and one that is difficult to manage and get under control.

To continue the military argument, men recruited from inferior regiments are often infected with disease germs due to the insanitary conditions to which they have been accustomed. Similarly in admitting animal flesh into the human frame as food, there is very great danger of taking in animal impurities, that is the waste products always present in flesh foods, as well as any disease germs the creature may have harboured during life.

To feed on animal flesh is one of the very best ways of introducing illhealth into the human system. On the whole the Colonel's decision to have none of such recruits is a wise one, and we cannot do better than to follow his example, and refuse to have anything to do with food of any sort obtained by slaughter.

The other source of supply of recruits, corresponding to the vegetable kingdom, possesses additional advantages owing to the immense variety, for whatever climate the regiment goes to, there will be found acclimatized recruits, young fellows with no preconceived ideas to be got rid of, healthy and clean livers, who are not saturated with insubordinate ideas, but ready and willing to fall in with the ways of the human organism of which they now find themselves a part.

To sum up the matter, the physical body should not be fed on food composed of animal bodies, because the particles are impure, too much specialized, and would build up a body with tendencies to reproduce animal characteristics. To get the best results the human body must be sustained on pure food and drink. To ensure that the various departments of the body are kept in good working order, care must be taken to select the right quantity, quality and mixture

of food; and attention must be paid to hygienic laws. When these matters become a daily routine, things run on as though by clockwork, one finds oneself on the high road to physical rejuvenation, possessing a body in perfect health, a suitable dwelling-place for a spirit who realizes the purpose, and tremendous opportunity offered by the experience of human life for spiritual advancement.

The next of the three vehicles of the Ego is the Astral or Emotional body, made of an invisible and finer grade of matter; it interpenetrates the physical, and is the body of the emotions. This is a more important instrument than the physical, because an unhealthy or damaged physical body does not necessarily cause tendencies to evil living, but a badly constructed emotional body forms a continual pressure or temptation to evil thought, emotion, and wrong action.

To clairvoyant sight this vehicle is seen to be composed of different grades of astral matter, hence it is frequently called the astral body, the densest particles forming a shape similar to the physical, the less dense making a surrounding mist of various colours, which in ordinary people extends in ovoid shape a few feet or inches beyond the astral body and is called the Aura.

People who are not clairvoyant may, I think, get a fair notion of the reality of an aura from the following illustration:- Consider some flower, say a rose; a man with the sense of sight (but none of smell) noticing the particulars of colour, number of leaves, their arrangement, and other details, will feel sure that he can observe all that there is to know about it. Yet a person with the sense of

smell in addition to sight, knows that this is an error due to the first observer's limitations, for the rose is really much larger than appears by sight alone, since the surrounding space contains something distinctive and inseparable from each flower, in fact what might be called the “scent aura.”

Again, if you stand near a man under the influence of strong emotion, such as anger, depression or joy, though his emotion may not in any way be directed towards yourself, yet you distinctly feel a pleasant or unpleasant feeling, in fact you sense his aura. It is easy to understand that with keener vision this would become visible.

The brightness or dimness of the colours and their arrangement in the aura correspond with the intensity and quality of the emotions; the regularity of the different bands and definiteness of their outline indicates the amount of control the Ego has over them. Thus spirituality shows as a bright band of ultra-violet; intellectuality, golden; pure devotion, a beautiful blue; love and affection, rose colour; anger, dark red; fear and depression, grey; and so on. The more refined the emotions the more delicate the tints, muddy and dark colours indicating coarse emotions and selfishness. If there is little control by the indwelling spirit the colours run one into the other, as is the case in the emotional body of the undeveloped, but when the bands of colour are seen to have distinct and well-defined edges, they indicate that the emotions are well under control.

The particles of the emotional body and its aura are in a constant state of movement, and of change, renewal taking place far more

rapidly than in the case of the physical body, because this higher vibratory matter is so very much more active; also new material is taken in with every emotion; so in time the most frequent emotions build up and colour the emotional body and its aura.

The material for this building is obtained from two chief sources, some from the etheric and astral counterparts of food and drink taken into the physical body, others from particles drawn in from the higher world by the power of thought and emotion.

In the physical world if you want any particular sort of material for building you must go and get it, or arrange for some one to bring it to you, since physical matter is without the power of motion. But with astral or higher vibratory particles it is otherwise. To collect this matter it is only necessary to set up thought or emotional vibrations which at once attract the corresponding type of particles. So in obtaining materials for building the emotional body, there is neither difficulty nor expense, the very best materials are equally available as the worst, for all obey this law of attraction.

To collect material it is only necessary to permit emotion of the type desired, which draws in a flood of astral particles of corresponding nature and as the emotion continues or is frequently repeated, some of the particles are absorbed and become permanent, making it more easy to again reproduce similar emotion, as well as causing a strong tendency to do so. Then, as the process is continued, that part of the aura becomes full, and as more space is required, other particles that correspond to emotions that are dying from want of exercise are pushed out. If

still more space is wanted the aura grows in size, improving or degrading according to the type of emotions cultivated by the Ego.

For instance, imagine the very extreme case of a person who permitted himself to feel only one emotion suppose he chose to be always depressed, then the astral body and aura would be flooded with the grey matter that corresponds to depression, and as time went on the other particles of his astral body, getting no opportunity of vibrating to their particular emotions, would atrophy from want of use, and be shaken out by the repeated waves of depression; soon depression only would be possible, no matter how much the Ego might wish to experience some other emotion. Having built so unpleasant an emotional body and aura, the Ego would have to put up with it and suffer great discomfort until he could, with much trouble and difficulty, alter and rebuild on more sensible lines.

It is therefore necessary before building (and we are building every day of our lives) to consider what sort of an astral body we require. What emotions do we wish it readily to respond to, and what emotions should we like it to be impervious to? The ideal would be an emotional body that responded only to unselfish emotions of the highest sort, such as spirituality, intellect, devotion, truthfulness, sympathy, affection, one in fact which could not respond to lower emotions.

Now when we start intelligently taking charge of the rebuilding operations, we have to deal with the astral body we have already arranged for ourselves, and though we cannot see it, it is easy to get a good idea of what it looks like, by making a list of the emotions

which most easily influence it, or which are most frequent. Then in imagination paint in an oval with bands of the corresponding auric colours; if the emotions depend largely on outside happenings, or if we know that there is little control over them, the colours must be shown as vague in outline and running into each other. In this way with a little trouble quite a good idea of the appearance of the aura can be obtained; and if the picture is not satisfactory it is easy to set to work to improve matters.

First the undesirable emotions must be noted and the resolve made that in future these vibrations shall not be allowed. Suppose, for instance, that the aura contains too much of the red colour that indicates anger and facility for becoming angry, the Ego must determine to alter this, and the next time something occurs that tends to cause anger there must be deliberate refusal to allow the emotional body to vibrate with that emotion. It must be compelled to remain cool and collected, no matter how severe the provocation and directed to vibrate only with a selected emotion of an opposite sort, which in this case would be “kindly feeling.” At the same time the physical body must be kept quiet and restrained; whilst the whole power of the mentality is directed to reviewing the situation from the opponent's point of view and considering the wisest thing to say or do in the circumstances; keeping strongly before it the fact that in any case should the emotional body be allowed to give way to anger matters will be made worse and a friendly solution of the difficulty become more remote.

The result of all this (very difficult at first) is that, the anger particles gradually become less active and then are expelled from the aura altogether to make room for material of better sort. As the

individual succeeds he is aware of his success, because he finds it more and more easy to restrain himself in circumstances that previously would have caused great excitement. So that in the end when complete victory is achieved over this emotion he finds himself not only incapable of originating anger, but also impervious to that emotion from the proximity of angry people. In a similar way every other emotion considered undesirable can be taken in hand and eventually starved out, good emotions being built in to replace them.

By practising in this way another valuable quality is gained, namely, control of the emotions. It would be of little use to be overflowing with kindly feelings if they are not under control, for misdirected kindness may do just as much harm as deliberate cruelty.

Self-control is also a most practical and useful quality, for the person who succeeds in any walk of life is one who can remain cool and collected in difficult situations.

It follows that a perfect astral body is such that it is capable only of emotions which are selected by and entirely under the control of the owner; it ensures his comfort in everyday life, even in the worst of astral surroundings, for coarse and evil vibrations from outside cannot affect it. Not only is it a blessing to the owner, but also to his neighbours, for wherever he goes his high vibrations tend to raise the tone of the surrounding astral matter, strongly affecting for good any astral body that may come within range. As an everyday example of this, most of us experience when in the proximity of certain people the feeling of being uplifted or

depressed, the result of the infectious action of one astral body on another.

Next there is the action of the emotional body on the physical to be considered; violent emotion of any sort strongly affects the physical, producing wear and tear. We all know how physical exhaustion follows on a fit of anger, and when the body is tired out or unwell how easy it is to give way to bad temper and irritability, So these two vehicles act and react on each other, improvement or deterioration in one causing corresponding change in the other.

It should be noted that though it is true that a perfected astral body is absolutely unaffected by evil surroundings, yet before that high state of perfection is arrived at, bad surroundings are a source of great danger, for if there remains only a little low type astral matter in the aura it will in evil company tend to be stimulated. If the individual purposely goes into bad company to do good, then it will be a matter of which is the strongest; if he is strong enough his high vibrations will carry all before him (one often notices the change in conversation amongst the undeveloped when one of a higher plane joins in), but if his astral body is not strong enough he may do the others little good and himself much harm.

The old saying, “ Evil communications corrupt good manners,” is much to the point, or it might be worded in this connection, “ Evil emotional bodies do much harm to the emotional bodies of other people.”

We now come to the highest, most important, and most difficult to control and improve of our vehicles the mental body, made of still finer material than even astral matter. It surrounds and

interpenetrates the physical and astral bodies. It is far the most important of the three, because during life it is always acting on the other two, causing tendencies to emotions and actions; if the mental body is evolved on right lines these will be towards good deeds and kindly feelings, but if it be badly organized or composed of inferior materials it not only causes tendencies towards evil, but its owner, the deathless spirit, can have little control over it or any of his vehicles, which therefore run riot and may be the cause of much suffering to himself as well as others.

The mental body with which we are born contains the germs of the concentrated essence of the mental qualities. To clairvoyant sight the mental aura appears as a coloured mist similar to the astral aura but of much more beautiful and delicate colours, which indicate the nature of the predominating thoughts. The particles composing it are made of matter composing the mental plane and are in a constant state of change and movement, for fresh material comes in and passes out even more rapidly and easily than in the case of the lower vehicles; every thought causes vibrations which attract mental matter of the corresponding type and colour, individual thoughts constantly draw in new material, repetition of those of similar nature increasing the quantity of that colour in the aura; hence the mental aura of an individual always corresponds to the sum total or average of the most frequent type of thoughts that are indulged in.

These auric colours arrange themselves in bands whose regularity of outline indicates qualities such as coolness, courage, truthfulness, will power, and others that have no particular distinctive colour, and also show the amount of control the Ego has

over the mental body. If the aura were visible, it would be seen to be composed of bands of thought forms, for when we think either an old thought form is strengthened or a new one is created and takes its position in the mental aura according to its vibratory rate, i.e., its colour. Definite and purposeful thought has a further and most important effect, for a duplicate thought form is also produced (built of astral or mental matter according to its nature), which passes out and proceeds to the person thought of, a mission that may be beneficent or evil.

Besides this the original thought acting on the whole mental body causes waves of vibration in the surrounding mental matter (the analogy of ripples in still water when a stone is thrown in is often used to illustrate this), and affects all other people who may be within reach, tending to produce in their mental bodies images of similar nature.

So thought has four main effects. (1) The formation of the more or less permanent image, which remains in and gives colour to the mental aura. (2) The formation of a travelling thought form, the angel or devil, who goes on its mission to the person thought of and discharges itself into his aura, or waits until an opportunity offers, but if no opportunity occurs of doing so returns and discharges itself on the sender. An illustration may make this clearer: suppose that a person for some reason or other feels anger towards another, instantaneously the duplicate thought form is dispatched to the one thought of. It may there find one of three conditions, for the person in question may be at the moment (a) in a state of anger or irritation; (b) in a state of kindly feeling, though

he may be one who occasionally loses his temper; (c) a person so developed that he never allows the emotion of anger.

In case (a) our travelling thought form finds vibrations that synchronize with itself, as well as an attraction, and readily enters the aura and discharges itself.

In case (b) the vibrations at the moment being antagonistic to those of the travelling thought form, no effect is possible until something occurs to cause a loss of temper, which makes an opening and gives an opportunity for entering the aura as in case (a). In case (c) the anger thought form on contacting so highly developed an aura is thrown off and rebounding returns to discharge itself on its creator; which might be compared to a boomerang which, missing its mark, returned to the thrower with damaging force.

Many have proved for themselves the reality of these travelling thought forms by the following experiment. At a certain fixed time every day (early morning is best) in the quiet of one's room, deliberately turn the thoughts towards someone with whom there has been a quarrel, sending kindly and pleasant thoughts of goodwill and the wish to be again on good terms. If this practice is steadily persisted in even by only one of the parties, when they happen to meet later, both will be astonished at how friendly disposed they feel towards each other, and how easy it is to come to a reconciliation.

(3) The waves of sympathetic vibrations that are set up in the surrounding mental matter, which will tend to produce similar sorts of thoughts in any one who may come within reach.

(4) The thought form attracts to its owner similar types of thoughts from other people, which are often mistaken for tempting spirits.

One realizes that every thought affects the creator of the thought and the person thought of, and improves or coarsens the local mental and astral atmosphere, which makes it easy to understand how very farreaching are the effects of thought.

Improvement in the mental aura is obtained by taking advantage of the natural law that determines the improvement or otherwise of all the vehicles, namely, that exercise causes growth, whilst disuse produces feebleness and eventually death of the part not used. So if the mental aura is not satisfactory, and it may easily be examined by tabulating the types of thought most used, the method of altering it is in theory extremely simple. One has only to discontinue the production of the classes of thought forms disapproved of, cultivating in their place thoughts of a higher description, and instead of permitting any of the drifting thoughts of other people that are continually met, to enter, one must keep strict guard and censorship, giving admission only to those approved of, all others being severely rejected. In practice this control and selection of thought is extremely difficult, especially at first, but is well worth time and trouble, for success is absolutely certain if the method is persisted in.

Having now considered the three vehicles separately, it will be understood how necessary it is that they should be in harmony and work with each other. Some people imagine that they can control the physical body whilst allowing the emotional or mental bodies to go as they please, which is impossible, for it corresponds to a

state of civil war amongst the vehicles, each side being hampered by the others and in the end damage being done to all.

There is truth in more senses than one in the old saying that, “As a man thinks so he is,” for of all our activities, “Thought” is the most important. Emotion comes next, and Action last of all.

Consider the three vehicles in everyday life. Suppose one wishes to change some habit, take a very small one as an example; let us say there is the habit of smoking a cigarette at 11 a.m., which we wish to discontinue. The wrong way to go about the business is to consider the physical only, then when 11 a.m. comes the cigarette is refused, the physical body then begins to get uncomfortable and complains, saying, “What about my usual cigarette?” You say, “That is off, I do not have a cigarette at 11 now.” The body protests more strongly, and the mental body joins in, and argues, “Why not? What is the sense of making the physical uncomfortable for so small a matter?” “How stupid you are to fuss about a trifle like that,” etc. Then the emotional body will also be likely to join the rebels, for feeling the inharmony, it will be likely to cause irritability.

The correct way of tackling this small habit would be, first the Ego must examine the matter, and be firmly determined that he is going to be master in his own house, that if he directs the body to discontinue the habit he intends to be obeyed.

The mental body should review the reasons that lead to the order being given, and dwell on the various advantages that will accrue from discontinuing the habit. The emotional body is now considered and is warned in advance that at 11 a.m. there may be

some trouble with the physical vehicle, and on no account is the emotional body to become excited if the physical is fool enough to rebel against orders. Now we have two strong allies on the side of law and order, and when 11 a.m. arrives the physical body finds that not only is the customary cigarette stopped, but that both other vehicles are unsympathetic and strongly against rebellion. It will therefore quickly fall into line and after a few days of declining opposition declare that it does not want or take the slightest interest in cigarettes at 11 a.m.; in fact the habit will be broken and overcome for good, this result having been arrived at with the minimum of annoyance.

Thus can the Ego get his way and cure any habit, however firmly fixed, incidentally strengthening the control he has over all the vehicles.

In a similar way defects in character can be dealt with, remembering always before commencing an improvement of either vehicle to enlist the sympathies and co-operation of the other two; as this is done all the vehicles will become more and more controlled, purified and refined which means that the individual is making progress in evolution, and fitting himself to be of use in the world, which is precisely the purpose for which we are here.

CHAPTER IV - The Power of Thought

THE KEY OF PROGRESS “

As a man thinks, so is he.”

There is a widespread belief that thoughts, being flimsy things, like dreams, do not matter, provided our actions are correct. This idea, however, is entirely erroneous, for the simple reason that actions are the outcome of thought and are in fact materialized thought.

It is well known that wrong thought cannot tend to produce right action, any more than right thought can result in crime. For instance, if envious or covetous thoughts be indulged in long enough, they may, when a favourable opportunity occurs, result in dishonesty. If thoughts are habitually of a kindly nature it is quite impossible to carry out unkindly acts. So it is clear that the thoughts we harbour, and especially those we frequently repeat, are of practical importance.

The chief difference between mankind and the lower animals lies in thought power, which, though undeveloped in the animal kingdom, is possessed in varying degree by the human race and causes one of the principal differences between individuals.

If we look at success or failure purely from the physical standpoint of the accumulation of riches, or possessions, we notice that those who obtain great success in life without the assistance of interest or fortune are individuals who invariably possess a remarkable amount of thought power. Whereas those who do not succeed are equally remarkable for lack of this power.

Thought power is therefore very desirable from the *physical* plane point of view. Equally so is it from *spiritual* considerations.

If we ask the question: For what purpose are we in this world? or, What is the meaning of it all? the answer in as few words as possible is that life is a great opportunity. We are immortal spirits come here clothed in mortal bodies, with more or less indifferent characters, and in undergoing the events of everyday life pass through a course of training - the object of which, if we take advantage of the opportunities, is to improve our character and evolve the powers which are latent in all.

Now it is possible for a boy sent to a first-rate school to finish his school days practically as ignorant as when he joined; in like manner we may pass through life with little advantage to ourselves from the experiences we have undergone. Success at school as well as improvement of character entirely depends on personal effort, which can only be successful through the cultivation of thought power. Thought power is therefore both important and desirable.

Let us look at this matter from another point of view. Suppose one went about asking, What is the greatest force in the world? The replies would probably be electricity, steam, water power, or that of high explosives. I do not suppose one in a thousand would give the correct answer - Thought power. Yet it is by thought we control and utilize Nature's forces.

Why is it that in many parts of the world you do not find trains, machinery, or other mechanical contrivances? Is it because Nature has omitted to supply her forces to these countries? Of course not; the forces are there right enough, but the inhabitants have not yet

evolved the master force of thought power by which to call up and use the others.

Again, we know that steam, electricity and other forces are very dangerous unless used in accordance with knowledge of physical laws. Still more dangerous is the spiritual force called thought power if used without regard to spiritual law. Of this there is a terrible illustration in the present state of affairs.

What is the cause that produced the catastrophe of European war?

To my mind the answer is extremely plain. For a great many years a wave of materialistic ideas has spread over Europe, numbers holding and teaching that there is no law higher than scientific law, and no force superior to physical force - that belief in spiritual ideas and consequences is foolishness and unworthy of practical people.

During this period it is noticeable that although enormous advance has been made in scientific knowledge, with its application to machinery and all sorts of convenient inventions, the kindly feelings which should exist between capital and labour, masters and men, classes and masses, became practically non-existent.

In the case of European politics, after a mad race in armaments universal war was arrived at. The experiment of running Europe on material lines has been given a generous trial and failed most dismally.

The fact of the matter is that this world is controlled by two sets of forces acting under their respective laws, one physical, the other spiritual. Of these much attention has been paid to Nature's physical forces and the laws under which they may be used in safety. In this

investigation and in other worldly matters, Business for example, the spiritual force called thought power has been freely used, but most unfortunately without any regard to spiritual law, We have learnt by bitter experience that to ignore physical law causes “ accident” ; shall we now realize that to use spiritual force in ignorance of spiritual law produces “ catastrophe” ?

Systematically we have ignored the spiritual law of Brotherhood, and through war, desolation and ruin, we reap the consequence. Thought power, therefore, is not only important and desirable, but very dangerous if used without due regard to spiritual law.

Now because a force is dangerous it does not follow that we need to refuse to make use of it. We do not object to electric light in our houses because electricity is dangerous; on the contrary, the greater the danger the more trouble do we take to find out the conditions under which the force may be used in safety.

In the case of thought power the conditions under which this spiritual force may be used in safety are: that it is only used in strict accordance with spiritual Laws, which may be found at the' root of all great religions. Such are the laws of “ Truth,” “ Honesty,” “ Brotherhood,” etc., or as they are summed up in Scripture, “ To love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy strength, and to love thy neighbour as thyself “ (Matthew xxii. 36-40).

It is very difficult to realize how much more damaging it is to transgress a spiritual law than a physical one.

Suppose, for example, the law of heat is ignored and the hand thrust into the fire. Pain immediately follows, calling attention to the fact

that a law has been overlooked, and the memory of the pain will in future help to prevent similar foolish action.

Now suppose a spiritual law is ignored, say the law of truthfulness. A lie is told and in all probability nothing happens to indicate that anything is wrong; the lie even may be accepted as truth. In which case there is a strong tendency for the ignorant to imagine that lying is clever.

The real results, however, were not only to generate and store up bad Karma, but the character of the one who lied was actually injured, making it more difficult for him to speak the truth in the future.

In everyday life we have constantly to decide whether we will act with or against these laws. Each time we decide to work with them it becomes increasingly easy to continue to do so. But if we go against the law it becomes increasingly difficult to act rightly.

Very many people unconsciously obey to some extent spiritual laws, but these laws can be used to far greater effect if their way of working is understood.

The apparatus of thought consists of two parts, the brain and the mental body. It may well be compared with the apparatus for the production of music, the brain corresponding to the musical instrument, the mental body to the musician. To obtain good results the combination of a good brain with a good mental body is absolutely necessary.

One of the commonest causes of feeble intellect is malnutrition of the brain, so the quality and condition of the substances which feed

the brain are important. The brain is nourished by the blood, which is formed from our food and drink, and also varies in condition with the state of general health. To possess a healthy brain it is therefore necessary to pay attention to the laws of health, not only as regards pure food, but also exercise, fresh air, correct breathing, etc. The brain also must be exercised, experience having proved that the more it is used within reason, the more capable does it become; this means that each must do his own thinking and not get in the habit of allowing others to think for him.

The appearance of the mental body cannot be described, for it is constructed of materials not of this world, spirit matter, or fourth dimension stuff, for which we have no words; yet we know a little of its capabilities. It is quite independent of restrictions such as time and space; when fully developed it has many wonderful properties as little understood by the majority to-day as were the possibilities of electricity one hundred years ago.

Though we cannot see the mental body, a good deal of information can be obtained about it from the appearance of its aura, the name given to the luminous mist, visible to some, which surrounds it. With a healthy and developed mental body the aura would show regular and bright bands of colour, as described on page 55 (in the book).

One skilled in reading the colours would, on viewing an aura, at once understand the character which produced it - an interesting consideration when it is remembered that after the death of the physical body all developed people will have this power of sight, and the hiding of character will be impossible.

Another useful quality of the aura is that it repels all vibrations that are not harmonious to it. A good aura therefore acts as a protection from evil.

How thought acts. Thoughts are things. Given a good brain in combination with a developed mental body, the act of thinking creates thought forms, which take shape and colour according to the type of the thought; these, like the aura, are at present only visible to a comparatively small number of people, but are just as real, or perhaps more so, than physical objects.

If the thought is vague, the thought form would be merely an undefined sort of cloud or coloured mist. Definite thought, however, produces very clear forms, in general shape something like flowers, sea shells, or geometrical figures which would be recognized and understood by one skilled in such matters. Good thought produces forms that are very beautiful and useful. Evil thought gives birth to horrible and dangerous forms. The length of time that these persist varies with the strength of the thought and frequency of repetition.

Steady thinking has four chief results. Firstly, it sends out thought waves in all directions, which improve or make worse the mental atmosphere. Secondly, a more or less permanent thought form is created in the aura and affects the character of the thinker for good or evil. Thirdly, there is an attractive effect on similar thought forms of others. Fourthly, a travelling thought form goes out and endeavours to affect the one thought of. (For further details see pages 56-57 (in the book).)

Here is the explanation how it is that a good aura acts as invisible armour against evil.

We see, then, that the act of thinking has two effects on others, and two on the thinker, one of which causes a gradual change of character. Very true is the saying, “As a man thinks, so is he.”

The question is often asked: “Should we hate?” Obviously the answer is No. If we are not sufficiently developed to be able to follow the directions given in the New Testament as to how enemies are to be treated, we may perhaps realize that to send damaging thought forms of hatred not only tends to make the character of the person thought of worse, but causes injury to ourselves and those about us. For hatred is a weapon that injures him who uses it - both mentally and physically.

Fear thoughts are a very great mistake, and frequently cause unnecessary harm to our friends. Take the case of a mother who, having a son exposed to danger, lives in a continual state of anxiety about his safety. Unwittingly she is doing the very last thing she would wish, for her fear thoughts reaching her son's aura will, if he has any fear in his composition (and who has not?), tend to further increase that quality; and though the mother's fears would not actually lead him into danger, they might indirectly do so by tending to cause him to make wrong decisions at critical moments.

The way to help a friend in any position of danger is to send strong helpful thoughts, such as, that he or she is carrying out duty with confidence, bravely and successfully - that in due time, having accomplished the work, will return home in honour and safety.

At funerals or death-beds it is most desirable that the one who is passing should not be disturbed by selfish wishes for his return to earth life, for such wishes are most harmful and disturb him at a time when quiet and helpful thoughts from those still on earth are most needed.

Unrestrained grief on the part of the mourners only retards his progress when loving thoughts are required to help the traveller on his way in the new world to the bright and happy life that lies before him.

How to cultivate Thought Power.

1. Take the physical body in hand, and by personal attention to the laws of hygiene make it healthy.
2. Obtain control of the physical body - make it do what you order.
3. Think only thoughts of which you approve. Turn out all others.
4. Practise daily sending out good and kindly thoughts to other people.
5. Practise improvement of memory - and the habit of noticing things.
6. Practise concentration - that is thinking steadily on one selected subject.
7. Practise daily remembering all events, trivial or otherwise, in the reverse order to which they happened. Apply this when something is lost. The usual method is to search in likely places; a tedious and uncertain method. Instead, sit comfortably in your room, quiet the mind, and go over in memory (backwards) all previous incidents

until you come to the occasion when the lost article was in use; you will then remember what you did with it.

Another useful and satisfactory practice is, when someone is unfriendly, or you have had a quarrel, bombard that person regularly every day with kindly thought forms. Use thoughts such as, how foolish it is for us to quarrel; the matter is a trifle and not worth it; it is merely a misunderstanding; we are really good friends, etc. When next you meet you will be astonished how friendly you find yourselves.

In conclusion, there are two necessary cautions. When you practise concentration, first place your physical body in a place of safety; do not concentrate in the streets, or anywhere where the body, not being looked after by the mind, might be injured. The best place is a room where you will not be suddenly disturbed. Secondly, do not concentrate too long; a few minutes at a time at first is ample. In these ways you may learn the “ Power of Thought.”

CHAPTER V - What Comes After Death?

THERE IS NO DEATH

Birthless and deathless and changeless remaineth the spirit for ever,
Death hath not touched it at all, dead though the house of it seems.
Arnold.

“What comes after Death?” is of all questions the most important, and in seeking for an answer several facts must be kept in mind. One of the greatest difficulties in obtaining information about any place we have not personally visited lies in getting complete reports, because each traveller colours his tale unconsciously with his own idiosyncrasies, paying most attention to and making most prominent features that interest him, to the exclusion of others, so that several reports of the same place may give altogether different impressions and yet each be absolutely true so far as it goes. Then there is the difficulty in regard to language, the want of words to express new ideas and conditions, and the great likelihood of the observer totally misunderstanding what is seen through ignorance or inexperience.

The letters of an African chieftain to his relatives describing his first visit to London are a good illustration of the mistakes that are liable from these causes. In writing to his friends at home, amongst many things which were totally misrepresented, he reported the very large number of the “idle rich” to be seen daily sleeping on the grass of our parks! To him the driver of a taxicab was a powerful magician! And he was immensely impressed by the lift attendant, who by a wave of his hand took him up or down. The letters ending with

many prayers and entreaties to his readers that they would not think he had degenerated into a deceiver and liar of the worst sort, but language failing him he found it impossible to describe the wonders by which he was surrounded.

In taking up the study of the next world we must first understand what is meant by the “astral plane,” the “mental plane,” and higher planes, which are simply new names for the after death regions, the old words Heaven and Hell being unsuitable for detailed explanations, since they are too narrow and symbolize only conditions of extremes of happiness or of misery; good enough, perhaps, for the thoughtless who accept as satisfactory and without question the ridiculous statements that they who reach Heaven wear golden crowns and spend their time singing hymns for all eternity; and that in Hell a material fire burns the immaterial spirit for ever and ever!

The expression “the planes of nature” includes all the regions or planes composing the universe; for convenience each of these is given a particular name, as the physical plane for the region in which everything is composed of physical matter. It is customary to think that this comprises the whole of our earth, but that is a great mistake, for the physical plane is only one of several planes that make the complete globe. The fact that we do not see the other planes has of course nothing to do with their reality, any more than a blind man not being able to see the sea has any effect on the existence of the Atlantic Ocean. The regions called the astral and mental planes, in which live most of those who have passed on, are not distant globes to which the soul travels at death, but are part of this world and inseparable from it, existing all around us and just as real as are

the mountains or seas. Therefore our globe contains more and reaches much further than is usually imagined; it is in fact an enormous sphere extending a great way into space, the physical plane (of which we see a part only, for many gases are invisible, as well as all etheric matter) being at the centre. The astral plane, the lowest of the spiritual regions, is another globe of less dense material occupying the same space, but also extending further, nearly, it is said, as far as the moon. The mental plane, a still higher spiritual region, is a third globe of even more rarefied matter partly occupying the same space as the physical and astral, but reaching still further, yet not so far as to touch the mental planes of the other planets of our system. These three planes, the physical, astral and mental, interpenetrate, and yet are quite distinct from each other, because each has its own laws, and the range of the vibrations of each plane differs. The reader may find a good illustration of this interpenetration by noticing that we may have in a room sound, light and electricity interpenetrating, that is occupying the same space, and yet each remains quite independent and unaffected by alterations in the others. An instrument constructed for recording sounds would pay no attention to the light or electricity vibrations present, being unaware of either, and to record all the vibrations in the room we should require three different instruments, one to register sound, another light, and a third electricity.

So is it with us here on earth. We have a physical body constructed to sense the physical plane, an astral body to sense the astral plane, and a mental body to sense the mental plane. These three bodies are each made of materials of their own plane, on which only can they be used, which accounts for the fact that the astral and mental

worlds are invisible to us during physical life, the faint glimpses that occasionally come through of spiritual existence appearing shadowy and unreal, yet in some dream states when the spirit leaves the physical body and functions in the astral one knows how very real the experiences seem to be; the same holds good at death, when the evolved spirit will find the spiritual worlds most real, and the physical one fade from view.

On the development of our several vehicles depends the amount of consciousness possible on either of these planes. On earth one meets people whose bodies are not properly developed, blind or deaf or with other of their senses wanting. To them the physical plane is far less complete than to others who have all five senses fully developed. Similarly, at the change called death, when the physical body with its physical senses is shed, the soul finds itself in the spiritual vehicles and by the spiritual senses of these vehicles contacts the spiritual world. Many then who during earth life neglected their higher nature find themselves astrally or mentally blind, deaf or otherwise deficient, and until progress is made get very limited impressions.

During physical life each of us actually builds up the astral and mental bodies we shall have to live in. If we were sufficiently evolved in character we should even now possess greatly improved vehicles which would give many advantages. Not only would the senses of each report correctly and give full information about everything to which we turned our attention on whichever plane we happened to be, but the three bodies would be so refined that we should be able to pass from one to the other at will, without loss of memory, and though living in the physical we should, through our astral and

mental bodies, have the astral and mental worlds open to our inner vision and hearing, in fact we should be perfectly clairvoyant and able to communicate as well as ever with those who have dropped the physical body (the dead as we call them); which means that death would have lost all power.

In the present day there are an increasing number of people who, though far from claiming perfection of character, have powers of perception which go beyond the ordinary. This is nothing new, for there are many such cases on record, but until lately to own to a sixth sense involved great danger, the fate of Joan of Arc and others tending to make people reticent, there being little satisfaction in being canonized a few hundred years after martyrdom. But now with the wave of spiritual awakening that is flooding the world, more and more individuals who have this important gift are coming to the front and stating the things they know to be true.

The amount the sixth sense is developed varies very much in different people, in most it is not developed at all, but here and there may be found one with perhaps the power of seeing the human aura and (when the art of understanding the meaning of the colours and their combinations is mastered) of becoming acquainted at sight with other people's characters. In another it may be the capacity of seeing, when conditions are favourable, certain types of thought forms. Others again are able to sense the strong thought of other people, a branch of which has lately been made quite orthodox by christening it "telepathy." To some it gives healing powers. In rare cases it gives the power of sensing the cause of illness and of indicating the remedy. The sixth sense again appears as the faculty of seeing astrally, or, more correctly, it is the

capacity of passing on to the physical instrument impressions sensed by the higher vehicles. Those who can do this are able to visualize and converse with astral people (the so-called dead), and have unique opportunities for finding out about the next life as far as it can be explained in our language.

It must be understood that these powers are simply a small beginning of the functioning of the sixth sense latent in every human being, but unfolded as yet by few, and which as evolution proceeds will come to all. At present it gives great advantages to those who possess it, in the same way that a man with sight and hearing has advantages over the blind and deaf, but is clearly a gift fraught with danger on account of the temptation to use it for selfish ends.

The reader may say - Why should a few people only have the commencement of so extraordinary a sense, whilst others who appear equally evolved have not the slightest sign of it? The reply is by another question: Why is it that people who live similar lives are so different in their nervous systems? If that could be answered, and if we understood all about spiritual laws, the nerves and the higher vehicles, it is probable the first question could be replied to.

It may now be asked what proof is there of these statements about the sixth sense. I refer to the very many published instances on record. In my own case I personally know men living in England leading ordinary lives who have these powers, and have repeatedly had proofs of their genuineness, which may of course be accounted for as being due to my possessing no reasoning powers, and being extremely gullible and foolish. If this be true the same must be assumed for some thousands of others who have had similar

evidence, or it may be accounted for from the equally likely cause that these curious powers (curious only because unusual) do exist and are on the increase, in which case we have valuable evidence available to check or support information gained about the next world from other sources. The most satisfactory way is for the reader to obtain personal proof by applying spiritual laws to everyday life. When this is seriously and perseveringly undertaken some or all of the ordinary senses are found to become extended in their range and more acute, very much more being sensed than formerly, the useful quality of intuition becomes keener, and many persons have found one or other of the abovementioned sixth sense powers come into being.

In discussing death the first interesting point is that the passage to the spiritual planes is painless. It is true that what is called accident or illness often may be very painful, but there is no need to fear death itself. The idea of a fearful and lonely passage through the valley of the shadow of death is an error. As soon as the process of death sets in, pain gradually ceases, for as the spirit is withdrawn from the physical body the sense of feeling of the physical naturally becomes less and less, just as in falling asleep one becomes drowsy and less and less conscious of one's surroundings, the contortions of the body and the death rattle that so often distress the relatives being merely muscular contractions. For the developed, death itself is but a momentary unconsciousness; for the less developed the process is longer; it may extend over days or hours, while the spirit is being disengaged from the physical vehicle. This goes on until only a thin thread connects the body, and when that breaks the body is dead - and the spirit, freed from the physical, is born into the spirit world

and is indifferent as to what becomes of its late body, the funeral ceremonies interesting it not at all, for during this period the soul is awakening (in some cases very slowly) to the new world, where most interesting matters claim its attention, provided it is not disturbed by unrestrained grief, or longing for its return to earth on the part of relatives, which cause the greatest distress. For though the relatives may consider the person dead, the new-comer to the spirit world is under no such delusion, and if all is well there is a most delightful feeling of extraordinary health and fitness. The most helpful attitude of relatives is when they unselfishly restrain their natural sorrow and follow the departed in thought with prayer and loving wishes for his or her well-being.

The conditions the spirit finds itself in on awakening after the change of death varies from the highly developed who awake to the glories of the Heaven world, the ordinary person who cannot believe that he is dead, and the undeveloped who finds himself in gruesome surroundings; between these there is an infinity of degree of happiness or the reverse. Into which grade of consciousness the spirit wakes depends on how the life just closed has been spent. If the earth life has been rightly used in accordance with spiritual laws and therefore as a preparation for spirit life, the soul will awake to happiness and useful work. If the earth life has been wasted or evilly lived, there are many degrees of differences of unhappiness down to extremes of misery; but in all cases the suffering is terminable; never is this state, as has been blasphemously taught, “for ever and ever.” The God of Love permits punishment under spiritual laws only to awaken the foolish and wilful spirit. As soon as that happens an improvement in the environment sets in, or to speak more

correctly, the environment does not change, but the spirit ceasing to fight against Divine laws finds its vehicles improve and is able to sense more refined and harmonious conditions which were present all the time but invisible; then once on the path of right endeavour there is no limit to the happiness that can be attained.

For all classes of spirit people there are some conditions that are general. For them heat, cold, hunger, thirst, disease, physical pain and atmospheric changes do not exist, nor is there ever any darkness except for those in the lowest states, everything being brighter, colours more beautiful and far more brilliant than anything we can imagine. A strange world where money, food and shelter are not required; where the qualities of each are visible to all, for though thought clothes the astral body as one wishes, yet character cannot be hidden because they show in the colours and arrangement of the aura, so it is not possible for any one to disguise his real disposition and pretend to be other than he really is. The mask so often worn on earth has fallen, the man himself stands revealed.

The astral body is a very superior vehicle to the physical, because the senses are not limited to separate sense organs as the eyes, ears, etc.; the astral vehicle has no specialized sense organs and the senses are not confined to one part, but are, as it were, all over, so that developed astral sight is in all directions, goes much further, and is much more penetrating: it is only necessary to fix the attention on anything and the whole of it, all sides, top, bottom, as well as the interior, is seen at once, not in perspective as we see things, but as they are. Our physical plane limitations of movement no longer exist because a developed astral body is able to travel (within the limits of

the astral world) in any direction with the speed you think of it as moving, and is not delayed or hindered by obstructions of any sort unless the owner chooses to think he has met something he cannot pass. Nor can it be injured in any way, an astral body being able to pass through astral matter without inconvenience, a difficult condition to imagine: but one must remember that the natural laws of this plane are quite different from those of the physical to which we are accustomed, astral matter moving, obeying and taking shape in obedience to the power of trained thought, which in these spiritual regions is all powerful.

Our physical world might be described as divided into many sub-planes according to the education and intelligence of the inhabitants, the coarse and ignorant being on a lower sub-plane than the more evolved; similarly in the astral world, the scenery, surroundings and inhabitants appear quite different according to the spiritual advancement reached by the observer, ordinary human inhabitants of any sub-plane being only able to see sub-planes of their own spiritual level and below, all above being invisible, the subplanes becoming more and more refined as progress is made, until the highest, which borders as it were on the Heaven world, is reached.

There is an important exception to the statement I mentioned just now, that the astral world is far brighter than the physical; the lowest subplane is the exception, for in it is found all that is coarsest and most

unpleasant in surroundings and inhabitants. (See W. Leadbeater : *The Astral*

Plane) This is a dismal region inhabited by undeveloped individuals whose desires during earth life were gross and brutal; 4,000 years ago it was described by an Egyptian seer as follows: “ What manner of place is this into which I have come? It hath no water, it hath no air, it is deep, unfathomable, it is black as the blackest night, and men wander about helplessly therein, in it a man may not live in quietness of heart.”

In the present day a partial description of this region may be obtained by listening to the so-called ravings of a man suffering from delirium tremens, a disease in which excessive drink has broken down the protective screen between the physical and astral planes and partly opened up astral sight, but owing to the unrefined state of the patient's vehicles it is only the very lowest levels that become visible to him. A man so suffering sees loathsome astral creatures from which he shrinks in terror, increased by the lack of understanding of his friends, who think him delirious, but he is really actually seeing his own thought forms as well as those of others and perhaps elementary astral creatures attracted by his condition, thus getting a foretaste of the subplane on which he will find himself on the death of his physical body.

Undeveloped individuals, criminals, suicides (who have committed their rash act from cowardly motives), and those who have committed grave faults find themselves at death very much alive, but in a state of fear and general discomfort, a very real hell that must be endured until either their evil passions are worn out or until they succeed in improving their astral bodies by cultivating good desires and doing useful work for others, when they may rise to happier conditions, or may perhaps be permitted to reincarnate

and make a fresh start in a new body in the physical world. All such are very much helped by the prayers and good wishes of those still in the flesh.

Criminals who are found on this part of the astral world are often full of fury towards humanity, and owing to the increased powers now available are able to work much harm to the living by obsessing the weak minded and urging them on to crime, a fact which shows how extremely wrong is capital punishment, for instead of banishing the malefactor from the world as is supposed, the effect is to set him free with largely increased powers for evil.

Here in the physical body it was possible to imprison the convicted felon and by the imprisonment of his body to confine his undeveloped spirit, so preventing further mischief, but set free on the astral plane by execution, there is no way of imprisoning or controlling him.

As soon as these facts are understood, instead our laws demanding the death penalty for certain crimes, the greatest trouble will be taken to keep criminals alive, confined, and of course placed under a careful system of training, in which by work, discipline and kindness, their mentality may be improved character altered for the better, and they may cease to be a danger to society.

Criminals at the death of their bodies are often haunted by their victims, in reality by thought forms of their victims unconsciously formed by themselves from whom they fly in terror, or may spend their time in mentally repeating over and over again the desires and passions that led up to their crime, which they visualize and react, as well as all the fear and punishment that followed. This is

occasionally seen in the case of criminals still in the physical body who have escaped the law, but finding life unbearable, owing to the torture of their thoughts, give themselves up to justice in the hope of gaining expiation or the supposed oblivion of death.

Some who have passed over who do not realize the folly of their past actions haunt places on earth where assemble the most vicious and degraded, and endeavour to satisfy their cravings for physical life and sensations by entering into the auras and even into the bodies of people who by uncontrolled passions and in other ways provide the opportunity. They then endeavour to goad these to crime or evil living, a course of action which besides the injury it does to the living will by Karmic law make their conditions worse than ever in the future truly for such as these the last state is worse than the first.

Suicides, who, thinking to evade their difficulties, have taken their lives from selfish or cowardly motives, find themselves in circumstances much worse than those from which they thought to escape, but have to endure much greater discomfort than if they had remained on earth and faced their troubles. This continues until the time arrives when in the natural course their lives would have come to an end.

It is related by one on whom the vicissitudes of earth life pressed very heavily, that feeling herself unequal to continuing the fight, she thought to end it by the destruction of her physical body; seeking oblivion in death she found it, in the sense that the physical body and the earth vanished, but she found herself in darkness and solitude, with life and memory uninjured.

We know that one of the severest punishments is solitary confinement, even for a very few days, but this spirit had the appalling experience of being cut off from every one for an uncalculated period, and though always searching could find no companionship. The horror of the situation becoming greater and greater, at last feeling that she must be on the verge of madness, she cried out for help.

Immediately spirit helpers came to her, explained the reasons of her position, and told her that they had been there all the time of her loneliness, but were unable to make their presence felt until she prayed for help.

From these she learned how she might improve her miserable conditions; they told her that the only way was to accomplish, as it were, a reversal of what she had done in committing suicide. In other words, her task was to prevent some other soul from accomplishing the deed contemplated by them similar to her own. This with her experience seemed a simple matter, but imagine her dismay on finding how difficult it is for one who has left the physical body to influence those still in the flesh. Here was a spirit burning with desire to help, to warn, and to explain to others from her personal experience, but found that with the loss of the physical body, which she had so recklessly destroyed, she had lost the instrument and with it largely the opportunity for influencing others.

One is accustomed to think that spirit people can easily present thoughts and influence the living, but in practice that is very difficult. This spirit tells us we can have no idea of the horror of looking on at a person bent on a fatal course leading to self-

destruction and being unable to do anything that will arrest the catastrophe. For knowledge and power to influence other people from the spiritual planes is only acquired after considerable study and experience.

The fact of the matter is that at death we lose the body - the physical tool suitable for work on the earth plane - after death it is therefore far more difficult to accomplish than during earth life when the tools suitable are to hand. The practical lesson for us is, not to postpone useful and kindly work, but to “ Do it now.”

After heartbreaking disappointments stretching over many years, success was at last achieved, and one who had every intention of suicide was dissuaded. Our narrator then found herself free at last from earthrestraining conditions and found happiness in further and pleasanter work.

All arriving on the astral plane who have not learnt self-control during earth life, find their earthly passions and desires not only more active, but more difficult to control; if these are of low type great pain is mentally suffered, because, having lost their bodies, physical desires cannot be satisfied, except by the unsatisfactory method of obsessing living people of similar nature; the drunkard craves for drink more than ever; the depressed and gloomy have the same emotions, but stronger; the miser has the same passion for gold and may endure agonies in seeing his heirs recklessly spend the fortune he accumulated with such trouble.

To all these classes the other inhabitants appear of similar nature or worse, because the sight possible through a coarse astral body is limited to a view of the worst part of the astral aura, all that is good

and higher in other people being invisible. So it is easy to understand how the idea of Devils and Hell may have originated.

The danger which I have mentioned of obsession of the living by some dead person or by one of the numerous classes of astral plane inhabitants who may wish for experience in a physical body, is a very real one, but it is a danger that can be guarded against, first, on the physical plane, by keeping the body in a refined and wholesome condition by pure food and attention to hygienic laws; secondly, on the spiritual planes, by doing everything possible to purify and get the emotional and mental vehicles well under control. The greater the control the Ego has over his vehicles, the more difficult is it for another to unlawfully seize and make use of either of them.

It is possible for obsession to occur in several ways when the threefold shield of a pure body, pure thoughts, and right actions is damaged; by injury to the body; again by violent emotion such as fear or sudden shock, which sometimes jars the vehicles to such an extent as to cause madness. Or, for instance, when a person is in such a rage as to lose control of himself, he attracts similar vibrations, and some astral being may be drawn into his aura. This may also occur by the use of drugs, or excessive drink, when instead of opening up astral sight as in delirium tremens, the effect may be to attract some undesirable spirit.

Again the screen may be destroyed by foolish attempts to develop astral sight by dabbling with spiritism, which must not be confused with spiritualism.

Spiritism consists in the phenomenal side of spirit manifestations, at séances in which the sitters provide conditions under which astral

plane inhabitants may manifest, either by knocks, moving of furniture, or physical manifestations of various sorts, and even materialization. The danger is that a door from the astral plane being thrown open, there is no check on who may step in; and as we know the least developed are they who seek most to get into contact with earth life, it is naturally more likely in promiscuous séances that entities of this class will be attracted than those from higher planes.

Such a séance might be compared to a person who, living on the high road, threw open all the doors and windows of his house, when it would be more likely that tramps would enter and make themselves at home, than that a learned professor would walk in and give a valuable discourse.

Unless the Earth-dweller has first developed his inward forces and is using them in his life for altruistic work, there must be grave danger in dabbling with the occult. But when so developed the possibilities of getting into contact with master minds may mean the bridge that will extend physical science into fields of discovery in superphysical regions. It may be that the manifestations of the séance room, at present so largely despised by the educated, may prove to be the stepping-stone to reach to higher philosophy.

Spiritualism, if rightly understood, must ever stand as a philosophy of life, both in its manifestation here and hereafter. Universal in its nature, it embraces all religions as far as the truth is revealed in them, proclaims the Brotherhood of Man, the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God, and reveals a path that all must tread, by the eternal

progression of the self, until at last the ultimate of this evolution is reached.

To return to the protecting shield we were considering, it may be injured by evil thoughts, or by such apparently harmless amusements as planchette, automatic writing, or attending public séances, when if not actually obsessed it is easy to pick up and carry home most undesirable astral acquaintances, guests who when once admitted are most difficult to eject. The sensible man steers clear of all such dangers and adds to his defences by wearing the invisible armour of pure thought, word and action.

At the present state of evolution of most of us the limitations of our physical bodies are a great protection in shutting out the astral plane, for we are not yet wise enough to deal with astral plane forces with safety, nor are we fit to be trusted with powers of the astral senses, which might be a hindrance in distracting us from the physical plane duties we are here to carry out. There would be also the tremendous temptation for the undeveloped to use clairvoyant and other psychic powers for evil purposes, such as gaining power over others, or amassing wealth. If such were yielded to it would be fatal to the individual's evolution. Doubtless, as before mentioned, these powers will in time come to all, and humanity will look back with astonishment at the material, selfish and practically atheistical social conditions of the world in the present day.

Let us now consider how the next world appears to the more developed and more numerous class of ordinary people whose thoughts during earth life were chiefly centred on worldly affairs, who led conventional, selfish and careless lives. To these the astral

plane appears just like the physical, and many are unable to realize for a long time that they have passed through the change of death, for the reason that they find themselves, though without a physical body, still alive, and in their thoughts and desires just the same as before. These conditions are very puzzling to them, for in some ways they find they have increased powers, but though they see and hear their former associates they cannot communicate with them.

There is a popular belief amongst many that when the soul reaches the next world everything that was difficult and obscure will be made plain. They adopt their religious views with the same blind faith that they accept their doctor's orders and prescriptions, and think the Creator, Christ and the Angels will be visible and that the individual will be instantaneously so changed as to be able to understand all mysteries. The whole of the evidence goes to show that these ideas are entirely false. The amount visible to any soul depends on its development. Knowledge is gained in the next world in a manner similar to the method by which it is gained here, that is, by studying cause producing effect, and by overcoming difficulty by personal effort. At death the soul does not receive any short cut to knowledge, the ignorant remain ignorant still, though to those who seek there are many opportunities for learning which are not available on earth. On low spiritual levels may be found some who in their blindness still deny that there is a God and attribute everything to chance or the haphazard working of the forces of Nature.

On earth most of us have to work in some way or other to obtain a living, but in the spiritual world nothing of the sort is required. This in popular opinion ought to provide the conditions for perfect

happiness. Each has health, no money is required, and every one may do exactly as he pleases, always provided he has developed the power to attain to that to which he desires, and, if sufficiently evolved, has the ability to make any article, building, or scenery that is wished by thought power. How does it work out? Take the case of one who during earth life spent the greatest part of his time in any of the most usual but trivial manners, for instance one who devoted himself to sport. After death his desires remain unaltered, he wishes to go out shooting or hunting, but he finds he cannot kill because astral bodies cannot be harmed, since astral bodies and astral matter pass through each other without injury. Then he may discover that astral animals are quite aware of his wishes and not only unfriendly (remembering how they were treated in earth life) but with the power to make things uncommonly unpleasant to him; there are also other astral plane creatures with the capacity of assuming any form they wish, and if antagonistic may be very terrifying to one who does not know how to deal with them. So our sportsman is likely to find himself in the position of the hunted; or contented to leave astral sport alone. What, then, is he to do to occupy his time, how is he to find happiness?

How will the vivisector and those who support vivisection fare in that world?

How is the gambler or one accustomed to occupy himself with games of chance to spend his time? What would be the use of winning money in the world where money is of no value, and where cards and all other objects can be seen through? The ambitious find it of no use to scheme for titles or social position in a world where rank is not recognized, but only nobility of soul.

All these and similar types of people cannot find happiness, for they have brought over with them the strong physical plane desires they had during earth life, and as they cannot now carry on their usual business or occupation find existence unsatisfactory and monotonous.

To the majority astral life is far happier than the physical, and is lived at a higher spiritual level in a wonderful and beautiful world, which is the Summerland so frequently described in spiritualistic literature, with its marvellous buildings and scenery.

There are many difficulties in trying to get descriptions of the higher planes. On earth we live in a three-dimensional world, but the spirit planes have four or more dimensions or extensions of consciousness. Again our three-dimension language is made to describe physical plane objects, and we know how very imperfect it is and how easy it is to be misunderstood and to convey wrong impressions. So, naturally, when we wish to speak of higher sub-planes of the astral world, and as the physical earth and its occupations recede from view, it becomes increasingly difficult except in the most general manner to describe the superphysical conditions, and our descriptions get more and more vague. How impossible would it be for a traveller to try and describe life in a battleship to the dwellers in the heart of some continent who had never seen the sea, yet those people would be very much mistaken if they concluded that the traveller was untruthful and the sea and ships imaginary. One is reminded of the story about the inhabitants of a tropical country who thought that they had proof that Europeans were liars because they stated that in their country rain and water were sometimes solid, and owing to paucity of words in their language much

interesting information was withheld because the people could not have received it.

It may be for similar reasons that we have no information about everyday occupations on the higher parts of the spiritual planes, but there is much evidence that many progressed spirit people keep in touch with the earth and take interest in mundane affairs. Some evolved ones who are beyond the necessity of earthly lessons return to impart knowledge and to work for the spiritual advancement of the race.

Some are drawn by the power of love to individuals. It might be thought that at death a pure spirit would pass to such high regions as to be lost to those still in the flesh or less spiritually advanced, but there need be no fear on this account, for the power of Love is so great that it will build a bridge from any plane.

Others, whose earth training is not complete, stay to act as guardians and advisers to those of the living who are sufficiently in sympathy or similar in character to them. Their power and work varies with development. It consists in suggesting helpful thoughts and occasionally of warding off dangers, similar to the duties that are popularly attributed to guardian angels; with the difference that these guardians being still imperfect learn very much from the trials, victories or defeats of their wards.

At some of the purgatorial stages, astral life is extremely uncomfortable, to others a little more developed it appears in many ways a continuation of physical life, but to those who are taking their evolution in hand and who can live comfortably without a physical body, it is a most happy, active, useful, and ever-extending

life, far beyond anything we can imagine, where very much is learned as the spirit progresses, influencing the future by the Karma that is made before passing to life in the Heaven world. The still more evolved and spiritually minded have either a short, happy useful life on the highest part of the astral world, or pass unconsciously and rapidly through the whole plane, like an arrow shot from a bow, to wake to the glories of the Heaven world.

Our Heaven world (a part of the mental plane) is a region where matter is in a still more rarefied condition and obeys laws that are different from those of the astral or physical planes, the ultimate particles of which the plane is built having, as it were, one overcoat less than astral particles and two overcoats less than physical particles. It is, therefore, a very much more beautiful and brilliant world, being nearer to reality, that is to spirit. This produces conditions which make description of the plane impossible on account of the poverty of our language, which fails to express or give any description of the intense bliss and active life that is possible.

On the physical plane there is much of pain and suffering; on the astral plane, physical pain cannot exist, but there may be great emotional distress and mental suffering. In the Heaven world nothing in the way of pain or suffering can enter, the only condition possible is one of greatest happiness. It is impossible for us to realize the conditions of a world where space and time as we know them do not exist, where language is not necessary, because thought is visible and at once understood; and where the seventh sense of a developed mental body gives the powers of all the senses combined and of instantaneously understanding all about any object under consideration.

Access to the physical, astral, and mental planes can be obtained by those who have evolved to the higher spheres, when they wish to lend their aid; and it is well for us that developed souls often renounce the higher worlds so that they may serve us who are less advanced pilgrims on the Path.

From the higher spheres, pre-existences can be seen in all their details and the Karmic causes followed through; from the study of these the spirit gains in knowledge and power and builds up capacity for right action in the future.

All human beings will eventually reach this happy region, but whether the journey is long or short, calm or stormy, depends on each individual. The length of life on the different planes varies according to development. Each plane presents its lessons and its tasks. When these are learned and accomplished the Ego finds himself in possession of power enabling him to reach the next stage. Thus the ladder of life unfolds, and is climbed step by step, its upper rungs giving access to realms far beyond our comprehension, and which can only be indicated by the one word - Infinite.

CHAPTER VI - What is the Use of Animals?

THE KEY TO THE PURPOSE OF THE ANIMAL CREATION

“ A sacred kinship I would not forego binds me to all that breathes.” - Boyesden.

In the Christian countries of the Western World the question is often asked: “ What is the use of Animals?” the usual reply being: “ They were given us to eat.” If we pursue the matter further and question this statement we are told: “ It says so in the Bible.” Yet there is clearly written in the first chapter of Genesis a statement purporting to emanate from the Creator indicating to man what he should eat.

“ And God said: Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, and every tree in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.”

In the laws of the Israelites we read that with certain very definite restrictions they were allowed to eat the flesh of animals; some people therefore in the present day consider that this gives them the permission they seek for the slaughter of animals for food; but if that part of the Law of Moses is accepted as a guide of life, it would be only logical and consistent to consider the rest of the standard of morality of the Israelites as applicable to ourselves, including slavery, polygamy, sacrifice of animals as expiation and to obtain forgiveness of sins, the establishment of cities of refuge, outside of which murder is permissible, the cold-blooded murder of women and children in war, with the rest of the savagery of the semi-barbarous Children of Israel.

Yet few flesh-eaters are consistent enough to openly advocate a return to these manners and customs.

It is recorded that the Israelites were permitted to eat the flesh of animals. We also read that these people during the forty years wanderings in the wilderness were fed on “ manna from heaven,” but their perverted appetites caused them to rebel, for they still “ lusted after flesh.”

“ And whilst the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was kindled against the people and the Lord smote the people with a very great plague. And he called the name of that place Kibroth-hattaavah: because there they buried the people that lusted” (Num. xi. 33-34). Strange treatment this of His chosen people by Almighty God, if, as the present-day flesh-eater asserts, He placed animals on this earth as food for mankind!

Further on the story of Daniel and his companions will be remembered, and how they would not defile themselves with meat or wine, and how under test conditions they vindicated the advantages of vegetarian diet. (Dan. i. 6-20.)

In Isaiah it is written: “ He that killeth an ox shall be in the sight of the Lord as if he slew a man,” and again - “ The wolf shall dwell with the kid, and the leopard lie down with the calf, and the lion and sheep shall abide together, and a little child shall lead them. They shall not hurt, nor shall they kill in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the covering waters of the sea.”

The Christian era was established some twenty centuries ago to supersede the Mosaic dispensation, to abolish the sacrifice of animals, the cruel law of “ An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth,” and introduce a far higher standard of civilization, morality, love, mercy and brotherhood, the spirit of the teachings of the New Testament.

Whether Christ was a vegetarian or not is a question on which people differ.

As regards Peter's vision, the usual explanation is that it was to teach him that there were other people in the world besides the Jews to whom he should take his message. This seems borne out by Acts x. 17-35. But for those who wish to argue that because in his vision St. Peter was told to “ kill and eat,” therefore we are justified in slaughtering animals for food, I would point out that though the “ Voice” ordered Peter three times to “ kill and eat” he flatly refused to do so.

Since the Bible does not offer any solution of the question “ What is the use of animals?” no more than it gives explanations of many other subjects on which we should like information, let us consider the matter from other points of view.

Natural history teaches with very convincing proofs that animals of the present day are considerably different from those of past ages, that animal life started from extremely rudimentary forms, having an evolution of its own which has been going on for millions of years, and that this evolution has not stopped, but is continually progressing.

Any one who has any knowledge of animals will agree that they vary very much in intelligence, the most intelligent being found in the highest branches of the mammals, as the horse, dog or elephant; so it is not only the physical forms, but also their mental capacities that are improving, and this brings one to the question: What is this intelligence in animals, and to what end is its evolution directed?

In the East the question is answered briefly as follows: It is said that animals are the physical vehicles of certain classes of spirit, which though essentially similar to ourselves, is less progressed and at a much lower stage of development, and in quality of intelligence varies considerably, so that jelly-fish and the lower forms of animal life are hardly conscious at all. The indwelling spirit called the group soul, it is said, divides and inhabits more than one animal body at the same time, so we might have a group soul at its early stages of physical life with some thousands of insects for its vehicles; later on the same soul might reincarnate and function through a few hundred sheep, and still later inhabit a small number of dogs, and so on, the number of vehicles used during earth life decreasing as the spirit progresses and is able to use higher forms of the animal kingdom. The ultimate goal being a state when individuality would be reached, and the spirit inhabit only one animal, then at the change of death the now individualized soul, having successfully completed its long course of training in the animal kingdom, would pass into a higher evolution in a world where conditions and vehicles are provided for this earliest type of individualized spirit to continue its upward progress.

Animal forms therefore correspond to the development of the spirit that inhabits them. If we knew enough about the subject, a list

might be made from the lowest to the highest showing the long ladder by which the group soul climbs upwards. On the lowest rungs would be insects, jelly-fish, and creatures that are little above vegetables, higher up vultures, jackals and other scavengers with very slightly developed astral vehicles; still higher, beasts of prey, whose astral bodies are very crude and their mental vehicles rudimentary; and so on, step by step until the highest types are reached, as the horse, dog, and the elephant, whose astral and mental vehicles are far more definitely formed.

The group soul idea is sometimes illustrated by comparing it to water filling a bucket, from which one tumblerful is taken to represent the soul of each animal in the group. During life this becomes coloured by the particular sensations and experiences of that animal, then at death the tumblerful is poured back into the bucket, diffusing and slightly colouring the whole contents. This accounts for instinct in animals. The reason why birds fear snakes is that many bird lives have been cut short by snakes, the group soul therefore becomes more and more aware that snakes are dangerous. Hence the instinct. The group soul thus gives warnings of perils that have been experienced, whilst a new danger finds the animal unprepared. If each tumblerful is imagined to shrink in quantity in proportion as it becomes coloured, the analogy is more complete. Since the increase of qualities in the group soul will mean less water poured back at death into the bucket, then fewer and fewer tumblerfuls can be taken out to inhabit new animal bodies, which must also be of more developed type to hold with safety the more concentrated liquid.

This theory also explains why the individual members of flocks and herds act so similarly, since they probably all belong to the same

group soul, and it gives a working hypothesis for many other animal characteristics.

Let us now investigate as far as our knowledge permits the conditions and circumstances of the evolution of the animal kingdom from the physical plane point of view, and try and place before our minds the very difficult problem that had to be solved in arranging for the evolution of animals.

There are obviously two distinct periods of animal evolution.

First: When animals are left to themselves in lands to which civilized man has not yet penetrated.

Secondly: When animals and civilized man inhabit the same country.

We will first consider the situation in countries to which civilized man, if he existed, had not penetrated.

The requirements of the case were:

To provide some inducement to cause the animals to take violent exercise and so develop their bodies and also to exercise their rudimentary minds.

To prevent their increasing at too great a rate and causing overcrowding.

To make sanitary arrangements for the disposal of the injured, sick and dead creatures.

The very wonderful solution of these difficulties was to arrange that some of the species should be flesh-eaters, others herbivorous and

frugivorous. If these types had been placed in different lands the problem would have remained unsolved, as doubtless the carnivora would soon have devoured each other and become extinct.

If the offspring of one pair of rabbits were to survive, there would be in less than a century, descended from that couple, many millions. So the non-flesh-eaters would soon have multiplied to such an extent as not to leave themselves a fair chance of surviving, and thus would have perished. Nature, however, has mixed the two species in exactly the right proportions.

The carnivora, the snakes, tigers, lions and such creatures, provide the stimulant which causes the other animals to exercise their muscles, sight, and hearing to the utmost, and at the same time what little mind they have is called on to work at its fullest capacity.

Those of the hunted who are least capable of battling against the hardships of life are continually weeded out, and as time goes on the species is bound to improve physically and mentally, and this reacts on the hunter, the carnivora, because as the hunted improve it is absolutely necessary for the hunter to keep pace in mind and body, or he will be left behind and starve.

Then the greater development of these animals of prey causes increased development in those preyed on, and so on.

Comparison of prehistoric and present-day animals in lands where civilized man has not settled shows how strongly this point comes out. In the words of science, it is “the struggle for existence” and “the survival of the fittest.” This arrangement largely disposes of the

danger of overcrowding, supplemented as it is by those powerful weapons, climate and atmospheric changes, so freely used by Nature.

The difficulty about sanitary arrangements is removed by the carnivora, who are the disposers of the bodies of the decrepit or sick animals. One may look on the lions, tigers, vultures, jackals, etc., with the armies of small creatures and insects that live on dead bodies, as Nature's most sanitary and efficient crematoria.

This is one of Nature's most marvellous arrangements. Think of the innumerable birds, fishes, insects, and animals that, having lived their lives, die daily, and yet how rare it is to see a dead creature. For with all these corpses to be disposed of one would expect to find them everywhere, for parts of the sea, streams and land to be polluted, and pestilences to occur, but such results are unknown except where Nature is interfered with by man.

It would seem that having in this way brought the animal evolution, chiefly as regards form, up to a certain point, the Creator decided that for further and quicker progress a complete change in the system and in the nature of the stimulant to evolution was necessary for certain animals, and called in civilized man to assist in this higher work. Some people are accustomed to think that everything in the universe is provided and intended solely for the comfort and convenience of Man, but this attitude is a mistake. Man is certainly the most highly evolved creature we are aware of, but there are others also in process of evolution, and other evolutions to be considered. The most thoughtless must see that much that happens is not altogether to Man's advantage, as fogs, storms, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and other disturbances.

So it should not be a novel kind of idea to suggest that possibly the subhuman kingdoms of animals are not intended entirely for man's benefit; but that Man, a being more highly evolved, is purposely brought into contact with them, and is intended to act so that animal evolution may be hastened, and pass to higher stages than was previously possible. And this is the point I wish now to discuss, and to show that it is not only Man's plain duty, but his high privilege to assist on the upward path, spirit, now manifest in the sub-human kingdom.

First consider the way in which civilized Man of the Western World has acted, when he has settled in countries inhabited by wild animals.

Man in the past has largely exterminated the ferocious types. This was necessary as civilized life spread over the world's surface.

He has tamed and trained certain animals which he finds useful for agriculture, personal use, and companionship, and thus has rightly lent his aid.

Others he uses for food, and to prevent the species becoming extinct he arranges for their breeding and increasing in large numbers, so that he may fatten, kill, and then eat their dead bodies at his convenience. Others animals he trains and preserves for sport, so that he may have the amusement of hunting and slaying.

In all cases his only thought has been what advantage or pleasure he may gain, the advantage or disadvantage to the animal race being entirely left out of his consideration.

Now if this were the correct treatment the Creator intended Man to mete out, when he was called in to co-operate with the animal

evolution, we should find the animals steadily improving beyond the stage reached before Man appeared on the scene. But we notice that very many sorts are not improving either physically or mentally; domestic cattle are a case in point, the breed is not advancing in powers of sight, hearing, etc., or in intelligence, but on the contrary is degenerating.

“ As stupid as a cow” and “ As silly as a sheep” are common expressions, and the word “ pig” is one of contempt. These may be getting fatter and fatter; a cow may be developing into a machine for producing the greatest quantity of milk in the shortest possible time; sheep may be developing towards prime mutton; pigs accustoming themselves more and more to eat any filth and convert it into flesh, but all this does not tend to upward evolution.

In the present day thinking people in England are much disturbed at the increasing amount of disease in our midst; and scientific men are proving more and more clearly that these diseases originate not in Man alone, but very largely in animals kept in captivity, that is without the amount of exercise and “ roughing it” that is suitable for them, then these animals are eaten by Man, who thus eats disease.

Scientists tell us that according to his structure “ Man is neither carnivorous nor herbivorous. He has neither the teeth of the cud-chewer nor their intestines. If we consider these organs in man, we must conclude him by nature to be frugivorous, as is the ape.”

So we have domestic animals of the classes that are eaten becoming more and more stupid, and the people who eat them becoming more and more diseased. This is Nature's way of speaking to us, and we know that when we disobey her laws, she has a disagreeable way

of bestowing punishment on the wrongdoer, without allowing any excuses such as “ I did not think,” “ I did not know.” This is Nature's way of stimulating our reasoning faculties. Is not she shouting at us that we are by our cruel treatment retarding animal evolution, neglecting our duty, and acting in exactly the opposite manner to what is expected of us?

Let us now return to where we left the animal creation at its introduction to civilized Man, and see if we cannot reason out where he has gone off the track of right behaviour.

The animals by themselves had reached a certain stage of development, and now civilized Man is given the great responsibility of “ dominion over them.” The higher being Man, replacing the carnivora, who have served their turn, the old forces of fear and hunger are to be abolished for the new stimulants of work and discipline, applied by Man with wisdom and kindness.

There is clear proof on this point, for when animals are trained, and kindly treated, we see Nature's strong approval, for by the stimulating forces of work, discipline and selection, animal evolution advances rapidly; a few instances of such are - the extraordinary sagacity, good temper and usefulness of trained elephants in India, the magnificent specimens of horses in England, and the intelligence and good temper of dogs.

On the other hand there are many instances where Man has dismally failed in his duty. Cattle are bred, housed, and fed under good conditions, but to the end that they may have bodies of the maximum size and fatness attainable, and when this is reached they are slaughtered with more or less cruelty, and their carcasses

consumed by Man, who thus unnaturally places himself on the low level of the carnivore.

Nature's very strong disapproval, as already pointed out, appears in the numerous diseases from which meat-eaters suffer.

Again, is it possible to imagine a greater wrong than vivisection? We all condemn the Inquisitors, who tortured human beings, yet we read that those men thought they were acting in the best interests of our race, and even believed that they were doing God's service. Vivisectors may honestly think that their cruelty leads to knowledge which is useful, but doctors disagree: some say it is useful, others equally distinguished in their profession state that it is absolutely useless. Whatever the use it cannot be justified.

We English pride ourselves on “ fair play” and “ playing the game” and consider most contemptible the strong who use their power to oppress and exploit the weak, whom they should in honour protect. The bribe offered by the vivisectors to dull the conscience and harden the heart, to condone and permit this cruel practice, is, that by it may perhaps be obtained remedies for disease - each of which in turn proves fallacious. Even if it were true that remedies could be so procured, and disease cured, the spiritually minded would reject them. Far better is it for the physical body to suffer or die, honourably, than to live dishonoured at the expense of the torture and misery of subhuman creatures.

It is on record that in the sixteenth century at Pisa (in Italy) certain criminals were delivered into the hands of the vivisectors, who were free to make any experiment they liked on these unfortunate people.

It will be remembered that this was long before the days of chloroform or other anaesthetics! One shudders to think of the end of these unfortunates.

In the year 1912 a vivisector was applauded when he lectured, in London, on experiments he had made on women and children, by inoculating them with a loathsome disease, these poor people, inmates of his hospital, being in his power and at his mercy.

Facts such as these show to what depths of wickedness vivisection may lead.

Sporting people are usually kind and sensible in their treatment of horses and dogs, but when it comes to hunting it is another matter. Of course so far as discipline goes, learning to work together, to obey orders, etc., all this makes for evolution, but starving these animals, feeding them on raw flesh so as to make them savage enough to hunt down the prey, is against evolution, and presses the hound backwards towards the wolf from which his species has evolved.

Is it any wonder that the progress of Man has been slow when we find still enacted upon the children the barbarous and revolting custom of “blooding” (the besmearing of the child's face with the warm blood of the hunted fox). Surely such an act must nullify the spirit of justice inherent in all, and create an illusion in the mind of that child that such is right and manly.

In human affairs a ruler, or governing body, is judged good or bad according to the condition of the people ruled. If a visitor from some other world came to see how the animal kingdom was getting on

under Man's guidance, what would he find? Shops with rows of bleeding carcasses exposed for sale, slaughterhouses and the organized massacre of nearly 1,000,000 creatures daily, cattle-ships hastening with cargoes of flesh to different parts of the world. He would also see vivisection laboratories in countries that consider themselves most advanced.

What would he think of Man - the ruler - who, when asked to consider these unnecessary sufferings and cruelties, refuses, saying, "I like meat and don't care," "I am content with things as they are"; or of people who while merciless to animals themselves, offer thanks to the Creator for His mercies to them, before sitting down to their meals of flesh.

The question, "Who are the rulers in this matter?" is easily answered. Every human being is a member of the governing body, and has power and responsibility.

On most great questions of the day the ordinary individual feels that he is but as a drop in the ocean, and that he is quite helpless in altering things, however clearly he may see what should be done.

But on this question of mercy to animals, each one of us as soon as he or she has considered the matter can proceed to action and cause considerable results.

Each one can cease to participate in cruelty, and can personally give up flesh-eating; then at once so many fewer creatures would be slaughtered for food, because the numbers born and slaughtered are entirely regulated by the commercial laws of supply and demand. Friends and relatives will notice the alteration in our way of living,

and, if we are tactful, will consider the matter, and often follow our example. It is general experience that all who have thought out for themselves these humane ideas and put them into practice, become keenly anxious to spread the information of the benefits they have found to follow.

I appeal to each reader to personally think this subject out, and if the arguments I have endeavoured to express seem reasonable, to join the increasing army of those who are giving up flesh-eating and making a stand against all forms of cruelty, so working for the good both of the human and sub-human races.

We may be perfectly certain that we shall not suffer as individuals or as a nation, if we forthwith change our ways and act up to our plain duty and privilege in assisting the evolution of the Animal creation.

CHAPTER VII - Diet and Health

THE KEY TO HEALTH

“ If wholesome diet will re-cure a man
What need of physic or physician?”
- Herrick.

In commencing to lead a spiritual life, the greatest of the practical difficulties is found to lie in the attempt to improve and control the vehicles. Until to some extent this has been done it is not possible to make much progress on the Path.

The most easy to work on of the three vehicles, and therefore the first to be taken in hand, is the physical body.

The best foundation for a spiritual life lies in a wholesome and controlled body. The simplest way to obtain such a vehicle is by living on foods that do not contain devitalized organisms of lower forms of life, such as flesh. In his efforts to alter habits of the body as regards food and drink, the Ego gains control and asserts mastership over the vehicle, refining it at the same time.

By derivation the word Vegetarian means “ one who thrives,” but it is usually misunderstood to mean “ one who lives on cabbage” or similar uninteresting foods. The word Fruitarian is equally unsatisfactory. In using either of these terms, Vegetarian or Fruitarian, one refers to a person who will have nothing to do with food obtained by slaughter. He is one who lives on the thousand and one things provided by Nature, which maybe summed up as “ the kindly fruits of the earth.”

This is no ascetic plan of semi-starvation, but very much the reverse. All who have tried a vegetarian cuisine agree that the dishes are palatable and can be made suitable for all tastes.

The only reason why educated people are not vegetarians is that they have never studied or thought about the food question. In our schools practically nothing is taught on the subject of food values and the effect of various foods on the human body. It is most unfortunate for the health of the nation that until recently the medical profession has overlooked this most important factor of health. Dietetics and the chemistry of food do not receive anything like the attention they should, being practically omitted from the curriculum of our medical schools. Happily more and more medical men are now taking up the scientific study of food, and it is noticeable that these physicians, instead of advocating methods of surgical operation and drugs, cure their patients by treatment and diet, and teach them how to live so as to avoid disease altogether.

The reasons why a meatless diet is so superior are very numerous, and may be divided under the headings of the vehicles affected, the physical, astral, and mental, of which I will take the latter first, as it is the most important.

The mental objection to the use of flesh as food exists in consideration of the fact that the business of providing such food causes great degradation to a very large number of men, women, and young people, who by the pressure of the necessity of earning wages, are forced into the disgusting trade of slaughter and its attendant horrors. Statistics show that crime is more frequent and bloodshed more common amongst this class of the civilization of to-

day than in any other, a result which is quite natural, for you cannot expect those whose lives are spent from morning to night in an atmosphere of bloodshed and cruelty, to become anything but debased and cruel, for by their environment their finer feelings must in time become deadened. The women who, though they do not actually assist the slaughterers in the slaughter-house, carry out much of the extremely revolting work in connexion with what may be called the by-products of the animals - these are sometimes called "gut girls" - live a life that does not tend to refinement, and they and their children suffer accordingly. In some countries boys are actually employed in the slaughter-house to kill small animals, to carry about buckets of blood, and is it to be wondered at that children engaged in such work become indifferent to bloodshed and cruelty, and their moral nature is stunted? The whole of this army, which numbers hundreds of thousands in Europe and America, feel very strongly the temptation to drink. It is not surprising that many in this way seek to dull their senses and thus further debase themselves:

As regards the portion of the group soul that inhabits the physical form of an animal, it is extremely bad for it to be driven out in a state of terror and anger. It is man's privilege to give all the help he can to animal evolution, but when he takes advantage of his higher powers, illtreats and cruelly slaughters (for killing can never be kind), he fails in his duty and reduces himself to the level of the carnivora, who have the excuse that they belong to a lower order of creation, in which the mental body is not as yet evolved. They therefore merely obey influences which impel them to seize, tear in pieces, and devour other creatures. One often hears it said that

“ Nature is red in claw and fang,” a statement that is only partly true, for it applies only to the least developed of animals, the scavenger and carnivorous creatures. For with very few exceptions the higher animals, as the horse, camel, reindeer, elephant, etc., who possess advanced qualities such as usefulness, good temper and intelligence, are vegetarians.

The carnivorous and “ red in claw and fang” animals are not suitable as examples for Man, who belongs to a higher evolution, many aeons beyond their stage, and who should recoil from slaughter.

It will also be remembered that Man's higher vehicles grow by the thoughts encouraged and permitted; if then, in order to allow the physical vehicle the fancied pleasures of a diet of flesh, the most important considerations concerning the degradation of the slaughterer and his assistants, and the great cruelty to animals are thrust aside, the food of the body becomes a stumbling-block and cause of injury to the higher vehicles.

It is also necessary to consider honestly the whole question of sport and vivisection; for if it is wrong to kill sub-human creatures for food, it is doubly wrong to hunt and slay for amusement, money-making, or gain of any sort, advancement in spirituality being well nigh impossible whilst these habits of selfishness and wanton cruelty persist.

By continuing to eat meat one assists in the perpetration of the terrible cruelties carried out in the slaughter of animals for food. This lack of mercy and want of sympathy for the lower creation causes great harm to the individual's emotional vehicle.

The weapon most commonly used in England for slaughter is the poleaxe, which kills at one blow if the animal is held motionless, if the slaughterer is strong, if he is skilful, and if he is sober; four conditions, one or all of which are frequently absent. For killing calves, sheep and pigs the knife is used, a sickening operation.

But of the cruelties and horrors of the slaughterhouse I will not write, because each reader, if a meat eater, should personally visit these iniquitous places, and should not be ashamed or shrink from investigating and seeing the whole process before the flesh disguised under the names of beef, mutton, pork, bacon, veal, etc., appears on the dinner-table, and then may eat if he or she finds appetite to make it possible.

Some people say they are so sensitive that they cannot bear to think of these horrors, yet these delicate and refined people (according to their own account) eat without compunction dishes obtained by these very horrors. Could anything be more illogical?

In the transport of animals on shore there is undreamt-of cruelty, especially in countries where distances are great, as in the United States, where from official statistics it is estimated that every year about 110,000 cattle are taken from the cattle trucks dead or mutilated on arrival at their destination. At sea the motion of a ship must be as disquieting to an animal as an earthquake is to us; then add seasickness, and broken limbs from being thrown about, terror and thirst, for it is impossible to go amongst the cargo of cattle in rough weather; the insanitary conditions, the dead or injured. Words fail to describe the infernal conditions, the fortunate ones being those who die soonest and pass out of their misery; the matter being passed

over in the newspapers with the remark that S.S. Cattleboat arrived after a stormy passage with the loss of so many hundred head of cattle.

English official returns give the following numbers for one year:- 14,000 thrown overboard, 1,240 landed dead, 455 had to be slaughtered on landing.

Drovers, especially in out of the way places, are accustomed to employ very cruel methods in driving cattle. And again on the approach to the slaughterhouse many cattle (being sentient creatures) sense what is coming and the one-sided struggle for life begins.

The kindly meat-eater who eats meat because he was brought up from childhood to do so, and has never considered these points for himself, deplors the cruelty but shuts his eyes to it, or stifles his conscience by saying that everything is as well arranged as is possible in this far from perfect world, and, anyway, he did not make the arrangement. Both of which statements are untrue, for flesh food is neither natural nor necessary. And if he partakes of flesh he associates himself with, becomes responsible, and thus creates Karma connected with it. The damping of kindly feelings by false reasoning is extremely bad for the emotional body, since callousness, selfishness and condonation of cruelty are about as bad qualities as are possible to build into it, producing a dulling of all good qualities.

We now come to the physical vehicle, and it is very easy to show that the flesh-eating habit is unnatural, unnecessary, harmful, less nourishing and more expensive than other foods.

First, to show that it is unnatural, we have in England large numbers of people whose bodies are not working well, since they are full of diseases and ill-health. The cause of this must either be that the Almighty made a mistake in designing the human body, and few will have the colossal impudence to make that suggestion, or the reason of the failure must lie with the users of the instrument - the body. Let us examine the machinery and see what foods Nature intended man to eat. It is well known that animals living in a wild state will only eat the food suitable for them, and if that is not available they starve. If, then, we can find some wild animal similar in construction to man, we shall, by noticing the food it eats, obtain the information we require.

Compare the human teeth with the teeth of carnivorous animals (lions, tigers, jackals, vultures, dogs, etc.) it is found that they are totally unlike. Next take herbivorous animals (cows, sheep, deer, etc.), again it is found that the teeth are totally unlike. But when we compare with frugivorous animals (the ape species), it is found that in number, shape and position the teeth are virtually similar.

Now compare the digestive apparatus of mankind with that of the carnivorous and herbivorous animals, it is seen to be totally dissimilar; but on comparing it with the frugivorous it is found to be identical in all its details.

Science therefore classifies Man as belonging to the highest family of living creatures - the Primates - frugivorous animals, whose food consists of the fruits of the earth. I do not see how Nature could have answered our question more plainly, that Man, by the structure of his body, is neither carnivorous nor herbivorous; but

having mental power he can, without violating the principles of frugivorous feeding, cultivate and prepare an infinite variety of foods; each habitable country having its own particular sorts which science is now discovering contain the nutriment most suitable for Man in that particular climate. Nature thus co-operating to provide Man with a plentiful supply of food she has constructed him to assimilate, and on which he thrives.

The physical body is extremely adaptable and can in time be made to accommodate itself to almost any conditions; this is what has been done in flesh eating countries, children being forced to eat meat until the natural repugnance is overcome, the natural taste vitiated, and the habit established. Example: If you put meat and an apple before a young child, it will always choose the apple. The body frequently rebels against the unnatural conditions forced on it, our medical men being hardly able to find names to attach to the diseases which multiply from day to day.

I will now ask the reader to take a common-sense view. Is it likely that eating dead, and not only dead but decomposing, bodies will conduce to health. Decomposition commences the moment life leaves an animal, and the rapidity with which it proceeds depends chiefly on temperature. The interior of the human body is always at tropical heat (98.4° F.) therefore if food be not digested it will decompose. In carnivorous animals this difficulty is allowed for, their digestive apparatus being so constructed that food remains but a short time in their bodies; in human beings it is otherwise, hence the danger.

Why do we keep meat hanging for several days after the animal is killed before it can be eaten? The answer, in plain English, is that meat is too tough until it commences to decompose! Is it likely that eating such stuff will promote health? How very common it is to hear that so and so is unwell because the fish was a little unfresh - decomposition again. What numbers die of ptomaine poisoning - the same thing - decomposition. Cooking is not a complete protection, for though the outer parts may be heated sufficiently to destroy harmful germs, the interior portions of the meat seldom become hot enough to ensure safety.

It is a most unpalatable fact that England is full of disease. We have sanitation, science and upwards of 30,000 doctors, yet the population is unhealthy.

In 1912 the Chief Medical Officer of the Board of Education reported that 6,000,000 children attending elementary schools in England and Wales had been examined, and it was found that 3,600,000 were diseased, suffering from defective vision, defective hearing, decayed teeth, tuberculosis, etc.

The standard of physical fitness in recruiting for the Navy is high, so naturally only those who think they are fit present themselves, yet about 50% have to be rejected as medically unfit. In recruiting for the Army, where the standard is lower, matters are even worse.

In England and Wales it is estimated that 30,000 people die every year of consumption. Doctors tell us that one man in every twelve, and one woman in every eight, is doomed to die of cancer. Operations for appendicitis, etc., seem to become more and more frequent. This state of affairs cannot be wondered at when it is

known that it is almost impossible to find a domestic animal, that is one of the species used as food, that is in perfect health. Examinations show that swine, cattle, sheep, etc., bred and kept under the unnatural conditions of captivity, suffer from most loathsome diseases in addition to cancer, consumption, and a host of minor ailments. Cancer is known to be very common in cattle, and many a butcher, finding a cancerous part, cuts it out, and sells the remainder of the carcass, being under the impression that he has removed the danger. But science tells us that if one part of an animal is cancerous, the whole body is dangerous, and any one who eats such food is liable to the disease.

Statistics show that consumption is so common in cattle that over half of them are tuberculous, which means that if eaten they may produce consumption in the eater; this gives force to the statement that if all tuberculous cattle were destroyed it would practically mean the extinction of the herds of Great Britain.

It is noticeable that in this country disease and epidemics of all sorts are most frequent during the winter months, when the animals bred for food are under more than usually insanitary conditions, crowded in sheds and getting less fresh air, fresh food, or exercise than during the summer.

One would like a straightforward answer to the question “ What becomes of sick animals?” We have in England millions of animals bred for food. Obviously very large numbers of these must occasionally be unwell. How is it that one never comes across the funeral of an animal? How are diseased animals disposed of? To bury the carcass of a cow, sheep, or pig is no easy matter, and

cannot easily be hidden, yet one never meets a party of men so engaged. It is disgusting to think that many diseased animal corpses are buried in the bodies of living people. Man indeed makes of his stomach a cemetery.

This, of course, is a money matter. When it is noticed that an animal is sick, instead of separating the creature for treatment, and at death burning or burying the carcass, it is most common to fatten the beast on oil cakes and hasten the still sick animal to the butcher - before it is too late - so that money may not be lost. The meat eater, therefore, who may often be heard congratulating himself that he eats good English meat - "None of your foreign rubbish," he would say - very frequently feeds on diseased flesh (for most disease cannot be discovered without a microscopic examination of each piece of meat), with the result that the standard of health in England falls lower and lower until ill-health has become so prevalent as to be looked on as something quite natural, unavoidable and almost fashionable.

On the other hand there are an increasing number of English men, women and children, who avoiding the dangers of flesh foods, find they are remarkably immune from cancer, consumption, and appendicitis, and the host of uric acid diseases, such as rheumatism, gout, dyspepsia, indigestion, headache, epilepsy, skin diseases, etc., etc., and many who formerly were ill have been cured by giving up flesh foods and adopting a scientific diet.

In looking back on the history of the world, we find innumerable millions who, though celebrated for strength, vigour and athletic prowess, were non-flesh-eaters. We have the ancient Britons, who

lived on berries, acorns and water, whom Plutarch tells us began to grow old at 120 years. The athletes of ancient Greece, the Spartans, and the gladiators, who made physical perfection a speciality, were vegetarians. In the present day old people in the country tell us that in their young days (before steam had made cattle-ships and the trade in frozen meat possible), there were no butchers' shops and meat was very scarce, and under these conditions the agricultural labourer was stronger and less diseased. The vast majority of the "toilers," the so-called working classes of the world, whose capital in life is health and muscle, are nonflesh-eaters. In Ireland, Scotland, France, Spain, Italy, Turkey, the Balkan States, Russia, and other parts of Europe multitudes thrive on such simple foods as potatoes, porridge, wholemeal or black bread, mealies, macaroni, cheese, porridge of chestnut flour, olives, oil, vegetables and fruits. One sees whole countries in which the national food is a non-flesh one, for example; Arabia, dates and milk; Egypt, coarse bread of wheat, millet or maize, dates, beans, lentils, melons and other fruits; India and China, rice and fruits; Manchuria, rice and beans. A good example of the physical fitness of vegetarians was seen at the time of the relief of the Peking Legations during the Boxer troubles, when the Japanese out-marched the soldiers of all other nations. Again in their war with Russia, these people showed the world the extraordinary physical fitness of their meatless navy and army; the general health of the Japanese nation being a standing reproach to the flesh-eaters of Europe.

I do not say that you cannot be strong on flesh food. What I maintain is that without it you can be just as strong and in much better health. My point is that flesh food is unnecessary.

At the present moment it is estimated roughly that from half to threequarters of the total population of the world are non-flesh-eaters. As regards brain power, amongst those who have lived in the past are found some of the noblest and most intellectual of humanity, as may be seen from the following short list:- Zoroaster, Pythagoras, Buddha, Isaiah, Daniel, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, John Wesley, Franklin, Goldsmith, Ray, Paley, Byron, Hypatia, Diogenes, Ovid, Plutarch, Seneca, Appolonius, Asoka, the Apostles Matthew, James, James the Less, Peter, the Christian fathers Clement, Basil, Tertullian, Marcion, Origen, Chrysostom, Jerome, etc., etc.

That vegetarian food is three or four times more nourishing than flesh food is shown by chemical analysis, which gives the total nutriment contained in grains and cereals as 80 to 86 per cent.; in various nuts, from 80 to 94 per cent.; in lentils, peas, beans, etc., 82 to 84 per cent.

Compare these numbers with the percentage of nutriment contained in flesh foods. The numbers are mutton, 28 per cent.; beef, 28 per cent.; veal, 37 per cent.; poultry, 26 per cent.; fish, 22 per cent.

It is recognized that fat is an absolute necessity to well-being, and one would naturally ask, “ Is it not better to take this element into our system in a pure form rather than the animal substance plus its contained poisons?” The percentage of fat, weight for weight, is three times exceeded in nuts as compared to meat.

It will be seen that in purchasing vegetarian foods, not only are the materials cheaper, but you get a greater quantity of nutriment.

Fruits contain a small amount of nutriment, but owing to their acids and salts have very great medicinal value. Another great advantage which is most important for health is that on non-flesh foods you are able to vary your diet according to climate and occupation. If cooking is inconvenient it may be dispensed with altogether, for it is easy and very wholesome to live on bread, cheese, salads, nuts and fruits.

Meat is, in reality, vegetable second-hand. For the size, strength and fatness of domestic creatures is derived from the nutritive properties of the food eaten, which for cattle and sheep are taken from the vegetable kingdom.

Sometimes it is said: If animals were not eaten they would overcrowd and eat us up! But exactly the opposite is the case; as soon as meateating ceases, breeding animals for food will stop, and the land now used for grazing will be available for more useful purposes.

In food reform is wrapped up many important social reforms which will automatically come into effect as soon as sufficient numbers of people break away from the flesh-eating habit.

First. A great amount of cruelty will be abolished, and the teaching of children that cruelty is permissible will cease. The nation, becoming humane about food, will become more humane in other directions. Flesh-eating England has the disgrace of requiring societies for the prevention of cruelty not only to animals but also to children. On the other hand vegetarian Japan, to take one instance of a non-flesh-eating people, is often described by English writers as “the children's paradise.”

Second. The national temper will improve. It is well known that the greatest cause of ill temper is indigestion, the result of eating unnatural food. Therefore, to the great advantage of every one, when the change of diet is made, temper improves!

Third. There will be much less disease. Many doctors and surgeons agree that on the scientific non-flesh diet being generally adopted their occupations will disappear, surgery except for injury become rare, and hospitals be almost unnecessary.

Fourth. The national curse of drink will diminish, and it follows crime will be reduced, because those who live on natural foods do not have the craving for alcoholic drink, as happens with the meat eater. A vegetarian drunkard is practically unknown. The Salvation Army takes advantage of this fact, and has permanently cured numbers of the many cases of habitual inebriety it has dealt with, by the methods of putting the patient on a fruitarian diet.

The craving for drink is the outcome of a congested system caused by over-stimulation by a meat diet; the drunkard craves for a stronger stimulant to expel the congested matter.

Fifth. Unemployment would be lessened, because instead of a few men now required to attend cattle, sheep and pigs, very large numbers of workers would be wanted to grow fruits, cereals and vegetables. Experts tell us this could be done in our own country, which is one of the most fertile in the world. Instead of our rural population crowding to the cities as at present, those born in cities would move out to the country, they being required for the wholesome occupation of agriculture. It is calculated that about £ 150,000,000 is annually spent on flesh foods by English people.

Most of this money goes out of the country, as it is spent on imported animals (dead or alive). It will clearly be an advantage when this vast sum is expended on the products of our own land.

Sixth. There will be a great improvement in our towns and villages from the gradual disappearance of shops in which animal bodies are exposed for sale, a disgrace to our boasted civilization. Instead of the disgusting stench from such shops, we shall have others full of fruits and vegetables, which, with the reduction of drink palaces due to the fallingoff of the demand for alcohol, will be one of the greatest improvements it is possible to imagine.

In making the change of diet determined effort is required, some people taking a few weeks before the habitual craving for flesh foods is overcome, but once this is done there is no further trouble, and practical advantages begin to be felt, nearly every one finding some or all of the following benefits.

The brain becomes clearer, and one feels that work can be continued after meals.

No headache and a great improvement in general health.

No indigestion and therefore better temper.

The craving for drink ceases, and it is easy to give up alcohol altogether.

Much greater endurance and the capacity of going for a long time without meals without inconvenience. No ravenous hunger as meal-time approaches.

The house becomes fresher and cleaner, there is no smell of burning flesh; less flies, there being no offensive matter to attract them.

No doctor's visits required.

No use for medicines. If not quite well, consideration of the mixture of the foods eaten at the same meal will usually indicate what is wrong, and a slight change put things right.

The teeth become better, since vegetarian food does not cause them to decay.

Many find they are no longer liable to coughs and colds, or if these are caught, the system is strong enough to throw them off very quickly, and there is almost entire freedom from inflammation with consequent rise of temperature.

The cooking is cleanly, economical and pleasant.

There is the assurance of freedom from the responsibility resultant of slaughter.

The more these matters are studied the more clearly is it seen that the flesh-eating habit is cruel, unnecessary, unnatural, harmful, and the cause of many social evils; the question arises, why not break with so unsatisfactory a habit, substitute a purer diet, and take the first step towards health on all planes?

The practical man in making this change will first have his cook taught the new cookery, and find out for himself what foods should be taken in lieu of meat, for it would be extremely foolish to leave off flesh-eating without considering what to eat instead of it.

The human body is far more complicated than is popularly imagined, for it really consists of three separate vehicles which powerfully affect each other, a fact which science has already grasped in recognizing that many diseases are due to causes other than physical, and that an unhealthy mental or emotional body may affect the physical so as to disarrange it and cause discomfort and ill-health. The physician therefore frequently orders change of mental occupation as part of his prescription; but it is necessary to go much further.

Health and immunity from disease are natural and our birthright, but in our present civilization we have drifted into an unnatural way of living and have temporarily lost sight of the art of living healthily. The blessings of perfect health depend on very much more than merely living in accordance with hygienic physical plane laws, or the food reformers would by practical demonstrations have long ago proved their case and converted the whole civilized world, whereas many food reformers are not at all good specimens of health and strength, the fact being that though food reform with its non-flesh diet is essential, it deals only with one-third of the whole body. For a completely healthy body we must also deal with the one-third composing the emotional vehicle, and the remaining very important third part, the mental vehicle. All of these must be taught to live in accord with the spiritual laws, and in harmony with each other, for the complete body to be healthy.

In considering the physical body, we know the factors and laws on which its health depends. You would not expect it to be healthy if exercise were given only to a few muscles of a hand or arm, and the remainder of the body and its members were unexercised and

entirely neglected. So it is not reasonable to expect (as many do) that the emotional or mental bodies will be healthy if only a small portion of them is used. Some exercise only the devotional part of their emotional vehicle, others one section only of the mental body and allow the remainder to stagnate, and so they become unevenly developed, which may cause ill-health of a particular vehicle, and therefore of the whole.

Examples of over-development of the emotional body may be read in history of people who took a one-sided and narrow view of religion, but, neglecting mercifulness and tolerance, went to the extreme of torturing and killing those who did not share the religious views they happened to hold; in a smaller and less harmful degree this one-sided development may be seen in people who in these days will not associate or do business with others whose religious beliefs differ from their own, nor engage servants or extend their charity to those who are not of exactly the same faith. Then there are emotional people who, though having a sympathetic and well-developed astral vehicle, have neglected the mental qualities that give balance as well as control. They overflow with emotion out of all proportion to the cause, and are easily taken in by an appeal to the emotional aspect of the case, and, though good and kindly, are often by indiscriminate charity a cause of much harm to others.

The political fanatic is another instance of one-sided development of the vehicles perverting his sense of proportion. Then there is the cold religionist, with quite sound and logical views about things spiritual as far as the mental body is concerned, but who neglects the emotional body, and therefore appears to others to be hard and without human feelings, and to hold a cold-blooded religion that

appeals to very few, and obviously has something incomplete about it, such people being cheerless, depressing, and unconvincing to listen to.

True religion has the effect of vivifying and developing the good qualities of all the vehicles, so that any one who has really grasped spiritual truths literally exudes happiness, cheerfulness, contentment, kindly feeling, and good-humour to all around.

For health, every department of the physical, astral and mental vehicles must receive attention, and be given suitable food and exercise for growth and improvement. Also, between these three there must be perfect harmony as well as perfect control by the indwelling spirit, the three bodies being first brought up to a corresponding state of development. For instance, if physical health has been neglected, an extra amount of time must be spent in bringing it up to its right tone or vibration, so that all three vehicles, being at the same level of development, may have no difficulty in keeping step, as it were, with each other on the march of progress. To obtain the best results one vehicle must not be allowed to rush ahead and outstrip the others.

The more nearly the development of the three vehicles corresponds, the greater will be the harmony between them and the easier the progress. Then the Divine forces will be able to penetrate and pass freely through the force centres of each vehicle, first into the centres of the mental body, vivifying the mental vehicle, then passing into the corresponding centres of the astral body, bringing life and activity to it; next flowing into the corresponding centres of the physical body, flooding it with vitality and so energizing all the vehicles.

After all is it not reasonable to expect that a highly developed mental body will work and harmonize best with highly developed emotional and physical vehicles, but if the mental is well developed and the others neglected, lunacy may result. Genius is often said to be akin to madness, which is true if the high development of the mental body, called genius, is allied to a physical or emotional vehicle which does not come near enough up to the same standard, or where control by the Ego of his vehicle is lacking.

The conclusion of the matter being that for health on all planes we must learn and obey the law pertaining thereto.

CHAPTER VIII - Some Practical Rules

“ Che va piano, va sano”

The physical vehicle is subject to constant renovation, old particles being replaced by materials contained, in the blood, which carries and distributes nourishment to all parts. It is, therefore, most important that the blood be pure, and that it contains the necessary substances.

New blood is formed from food and drink by the process called digestion, and therefore “ good blood” depends on the right sorts of food and on thorough chewing, which mixes it with the saliva (a chemical necessary for the process of digestion), and prepares it for the stomach.

In the stomach it is mixed with another chemical (the gastric juice) and partly digested, that is to say, some of it is converted and passes into the blood; further on another chemical (the bile) is provided and digestion, or the conversion of the nutritive portions, of the food largely into blood, is completed.

Since it is obvious that pure blood is essential to health, the practical man looks after the purity of his food and drink. He is careful about his teeth, bad teeth cannot chew; without chewing good digestion is not possible, and inferior blood results, which means inferior health. Therefore, if necessary, get false teeth, eat slowly and chew thoroughly.

Old materials of the body (worn-out cells) are removed by the blood through the veins, this impure blood is purified in the lungs by

breathing fresh air. The practical man therefore pays attention to his breathing and to what he breathes. The correct way to breathe is through the nostrils, which are constructed for the purpose, keeping the mouth shut.

Practise deep breathing daily to exercise all parts of the lungs. Breathe fresh air. Live out of doors as much as possible.

To keep the air passages in nostrils clear, it is a good plan to practise (daily) drawing up cold water with a pinch of salt in it into the mouth through the nose, closing one side with a finger whilst doing so. This practice also tends to prevent catching colds.

Breathe fresh air at night. You cannot do this if the windows are tight shut, or, if open, are blocked with curtains and blinds.

Drink pure drink. The best is the juice of ripe fruits, the next best liquid is Nature's beverage - pure water.

Eat pure food in moderation. Remember that too much coal shovelled on a fire will put it out. It is a bad plan to eat many different kinds of food at the same meal; consider the difficulty of digesting such a mixture.

Manufactured food is often adulterated. Adulterated food is often poison. Impure food is not economical, and does damage to the system.

If your food and drink are right there will be no need for drugs. It is wiser to search the cause of ill health in impure blood, that is, in the materials introduced as food into the body, than to continue feeding

on the cause of disease and hope by medicines and operations to bring things right.

Get as much sunshine as possible into yourself. Sunshine contains vitality. Admit lots of sunshine into your house.

Exercise all muscles daily, especially those that have little use during working hours, fifteen minutes every morning should be sufficient for this.

Do not permit your body to become the slave of any habit. Practise selfrestraint and control of the body; make it obey your orders.

Practise control of actions; it is a good plan to determine on a routine in small matters, such as the time of getting up, for exercise, etc., and make the body carry out the routine, punctually.

Practise control of speech; think before speaking, and only say what is true, kind and helpful. Avoid gossiping, and learn to mind your own business.

Do unto others (human and sub-human) as you would they should do to you.

Cultivate a pleasant tone of voice, especially to your subordinates; there is little difficulty in speaking pleasantly to one's superiors, or to those from whom one expects advantage.

Perseverance and thoroughness are most necessary. The whole life must be regulated by the highest ideal.

Under all circumstances keep good-tempered, and cultivate looking good-tempered and cheerful, this is half-way to being so.

A kindly joke is often more effective than the most reasonable arguments.

Learn all you can about the physical world, and practise doing things for yourself.

Practise observing details and remembering them; it is easy to invent small exercises for this.

It is a good plan if you have an important decision to make, say a letter to reply to, to write your answer to the best of your ability and, if time permits, delay sending it till next morning, then examine your letter from the point of view of your correspondent, and see if you cannot improve your answer; in most cases you will find you can so improve it that you will re-write it.

When going to sleep it is important that the last thoughts be good ones.

The astral body is fed and nourished by the emotions; it is therefore necessary to cultivate only the very best - such as unselfishness, sympathy, adaptability, generosity, tact, spirituality, devotion, kindness, cheerfulness, affection, etc. Besides exercising these, which can be done every day, it is necessary to have them well under control and to apply them with strong common sense. Undesirable emotions such as selfishness, envy, uncharitableness, anger, depression, etc., and all that are not refined must by disuse be rendered inactive and dislodged from the astral body.

When anything happens tending to produce emotion, the Ego, the master of the vehicles, must decide whether the astral body is to vibrate with emotion or not; in this way control is gradually

obtained, and under no circumstances should the astral vehicle be allowed to “take charge” and make use of the other two vehicles as its slaves.

Learn to see God in all things. And look for the highest and best in others. Always attribute the best motives to others.

Refuse to be depressed (it is most infectious). Remember all misfortunes are transitory. Refuse to get angry. Refuse to be irritable.

Cultivate kindly emotions and actions, with no idea of personal gain or reward.

The nature and composition of that part of the astral world that interpenetrates the physical plane depends very largely on the emotions of human and sub-human beings. It is therefore clear that the emotional activity of each individual is either improving the astral atmosphere or making it worse. Be one of those who improve it.

When the astral plane is full of evil influences, so generated and attracted to the physical plane, we have wars, misfortunes, and catastrophes of all sorts. The practical man will therefore do all he can to fill his aura with good and kindly emotions, for as soon as sufficient numbers of people do this, war and injustice will become impossible, the brotherhood of nations and of individuals will become a reality, and both this earth and the astral plane will be far more pleasant places to live in.

The mental vehicle is nourished and grows by the thoughts it is fed on. Think, therefore, nothing but good of others.

Practise daily thinking kindly of your enemy (if you have one) and look at things from his point of view.

Think kindly thoughts daily of your friends, and for the good of all people.

Always give others credit for acting under the best motives.

Be very tolerant in all things, especially the religious opinions of others. Remember that the outer form of religion is unimportant.

In Christ's description of the last judgment of all nations (Matt. xxv. 32-46) those on trial were not asked: What religion did you profess? Were you orthodox? How often did you attend religious services? Did you believe so and so? Not one of these questions so generally held to be necessary for salvation was asked.

The questions on which each individual was tried and sentenced were: Did you feed the hungry? Did you give drink to the thirsty? Did you clothe the naked? Did you visit the imprisoned? Did you take care of the sick? Did you lodge the stranger? All practical questions in matters relating to the individual's dealings with others during his life and quite independent of the creed he may have held.

Study the root of Religion. That is, the spiritual laws. Apply them to everyday life. In so doing you will find happiness, no matter what your surroundings may be.

Do not criticize others (unless it is your duty to do so). It was Cromwell who said to his Council: " I beseech you, my brethren, in the sacred name of Christ to remember that you may sometimes be mistaken."

Do not be in a hurry to form opinions, first obtain full information and look on all sides of the question.

Practise control of your thoughts. Consider frequently what you are thinking about, and why, and if you disapprove of the subject reject it, and substitute other thoughts.

Do not let the mind get rusty from disuse. The older you are the greater should be your mental power and store of useful knowledge.

Read and study some useful subject daily, and practise doing your own thinking.

Cultivate knowledge, seek lessons, and trace causes in everything that happens.

The mind is most efficient when it is calm, and when the physical and astral vehicles are so well under control as to cause no interference. It is therefore necessary to practise keeping cool and collected under all circumstances.

Look on irritating events as traps which may be fallen into, unless by control of the vehicles one is enabled to overcome the irritating condition and thus avoid the trap.

Apply the test of common sense to everything. Ask yourself: “ Is it reasonable?” “ Is it kind?” “ Is it just?” and think and judge for yourself. It is no use always using the thought of other people; that will not improve your mental body.

On waking in the morning it is a good plan to let the mind run over the events of the previous day and impersonally judge whether the

thoughts, emotions and actions were unselfish, kindly and the best possible; giving oneself credit where due, but condemning freely where there was failure to take the right course; then consider what can now be done to improve matters, and also what should have been done at the time; so as not to be caught on a future occasion by a similar experience.

Remember that a large number of small successes in building character are as valuable as a great victory, and victory in something big is unlikely unless success in small matters has been attained.

Think health. That the physical body, fed on the right amount of pure food and drink, is making pure blood to nourish all parts. That its organs are doing their work correctly, being kept active by proper exercise, and therefore the body must become healthy.

That your emotional body, fed on pure, kindly and unselfish emotions, is becoming greatly improved, attracting to itself good influences under the spiritual law that “ Like attracts like” and is able to absorb more and more of the Divine life.

That your mental body, being fed on pure and suitable food in your various work, studies, and everyday life, is becoming a more powerful instrument owing to the Divine forces that are attracted and can now flow into it. That the whole body, instead of fossilizing, is becoming more active, more sensible and more full of life.

As a gymnast invents new exercises for the better exercising of his muscles, so it is easy for each to go on inventing rules to suit his or her particular condition for the improvement of the physical, emotional and mental vehicles.

Finally it must be remembered that though the soul may be exerting itself to lead a sensible, healthy, and useful life, it is extremely probable that in the past causes were set going whose Karma will have to be worked out in sickness, disease, misfortunes, or perhaps imperfection of the vehicles.

The attempt to lead a healthy life on all planes draws these Karmic results to a head, for progress on the Path is not possible till the course is cleared of old fetters and obstructions. So one often finds the awakened individual, though living a higher and better life than he has ever lived before, dogged by misfortune, ill-health, loss of fortune or friends - a somewhat discouraging result. But the annoyance of this must obviously become less and less as time goes on, provided no new bad Karma is made, for each misfortune not only works out some old Karmic debt, but if patiently and philosophically borne, the will power and endurance are greatly strengthened. The individual is completing the necessary preparations for very rapid advance on the path of progress and for taking a more active and useful part in God's great scheme of Evolution.