

CORRESPONDENCE CLASS COURSE
IN
YOGI PHILOSOPHY
AND
ORIENTAL OCCULTISM

THE TENTH LESSON

THE ELEVENTH LESSON

THE TWELFTH LESSON

THE THIRTEENTH LESSON

THE FOURTEENTH LESSON

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YOGI PHILOSOPHY.

NOTICE TO CLASS MEMBERS

This Booklet contains the Tenth, Eleventh, Twelfth, Thirteenth and Fourteenth Lessons of the Correspondence Class Course in YOGI PHILOSOPHY AND ORIENTAL OCCULTISM, bound together for convenience. These Lessons were advertised to be issued in August, September, October, November and December, 1904, respectively, but owing to the requests of many members of the Class, we have advanced the date of the publication of the last three Lessons, and have issued the five last Lessons on September 15, 1904, in this shape. The Class Course terminates with the Fourteenth Lesson, so that there will be no further lessons sent to Class Members of 1904, but the Class Membership, with its other privileges, of course, continues until December 31, 1904, and students are entitled to purchase their books, etc., at Class Discounts until that time. We make this explanation in order to prevent misunderstanding and confusion.

THE YOGI PUBLICATION SOCIETY.

Chicago, Ill., September 15, 1904.

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THE TENTH LESSON.

THE ASTRAL WORLD.

WE ARE confronted with a serious difficulty at the beginning of this lesson, which will be apparent to those of our students who are well advanced in occult studies. We allude to the matter of the description of “planes” of existence. These lessons are intended as elementary studies designed to give the beginner a plain, simple idea of the general principles of occultism, without attempting to lead him into the more complicated stages of the subject. We have tried to avoid technicalities, so far as is possible, and believe that we have at least fairly well accomplished our task of presenting elementary principles in a plain manner, and we know that we have succeeded in interesting many persons in the study, who had heretofore been deterred from taking it up because of the mass of technical description and complicated description of details that met their view upon taking up other works on the subject.

So, in this lesson on the Astral World, and the three lessons that follow it, we will be compelled to deal in generalities instead of going into minute and careful descriptions such as would be needed in a work taking up the “higher-grade” work. Instead of endeavoring to describe just what a “plane” is, and

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then going on to point out the nice little differences between “planes” and “sub-planes” we shall treat the whole subject of the higher planes of existence under the general term of “The Astral World,” making that term include not only the lower divisions of the Astral Plane, but also some of the higher planes of life. This plan may be objected to by some who have followed other courses of reading on the subject, in which only the lower Astral Plane has been so styled, the higher planes receiving other names, which has led many to regard the Astral Plane with but scanty consideration reserving their careful study for the higher planes. But we ask these persons to remember that many of the ancient occultists classed the entire group of the upper planes (at least until the higher spiritual planes were reached) under the general term “The Astral World,” or similar terms, and we have the best of authority for this general division. There is as much difference between the lowest astral planes and the highest mental or spiritual planes, as there is between a gorilla and an Emerson, but in order to keep the beginner from getting lost in a wilderness of terms, we have treated all the planes above the physical (at least such as our lessons touches upon) under the general style of “The Astral World.”

It is difficult to convey clearly, in simple terms, the meaning of the word “plane,” and we shall use it but little, preferring the word “state,” for a plane is really a “state” rather than a place—that is, any one place may be inhabited on several planes. Just as a room may be filled with rays of the sun; light from a lamp; rays from an X-ray apparatus; ordinary magnetic vibrations; air, etc., etc., each acting according to the law of its being, and yet not affecting the others, so may several planes of being be in full operation in a given space, without interfering with each other. We cannot go into detail regarding the matter, in this elementary lesson, and hope merely to give the student a good working mental conception, in order that he may understand the incidents and phenomena of the several planes comprising “The Astral World.”

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Before going into the subject of the several planes of the Astral World, it will be better for us to consider some of the general phenomena classified under the term “astral.” In our Sixth Lesson, we have told you that man (in the body) , in addition to his physical senses of sight, hearing, tasting, smelling and feeling, has five *astral* senses (counterparts of the physical senses) operating on the astral plane, by which he may receive sense impressions without the aid of the physical sense organs. He also possesses a “sixth-sense” physical organ (the organ of the “telepathic” sense) which also has a corresponding astral sense.

These astral senses function on the lower astral plane—the plane next removed from the physical plane—and the phenomena of clairvoyance is produced by the use of these astral senses, as we have described in the Sixth Lesson. There are, of course, higher forms of clairvoyance, which operate on planes far above that used in ordinary clairvoyance, but such powers are so rare, and are possessed only by those of high attainment, that we need scarcely do more than mention them here. On this lower astral plane, the clairvoyant sees; the clairaudient hears; the psychometrist feels. On this plane the astral body moves about, and “ghosts” manifest. Disembodied souls living on the higher planes of the Astral World, in order to communicate with those on the physical plane, must descend to this lowest plane, and clothe themselves with coarse astral matter in order to accomplish their object. On this plane moves the “astral bodies” of those in the flesh, who have acquired the art of projecting themselves in the astral. It is possible for a person to project his astral body, or travel in his astral body, to any point within the limits of the earth’s attraction, and the trained occultist may do so at will, under the proper conditions. Others may occasionally take such trips (without knowing just how they do it, and having, afterwards, the remembrance of a particular and very vivid dream); in fact many of us do take such trips, when the physical body is wrapped in sleep, and

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one often gains much information in this way, upon subjects in which he is interested, by holding astral communication with others interested in the same subject, all unconsciously of course. The conscious acquirement of knowledge in this way, is possible only to those who have progressed quite a way along the path of attainment. The trained occultist merely places himself in the proper mental condition, and then wishes himself at some particular place, and his astral travels there with the rapidity of light, or even more rapidly. The untrained occultist, of course, has no such degree of control over his astral body and is more or less clumsy in his management of it. The Astral Body is always connected with the physical body (during the life of the latter) by a thin silk-like, astral thread, which maintains the communication between the two. Were this cord to be severed the physical body would die, as the connection of the soul with it would be terminated.

On this lower Astral Plane may also be perceived the auric colors of men, as described in our Fourth Lesson. Likewise it is on this plane that the emanations of thought may be observed by the clairvoyant vision, or the astral of one who visits that plane in his astral body. The mind is continually throwing off emanations, which extend some distance from the person, for a time, and which then, if strong enough, gradually pass off, drawn here and there by the corresponding thoughts of others. These thought emanations resemble clouds, some delicate and beautiful, while others are dark and murky. To the psychic or astral vision, places are seen to be filled with this thought-stuff, varying in character and appearance with the quality and nature of the original thought which produced them. Some places are seen to be filled with bright attractive thought-stuff showing that the general character of the thought of those who inhabit it is of an uplifting and cheerful character, while other places are filled with a hazy, murky mass or cloud of thought-stuff, showing that those who live there (or some visitors) have been dwelling on the lower planes of thought,

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and have filled the place with depressing reminders of their sojourn there. Such rooms should be opened wide to the sun, and air, and one moving into them should endeavor to fill them with bright, cheerful and happy thoughts, which will drive out the lower quality of thought-stuff. A mental command, such as "I command you to move away from this place," will cause one to throw out strong thought vibrations, which will either dissolve the objectionable thought-stuff, or will cause it to be repelled and driven away from the immediate vicinity of the person making the command.

If people could see but for a few minutes the thought-atmosphere of grogeries, gambling-rooms, and places of that kind, they would not care to again visit them. Not only is the atmosphere fairly saturated with degrading thoughts, but the lower class of disembodied souls flock in large numbers around the congenial scene, striving to break the narrow bounds which separate them from the physical plane in such places.

Perhaps the best way to make plain to you the general aspects and phenomena of the Astral World, would be to describe to you an imaginary trip made by yourself in that world, in charge of an experienced occultist. We will send you, in imagination, on such a trip, in this lesson, in charge of a competent guide—it being presupposed that you have made considerable spiritual progress, as otherwise even the guide could not take you very far, except by adopting heroic and very unusual methods, which he probably would not see fit to do in your case. Are you ready for your trip? Well, here is your guide.

You have gone into the silence, and suddenly become aware of having passed out of your body, and to be now occupying only your astral body. You stand beside your physical body, and see it sleeping on the couch, but you realize that you are connected with it by a bright silvery thread, looking something like a large bit of bright spider-web. You are conscious of the presence of your guide, who is to conduct you on your journey.

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He also has left his physical body, and is in his astral form, which reminds you of a vapory something, the shape of the human body, but which can be seen through, and which can move through solid objects at will. Your guide takes your hand in his and says, "Come," and in an instant you have left your room and are over the city in which you dwell, floating along as does a summer cloud. You begin to fear lest you may fall, and as soon as the thought enters your mind you find yourself sinking. But your guide places a hand under you and sustains you, saying, "Now just realize that you cannot sink unless you fear to—hold the thought that you are buoyant and you will be so." You do so, and are delighted to find that you may float at will, moving here and there in accordance to your wish or desire.

You see great volumes of thought-clouds arising from the city like great clouds of smoke, rolling along and settling here and there. You also see some finer vapory thought-clouds in certain quarters, which seem to have the property of scattering the dark clouds when they come in contact with them. Here and there you see bright thin lines of bright light, like an electric spark, traveling rapidly through space, which your guide tells you are telepathic messages passing from one person to another, the light being caused by the Prana with which the thought is charged. You see, as you descend toward the ground, that every person is surrounded by an egg-shaped body of color,—his aura—in which is reflected his thought and prevailing mental state, the character of the thought being represented by varying colors. Some are surrounded by beautiful auras, while others have around them a black, smoky aura, in which are seen flashes of red light. Some of these auras make you heart-sick to observe, as they give evidence of such base, gross, and animal thoughts, that they cause you pain, as you have become more sensitive now that you are out of your physical body. But you have not much time to spare here, as your trip is but a short one, and your guide bids you come on.

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You do not seem to change your place in space, but a change seems to have come over everything—like the lifting of a gauzy curtain in the pantomime. You no longer see the physical world with its astral phenomena, but seem to be in a new world—a land of queer shapes. You see astral “shells” floating about—discarded astral bodies of those who have shed them as they passed on. These are not pleasant to look upon, and you hurry on with your guide, but before you leave this second ante-room to the real Astral World, your guide bids you relax your mental dependence upon your astral body, and much to your surprise you find yourself slipping out of it, leaving it in the world of shells, but being still connected with it by a silk-like cord, or thread, just as it, in turn, is connected with your physical body, which you have almost forgotten by this time, but to which you are still bound by these almost invisible ties. You pass on clothed in a new body, or rather an inner garment of ethereal matter, for it seems as if you have been merely shedding one cloak, and then another, the YOU part of yourself remains unchanged—you smile now at the recollection that once upon a time you thought that the body was “you.” The plane of the “astral shells” fades away, and you seem to have entered a great room of sleeping forms, lying at rest and in peace, the only moving shapes being those from higher spheres who have descended to this plane in order to perform tasks for the good of their humbler brethren. Occasionally some sleeper will show signs of awakening, and at once some of these helpers will cluster around him, and seem to melt away into some other plane with him. But the most wonderful thing about this region seems to be that as the sleeper awakens slowly, his astral body slips away from him just as did yours a little before, and passes out of that plane to the place of “shells,” where it slowly disintegrates and is resolved into its original elements. This discarded shell is not connected with the physical body of the sleeping soul, which physical body has been buried or cremated, as it is “dead”; nor is the shell connected with the soul which has gone on, as it has

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finally discarded it and thrown it off. It is different in your case, for you have merely left it in the ante-room, and will return and resume its use, presently.

The scene again changes, and you find yourself in the regions of the awakened souls, through which you, with your guides, wander backward and forward. You notice that as the awakening souls pass along, they seem to rapidly drop sheath after sheath of their mental-bodies (for so these higher forms of ethereal coverings are called), and you notice that as you move toward the higher planes your substance becomes more and more etherealized, and that as you return to the lower planes it becomes coarser and grosser, although always far more etherealized than even the astral body, and infinitely finer than the material physical body. You also notice that each awakening soul is left to finally awaken on some particular plane. Your guide tells you that the particular plane is determined by the spiritual progress and attainment made by the soul in its past lives (for it has had many earthly visits or lives), and that it is practically impossible for a soul to go beyond the plane to which it belongs, although those on the upper planes may freely revisit the lower planes, this being the rule of the Astral World—not an arbitrary law, but a law of nature. If the student will pardon the commonplace comparison, he may get an understanding of it, by imagining a large screen, or series of screens, such as used for sorting coal into sizes. The large coal is caught by the first screen, the next size by the second, and so on until the tiny coal is reached. Now the large coal cannot get into the receptacle of the smaller sizes, but the small sizes may easily pass through the screen and join the large sizes, if force be imparted to them. Just so in the Astral World, the soul with the greatest amount of materiality, and coarser nature, is stopped by the screen of a certain plane, and cannot pass on to the higher ones, while one which has passed on to the higher planes, having cast off more confining sheaths, can easily pass backward and forward among the lower planes. In fact souls

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often do so, for the purpose of visiting friends on the lower planes, and giving them enjoyment and comfort in this way, and, in cases of a highly developed soul, much spiritual help may be given in this way, by means of advice and instruction, when the soul on the lower plane is ready for it. All of the planes, in fact, have Spiritual Helpers, from the very highest planes, some devoted souls preferring to so devote their time in the Astral World rather than to take a well earned rest, or to pursue certain studies for their own development. Your guide explains these things to you as you pass backward and forward, among the lower set of planes (the reason you do not go higher will be explained to you bye-and-bye), and he also informs you that the only exception to the rule of free passage to the planes below the plane of a soul, is the one which prevents the lower-plane souls from entering the "plane of the sleepers," which plane may not be entered by souls who have awakened on a low plane, but may be freely entered by those pure and exalted souls who have attained a high plane. The plane of the chamber of slumber is sacred to those occupying it, and those higher souls just mentioned, and is in fact in the nature of a distinct and separated state rather than one of the series of planes just mentioned.

The soul awakens on just the plane for which it is fitted—on just the sub-plane of that plane which its highest desires and tastes naturally select for it. It is surrounded by congenial minds, and is able to pursue that which the heart of the man had longed for during earth life. It may make considerable progress during this Astral World life, and so when it is reborn it is able to take a great step forward, when compared to its last incarnation. There are planes and sub-planes innumerable, and each finds an opportunity to develop and enjoy to the fullest the highest things of which it is capable at that particular period of development, and as we have said it may perfect itself and develop so that it will be born under much more favorable conditions and circumstances in the next earth life.

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But, alas, even in this higher world, all do not live up to their best, and instead of making the best of their opportunities, and growing spiritually, they allow their more material nature to draw them downward, and they spend much of their time on the planes beneath them, not to help and assist, but to live the less spiritual life of the denizens of the lower planes—the more material planes. In such cases the soul does not get the benefit of the Astral World sojourn and is born back into just about the same condition as the last earth-life—it is sent back to learn its lesson over again.

The very lowest planes of the Astral World are filled with souls of a gross type—undeveloped and animal like—who live as near as possible the lives they lived on earth (about the only thing they gain being the possibility of their “living-out” their gross tastes, and becoming sick and tired of it all, and thus allowing to develop a longing for higher things which will manifest in a “better-chance” when they are reborn). These undeveloped souls cannot, of course, visit the upper planes, and the only plane below them being the plane of shells and the astral sub-plane immediately above the material plane (which is one of the so-called anterooms of the Astral World) they often flock back as near to earth as is possible. They are able to get so near back to earth that they may become conscious of much that is transpiring there, particularly when the conditions are such that they are in harmony with their own natures. They may be said to be able to practically live on the low material plane, except that they are separated from it by a tantalizing thin veil, which prevents them from actively participating in it except on rare occasions. They may see, but not join in, the earth-life. They hang around the scenes of their old degrading lives, and often take possession of the brain of one of their own kind, who may be under the influence of liquor, and thus add to his own low desires. This is an unpleasant subject, and we do not care to dwell upon it—happily it does not concern those who read these lessons, as they have passed beyond this stage of

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development. Such low souls are so attracted by earth-life, on its lower planes, that their keen desires cause them to speedily reincarnate in similar conditions although there is always at least a slight improvement—there is never a going backward. A soul may make several attempts to advance, in spite of the dragging-back tendencies of its lower nature—but it never slips back quite as far as the place from which it started.

The souls in the higher planes, having far less attraction for earth-life, and having such excellent opportunities for advancement, naturally spend a much longer time in the Astral World, the general rule being that the higher the plane, the longer the rest and sojourn. But sooner or later the lesson is fully learned, and the soul yearns for that further advancement that can only come from the experience and action of another earth-life, and through the force of its desires (never against its will, remember) the soul is gradually caught in the current sweeping on toward rebirth, and becoming drowsy, is helped toward the plane of the room of slumber and, then falling into the soul-slumber it gradually “dies” to the Astral World, and is reborn into a new earth-life in accordance to its desires and tastes, and for which it is fit at that particular stage of its development. It does not fully awaken upon physical birth, but exists in a dreamy state of gradual awakening during the years of early childhood, its awakening being evidenced by the gradual dawning of intelligence in the child whose brain keeps pace with the demands made upon it. We will go more into detail regarding this matter, in the succeeding chapters.

All of these things, your guide has pointed out to you, and he has shown you examples of all the things we have just mentioned. You have met and talked with friends and loved ones who have passed out of the body and occupy some of the planes through which you have passed. You have noticed with wonder that these souls acted and spoke as if *their* life was the only natural one, and in fact seemed to think that you had come to them from some outside world. You also noticed that

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while those on each plane were more or less acquainted with the planes beneath them, they often seemed in total ignorance of those above them—except in the case of those on the higher planes who had awakened to a *conscious* realization of what it all meant, and knew that they were merely in a class working their way upward. Those on the lower planes seemed more or less unconscious of the real meaning of their existence, not having awakened to the conscious spiritual stage. You also noticed how few changes these souls seemed to have undergone—how very little more they seemed to know about things spiritual and occult than when on earth. You also noticed on the lower planes an old friend, who in earth-life, was a pronounced materialist, who did not seem to realize that he was “dead” and who believed that, by some catastrophe of nature, he had been transported to some other planet or physical world, and who was as keen as ever for his argument that “death ended all,” and who flew into a rage with the visitors from the higher spheres who told him whom they were and from whence they came, calling them rogues and imposters, and demanding that they show him something of their claimed “higher spheres” if they were realities. He claimed that their sudden appearances and disappearances were simply the physical phenomena of the new planet upon which they were living. Passing away from him in the midst of his railing at you for agreeing with the “imposters” and “visionaries,” who, to use his expression, were “little better than the spiritualists of the old world,” you sadly asked your guide to take you to the highest spheres. Your guide smiled and said, “I will take you as far as you can go,” and then took you to a plane which so fitted in with your desires, aspirations, tastes, and development, that you begged him to allow you to remain there, instead of taking you back to earth, as you felt that you had reached the “seventh heaven” of the Astral World. He insisted upon your return, but before starting told you that you were still in one of the sub-planes of the comparatively lower planes. You seemed to doubt his

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words, and like the materialist asked to be shown the greater things. He replied, "No, my son, you have progressed just as far as your limitations will allow—you have reached that part of the 'other life' which will be yours when you part with the body, unless you manage to develop still more and thus pass into a higher grade—thus far you may go but no farther. You have your limitations, just as I have mine, still farther on. No soul may travel beyond its spiritual boundaries."

"But," continued your guide, "beyond your plane and beyond mine are plane after plane, connected with our earth, the splendors of which man cannot conceive. And there are likewise many planes around the other planets of our chain—and there are millions of other worlds—and there are chains of universes just as there are chains of planets—and then greater groups of these chains—and so on greater and grander, beyond the power of man to imagine—on and on and on and on, higher and higher to inconceivable heights. An infinity of infinities of worlds are before us. Our world and our planetary chain and our system of suns, and our systems of solar systems, are but as grains of sand on the beach."

"Then what am I—poor mortal thing—lost among all this inconceivable greatness," you cried. "You are the most precious thing—a living soul," replied your guide, "and if you were destroyed the whole system of universes would crumble, for you are as necessary as the greatest part of it—it cannot do without you—you cannot be lost or destroyed—you are part of it all, and are eternal."

"And beyond all of this of which you have told me," you cried, "what is there, and what is the center of it all?" Your guide's face took on a rapt expression. "THE ABSOLUTE," he replied.

And when you reached your physical body again—just before your guide faded away—you asked him, "How many million miles away from Earth have we been, and how long were we gone?" He replied, "You never left the Earth at all—

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and your body was left alone but a moment of time—time and space belong not to the Astral world.”

THE ELEVENTH LESSON.

BEYOND THE BORDER.

IN THESE lessons we have not attempted to force upon the student any conception of the truth which did not appeal to him, or which did not harmonize with his own conception. We grant to all the liberty of their own convictions, preferring that they should accept only such of the Yogi teachings as may appeal to them, letting the rest pass by as not being needed just at that time. We merely state the Yogi's conception of the matter, as simply and plainly as we are able, that the student may understand the theory—whether or not it appeals to him as truth is a matter with which we have no concern. If it is true, then it is true, no matter what the student may think of it, and his belief or unbelief does not change matters. But, the Yogis do not hold to the idea that anyone is to be punished for unbelief, nor is one to be rewarded for belief—they hold that belief and unbelief are not matters of the will, but of the growth of understanding, therefore it is not consistent with Justice to suppose that one is rewarded or punished for belief or unbelief. The Yogis are the most tolerant of people. They see good, and truth, in all forms of belief, and conceptions of truth, and never blame any for not agreeing with them. They have no set creeds, and do not ask their followers to accept as a matter

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of course all that they teach. Their advice to students is: "Take what appeals to you, and leave the rest—tomorrow come back and take some of what you have rejected today, and so on, until you receive all we have to give you—do not force yourself to accept unpalatable truths, for when the time comes for you to receive them they will be pleasant to your mental taste—take what you please, and leave what you please—our idea of hospitality does not consist in forcing unpalatable things upon you, insisting that you must eat them to gain our favor, or that you will be punished for not liking them—take your own wherever you find it; but take nothing that is not yours by right of understanding; and fear not that anything that belongs to you may be withheld." With this understanding we proceed with our lesson—a most important one.

When the Ego leaves the body, at the moment of what we call Death, it leaves behind it the lower principles, and passes onward to states which will be considered by us presently. It leaves behind, first, the physical body. This physical body, as we have told you in the First Lesson, is composed of millions of tiny cells—little lives having a bit of mind or intelligence, under control of the central mind of the man; having also a supply of prana, or vital force, and a material casing or body, the sum of which little bodies makes the whole body of the man. We have devoted a chapter of our book upon "Hatha Yoga" to the consideration of these little lives, and we must refer the student to that book for fuller particulars of their life and work. When the death of the man occurs—when the Ego leaves its material sheath which it has used for the period of that particular "life," the cells separate and scatter, and that which we call decay sets in. The force which has held these cells together is withdrawn, and they are free to go their own way and form new combinations. Some are absorbed into the bodies of the plants in the vicinity, and eventually find themselves forming parts of the body of some animal which has eaten the plant, or a part of some other man who has eaten the plant or the meat

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of the animal which had eaten the plant. You will, of course, understand that these little cell-lives have nothing to do with the real soul or Ego of the man—they are but his late servants, and have no connection with his consciousness. Others of these atoms remain in the ground for some time, until taken up by some other form of living thing which needs nourishment. As a leading writer has said, "Death is but an aspect of life, and the destruction of one material form is but a prelude to the building up of another."

From the moment that the Ego leaves the physical body, and the influence of the commanding mind is withdrawn from the cells and the cell-groups, disorder reigns among them. They become a disorganized army, rushing hither and thither, interfering with each other—jostling and pushing each other—even fighting each other, their only object being to get away from the crowd—to escape from the general confusion. During the life of the body their main object is to work together in harmony, under the orders of their officers—after the death of the body their only object seems to separate and each go its own way. First the groups separate one from the other—then each group breaks up into smaller groups—and so on until each individual cell becomes freed from its fellows, and goes its own way, or where it is called by some form of life needing it. As a writer on the subject has said, "The body is never more alive when it is dead; but it is alive in its units, and dead in its totality."

When the Ego departs from the physical body, at the moment of death, the Prana being no longer under control of the central mind, responds only to the orders of the individual atoms or their groups, which have formed the individual body, and as the physical body disintegrates and is resolved into its original elements, each atom takes with it sufficient Prana to maintain its vitality, and to enable it to form new combinations, the unused Prana returning to the great universal storehouse, from which it came.

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When the Ego leaves the body, at the moment of death, it carries with it the Astral Body as well as the higher principles. This astral body, you will remember, is the exact counterpart of the physical body, but is composed of a finer quality of matter, and is invisible to the ordinary vision, but may be plainly seen by clairvoyant or astral sight, and may therefore be sometimes seen by persons under certain psychic conditions. Clairvoyants describe the parting of the Astral Body from the Physical Body as most interesting. They describe it as rising from the physical body, like a cloud of thin luminous vapor, but being connected with the physical body by a slender, silken, vapory cord, which cord becomes thinner and thinner until it becomes invisible to even the fine clairvoyant vision, just before it breaks entirely. The Astral Body exists some time after the physical death of the man, and under certain circumstances it becomes visible to living persons, and is called a "ghost." The Astral Body of a dying person is sometimes projected by an earnest desire and may become visible to relatives or friends with whom the dead man is in sympathy.

After a time, differing in various cases, as we will see later on, the Astral Body is discarded by the Ego, and it in turn begins to disintegrate. This discarded Astral Body is nothing more than a corpse of finer material, and is what occultists know as an "astral shell." It has no life or intelligence, when thus discarded, and floats around in the lower astral atmosphere, until it is resolved into its original elements. It seems to have a peculiar attraction toward its late physical counterpart, and will often return to the neighborhood of the physical body and disintegrate with it. Persons of psychic sight, either normal or influenced by fear or similar emotions, frequently see these astral shells floating around graveyards, over battlefields, etc., and are often mistaken for the "spirits" of departed people, whereas they are no more the person than is the physical corpse beneath the ground. These astral shells may be "galvanized" into a semblance of life by coming into contact with the vitality of

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some “medium,” the prana of the latter animating it, and the sub-conscious mentality of the medium causing it to manifest signs of life and partial intelligence. At some of the seances of the mediums these astral shells are materialized by means of the vitality of the medium, and talk in a stupid, disconnected way with those around, but it is not the person himself talking, but a mere shell animated by the life principle of the medium and the “circle,” and acting and talking like an automaton. There are, of course, other forms of spirit return, which are far different, but those investigating spiritualistic phenomena should beware of confounding these astral shells with the real intelligence of their deceased friends. And now let us return to the Ego, which has left the physical body.

While the Ego, encased in its Astral body, is slowly passing out of the Physical Body, the whole life of the person from infancy to old age, passes before his mental vision. The memory gives up its secrets, and picture after picture passes in swift succession before the mind, and many things are made plain to the departing soul—the reason of many things is discovered, and the soul sees what it all means—that is, it understands its whole life just complete, because it sees it as a whole. This is in the nature of a vivid dream to the dying individual, but it leaves a deep impress, and the memories are recalled and made use of at a later period, by the soul. Occultists have always urged that the friends and relatives of a dying person should maintain quiet and calm around him, that he may not be disturbed by conflicting emotions, or distracting sounds. The soul should be allowed to go on its way in peace and quiet, without being held back by the wishes or conversation of those around him.

So the Ego passes on, and out from the body. To where? Let us say here that the future states of the soul, between incarnations, have nothing to do with places—it is a matter of “states” not of places. There are numerous places of existence, and all interpenetrate each other, so that a given space may contain intelligences living on several different planes, those

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living on the lower planes not being conscious of the existence and presence of those living on the higher ones. So get the idea of “place” out of your minds—it is all a matter of “states,” or “planes.”

The soul after passing out of the body, if left undisturbed by emphatic calls from those whom it has left behind (and which calls may consist of violent manifestations of grief, and earnest demands for the return of the departed one on the part of some loved one, or from someone to whom the deceased person was bound by ties of duty) falls into a semi-conscious state—a blissful, peaceful, happy, restful state—a dream of the soul. This state continues for some time (varying in individuals as we shall see) until the astral shell falls from it, and floats off in the astral atmosphere, and until the lower portions of that etherealized-matter which confines the lower portions of the mind gradually dissolves and also drops from the soul, leaving it possessed of only the higher portions of its mentality.

The man of low spiritual development, and consequently of a larger degree of animal nature, will part with but little of his mind-body, and soon reaches the highest of which he has been mentally and spiritually capable in his earth-life. The man of high spiritual attainment, will gradually “shed” much of his mental-body, until he has thrown off all except the highest portions developed in his earth life. Those between the two mentioned types will act according to their degree of spiritual attainment, of course. Then, when the last possible remnant of the lower mentality has dropped from the soul, it awakes, as it passes on to states which will be described a little later on in this lesson. It will be seen that the man of gross mentality and spiritual development will stay in the dream-like state but a short time, as the process of casting off of sheaths is a comparatively simple one, requiring but little time. And it likewise will be seen that the man who has reached a high degree of spiritual development, will rest for a longer period, as he has much more to get rid of, and this discarded material of the mind drops from

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him like the leaves of a rose, one after the other, from the outer to the inner. Each soul awakens when it has discarded all that it can (or rather all that *will* drop from it) and when it has reached the highest state possible to it. Those who have made material spiritual progress during the earth-life just past, will have much useless and outgrown matter to discard, while the one who has neglected his opportunities, and dies about as he was born, will have but little to throw off, and will awaken in a very short time. Each rests until the highest point of unfoldment has manifested itself. But before going on further, let us stop a moment to say that both the sinking into the restful state, and the soundness and continuance of it may be interfered with by those left in the earth life. A soul which has "something on its mind" to communicate, or which is grieved by the pain of those who have been left behind (especially if it hears the lamentations and constant call for its return) will fight off the dreamy state creeping over it, and will make desperate efforts to return. And, likewise, the mental calls of those who have been left behind, will disturb the slumber, when it has been once entered into, and will cause the sleeping soul to rouse itself and endeavor to answer the calls, or at least will partially awaken it and retard its unfoldment. These half-awake souls often manifest in spiritualistic circles. Our selfish grief and demands often cause our loved ones who have passed much pain and sorrow and unrest, unless they have learned the true state of affairs before they have passed out, and refuse to be called back to earth even by those they love. Cases are known to occultists where souls have fought off the slumber for years in order to be around their loved ones on earth, but this course was unwise as it caused unnecessary sorrow and pain to both the one who had passed on, and those who had remained on earth. We should avoid delaying the process of those who have passed on—let them sleep on and rest, awaiting the hour of their transformation. It is like making them die their death several times in succession—those who truly love and understand avoid this—their love and

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understanding bids them let the soul depart in peace and take its well earned rest and gain its full development. This period of soul-slumber is like the existence of the babe in its mother's womb—it sleeps that it may awaken into life and strength.

Before passing on to the awakening, however, we think it proper to state that it is only the soul of the person who has died a natural death which sinks at once (if not disturbed) into the soul-slumber. Those who die by “accident,” or who are killed—in other words, those who pass out of the body suddenly, find themselves wide-awake and in full possession of the mental faculties for some time. They often are not aware that they have “died,” and cannot understand what is the matter with them. They are often fully conscious (for a short time) of life on earth, and can see and hear all that is going on around them, by means of their astral faculties. They cannot imagine that they have passed out of the body, and are sorely perplexed. Their lot would be most unhappy for a few days, until the sleep overtook them were it not for the Astral Helpers, who are souls from the higher states of existence, who gather around them and gently break to them the news of their real condition—offer them words of comfort and advice, and “take care” of them until they sink into the soul-slumber just as a tired child sinks to sleep at night. These helpers never fail in their duty, and no one who passes out suddenly is neglected, be he or she “good” or “bad,” for these Helpers know that all are God's children and their own brothers and sisters. Men of high spiritual development and powers have been known to pass out of their physical bodies temporarily (by means of their Astral Bodies) for the purpose of giving aid and advice in times of great catastrophes, or after a great battle, when immediate assistance and advice are needed. At such times, also, some of the higher intelligences in the scale of spiritual evolution descend from their lofty states and appearing as men give words of encouragement and the benefit of their wisdom. This not only in civilized countries but in all parts of the world, for all are akin. Many who have reached the

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high stages of spiritual development, and who have advanced far beyond the rest of the particular race-group to which they belong, and who have earned a longer stay in the higher states, awaiting the progress of their brothers, devote themselves to this and similar tasks, voluntarily relinquishing their earned rest and happiness for the good of their less fortunate brethren. Persons dying in the way of which we have spoken, of course, gradually fall into the slumber of the soul, and the process of the casting off of the confining sheaths goes on just as in cases of those dying a “natural” death.

When the soul has cast off the confining sheaths, and has reached the state for which it is prepared by its earth-lives, including that gained by development in the last earth-life, it passes immediately to the plane in the Astral World for which it is fitted, and to which it is drawn by the Law of Attraction. Now the Astral World, in all of its stages and planes, is not a “place” but a state, as we have before stated. These planes interpenetrate and those dwelling on one plane are not conscious of those dwelling on another, nor can they pass from one plane to another, with this exception—those dwelling on a higher plane are able to see (if they desire) the planes below them in the order of development, and may also visit the lower planes, if they desire to do so. But those on the lower planes are not able to either see or visit the higher planes. This is not because there is a “watchman at the gate,” or anything of that sort (for there can be no “gate” to a plane or state) but from the same reason that a fish is not able to soar above the water into the air like a bird—its nature does not permit it to do so. A soul having another soul toward which it is attached by some old tie, and finding that soul on a lower plane than itself, is able to visit the less developed soul and aid it in its development by advice and instruction, and to thus prepare it for its next incarnation so that when the two shall meet again in earth-life the less developed soul will have grown far nearer to its higher brother- or sister-soul, and may thereafter go hand

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in hand throughout life, or lives. This, of course, providing the less developed soul is willing to be instructed. Souls after reaching a certain degree of development are quite willing to be instructed when out of the body (as above stated) as they are freed from the distracting influences of earth-life, and are more open to the help of the Spirit. The Yogi teaching goes so far as to state that in rare cases, the helping soul may even bring his lower brother to such a state that he is enabled to throw off some of the lower mental principles which have clung to him after his awakening, and which kept him in a certain plane, and thus enable him to pass on to the next higher plane. But this is rare, and can only happen when the soul has been *nearly* but not quite able to throw off the confining sheath, unaided.

The lower planes of the Astral World are filled with souls of a gross, undeveloped type, who live lives very similar to those lived on earth. In fact they are so closely connected with the material plane, and are so attracted to it, that they are so conscious of much that goes on in it, that they may be said to be living on the material plane, and only prevented from active participation in it by a thin veil which separates them from their own kind in the body. These souls hang around the old scenes of their earthly degradation, and often influence one of their kind who is under the influence of liquor and who is thereby open to influences of this nature. They live their old lives over again in this way, and add to the brutality and degradation of the living by their influences and association. There are quite a number of these lower planes, as well as the higher planes, each containing disembodied souls of the particular class belonging to it. These lower plane souls are in very close contact with the material plane, and are consequently the ones often attracted to seances, where the medium and sitters are on a low plane. They masquerade as the "spirits" of friends of visitors, and others, often claiming to be some well known and celebrated personages. They play the silly pranks so often seen at seances, and take a particular delight in such things, and "general

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devilment," if permitted to do so. They are not fit company for people on the higher plane, whether they be embodied or disembodied.

These lower plane souls spend but little time in the disembodied state, and are strongly attracted by the material life, the consequence being that they are filled with a great desire to reincarnate, and generally spend but little time between two incarnations. Of course, when they are reborn they are attracted to, and attracted by, parents of the same tendencies, so that the surroundings in their new earth-life will correspond very closely to those of their old one. These crude and undeveloped souls, as well as the souls of the savage races, progress but slowly, making but a trifling advance in each life, and having to undergo repeated and frequent incarnations in order to make even a little progress. Their desires are strong for the material, and they are attracted to and by it—the Spirit's influences exerting but a comparatively slight attraction upon them. But even these make *some* progress—all are moving forward if even but a little.

The souls on each of the succeeding higher planes, of course, make more rapid progress each earth-life, and have fewer incarnations, and a much longer time between them. Their inclinations and tastes being of a higher order, they prefer to dwell on in the higher places of disembodied life, thinking of and contemplating the higher teachings, aided as they are by the absence from material things and encouraged by the rays of the Spiritual Mind beating down upon them, helping their unfoldment. They are able to prepare themselves for great progress in this way, and often spend centuries on the higher planes, before reincarnating. In some cases where they have advanced far beyond their race, they spend thousands of years in the higher planes, waiting until the race grows up to render their rebirth attractive, and in the meantime they find much helpful work to do for less developed souls.

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But sooner or later, the souls feel a desire to gain new experiences, and to manifest in earth-life some of the advancement which has come to them since "death," and for these reasons, and from the attraction of desires which have been smoldering there, not lived out or cast off, or, possibly influenced by the fact that some loved soul, on a lower plane, is ready to incarnate and wishing to be incarnated at the same time in order to be with it (which is also a desire) the souls fall into the current sweeping toward rebirth, and the selection of proper parents and advantageous circumstances and surroundings, and in consequence again fall into a soul-slumber, gradually, and so when their time comes they "die" to the plane upon which they have been existing and are "born" into a new physical life and body. A soul does not fully awaken from its sleep immediately at birth, but exists in a dream-like state during the days of infancy, its gradual awakening being evidenced by the growing intelligence of the babe, the brain of the child keeping pace with the demands made upon it. In some case the awakening is premature, and we see cases of prodigies, child-genius, etc., but such cases are more or less abnormal, and unhealthy. Occasionally the dreaming soul in the child half-awakes, and startles us by some profound observation, or mature remark or conduct.

Much of this process of preparing for reincarnation is performed by the soul unconsciously, in obedience to its inspirations, and desires, as it really has not grown to understand what it all means, and what is before it, and is being swept along by the Law of Attraction almost unconsciously. But after souls attain a certain degree of development, they become conscious of the process of reincarnation, and are thereafter conscious of past lives, and preceding a rebirth may take a conscious part in selecting the environments and surroundings. The higher they rise in the scale, the greater their conscious power, and choice.

It will readily be seen that there are planes upon planes of disembodied existence. The Yogi Philosophy teaches that there

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are Seven Great Planes (sometimes spoken of by uneducated Hindus as the “seven heavens”), but each great plane has seven sub-divisions, and each sub-division has seven minor divisions, and so on.

It is impossible for us to begin to describe the nature of the higher astral life. We have no words to describe it, and no minds to comprehend it. Life on the lower planes is very similar to earth-life, many of the inhabitants seeming to think that it is a part of the earth, and, not realizing that they are freed from earthly limitations, imagine that fire can burn them, water can drown them, etc. They live practically on the earth amidst its scenes. Above these are planes whose inhabitants have higher ideas and lives—and so on and on and on, until the bliss of the higher planes cannot be comprehended by man today. In some of the intermediate planes, those who are fond of music indulge to the utmost their love for it—artists their love for their art—intellectual workers pursue their studies—and so on, along these lines. Above these are those who have awakened spiritually and have opportunities for developing themselves, and gaining knowledge. Above these are states of which we cannot dream. And, yet remember this, even these highest planes are but parts of the high Astral Plane, which plane is but one of the lower ones of the Universe, and above that comes plane after plane of existence. But why speak of this, friends—we cannot undertake to master the problem of higher mathematics, when we scarcely know how to add two figures together. But all this is for us—all for us—and we cannot be robbed of our inheritance.

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THE TWELFTH LESSON.

SPIRITUAL EVOLUTION.

THE BEAUTIFUL doctrine of Spiritual Evolution—that gem in the diadem of the Yogi Philosophy—is sadly misunderstood and misinterpreted, even by many who are its friends. The mass of uninformed people confuse it with the crudest ideas of the ignorant races of Asia and Africa—believe that it teaches that the souls of men descend into the bodies of the lower animals after death. And under the guise of high teachings regarding Reincarnation, many promulgate theories holding that the soul of man is bound to the wheel of human rebirth, and must live in body after body—whether it will or not—until certain great cycles are past, when the race moves on to another planet. All of these misconceptions, however, are based upon the real truth—they are the truth, but not the *whole* truth. It is true that the soul of a brutal, selfish, bestial man, after death, will be drawn *by the force of its own desires* toward rebirth in the body of some of the lower and more beast-like races of man—it has failed in its class-work, and has been sent back to a lower grade. But the soul that has once reached the stage of even primitive Manhood, never can sink back into the plane of lower animal-life. As bestial as it may be, it still has acquired something that the animal lacks, and that

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something it can never lose. And likewise, although the race—as a race—must wait until certain periods are reached before it may move onward, yet the individual who has risen beyond the need of immediate rebirth, is not compelled to reincarnate as a man of the present stage of development, but may wait until the race “catches up” to him, as it were, when he may join it in its upward swing, the intervening period being spent either in the higher planes of the Astral World or in *conscious* temporary sojourn in other material spheres, helping in the great work of the evolution of all Life.

And, so far from the spiritually awakened Man being compelled to suffer continuous involuntary rebirths, he is not reborn except with his own consent and desire, and with a continuance of consciousness—this continuance of consciousness depending upon the spiritual attainment reached. Many who read these lines are partially conscious of their past existences in the flesh, and their attraction to this subject is due to that semi-consciousness and recognition of the truth. Others, now in the flesh, have varying degrees of consciousness, reaching, in some cases, a full recollection of their past lives. And, rest assured, dear student, that when you reach a certain stage of spiritual awakening (and you may have reached it even now) you will have left behind you unconscious rebirth, and, after you have passed out of your present body—and after a period of spiritual rest—you will not be reborn, until you are ready and willing, and you will then carry with you a continuous recollection of all that you choose to carry with you into your new life. So cease this fretting about forced rebirth, and stop worrying about your fancied loss of consciousness in future lives. Spiritual attainment is slow and arduous, but every inch gained is so much further on, and you can never slip back, nor lose the slightest part of what you’ve gained.

Even those who are reborn, unconsciously, as are the majority of the race, are not actually reborn against their will or desire. On the contrary, they are reborn *because* they desire

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it—because their tastes and desires create longings that only renewed life in the flesh can satisfy, and, although they are not fully conscious of it, they place themselves again within the operation of the Law of Attraction, and are swept on to a rebirth, in just the surroundings best calculated to enable them to exhaust their desires, and satisfy their longings—these desires and longings thus dying a natural death, and making way for higher ones. So long as people earnestly desire material things—the things of the flesh and the material life, and are not able to divorce themselves from such things at will—just so long will they be drawn toward rebirth that these desires may be gratified or satisfied. But when one has, by experience in many lives, learned to see things as they are, and to recognize that such things are not a part of his real nature, then the earnest desire grows less and finally dies, and that person escapes from the operation of the Law of Attraction, and need not undergo rebirth until some higher desire or aspiration is appealed to, as the evolution of the race brings new eras and peoples. It is as if one were to soar away up above the atmosphere of the earth—beyond the sphere of the earth's attraction—and would then wait until the earth revolved beneath him and he saw, far below, the spot which he wished to visit, when all he would have to do would be to allow himself to sink until the force of gravity exerted by the earth would draw him to the desired place.

The idea of compulsory rebirth is horrible to the mind of the average man, and rightly so, for it violates his intuitive sense of the justice and truth of this great law of Life. We are here because we wished to be—in obedience to the Law of Attraction, operating in accordance with our desires and aspiration—yes, often, longings—after our departure from our last fleshly tenement, and the period of rest which always follows a life. And we will never be anywhere else, or in any other life, unless by reason of that same law, called into effect in the same manner. It is quite true, that the period between lives gives us an opportunity to receive the higher knowledge of the

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Spirit more clearly than when disturbed by material things, but even with this additional aid, our desires are often sufficiently strong to cause us to reject the gentle promptings of the Spirit, as to what is best for us (just as we do in our everyday lives) and we allow ourselves to be caught up in the current of desire, and are swept onward toward rebirth in such conditions as to allow us to manifest and express those desires and longings. Sometimes, the Spirit's voice influences us to a degree, and we are born in conditions representing a compromise between the Spirit's teaching and the grosser desires, and the result is often a life torn with conflicting desires and restless longings—but all this is a promise of better conditions in the future.

When one has developed so far as to be open to the influence of the Spiritual Mind in his physical life, he may rest assured that his next choice of rebirth will be made with the full approval and wisdom of that higher part of his mind, and the old mistakes will be obviated.

As a general statement of truth, we may say that those who actually *feel* within them that consciousness of having always existed and of being intended for an endless existence, need fear nothing on the score of future unconscious rebirths. They have reached the stage of consciousness in which, henceforth, they will be aware of the whole process of the future incarnations, and will make the change (if they wish to) just as one changes his place of residence, or travels from one country to another. They are “delivered” from the necessity of the unconscious rebirth, from blind desire, which has been their portion in the past, and which is the lot of the majority of the race.

And now after this long preamble, let us see what Spiritual Evolution, as taught by the Yogis, really means.

The Yogi Philosophy teaches that Man has always lived and always will live. That that which we call Death is but a falling to sleep to awaken the following morning. That Death is but a temporary loss of consciousness. That life is continuous, and that its object is development, growth, unfoldment. That we

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are in Eternity Now as much as we ever can be. That the Soul is the Real Man, and not merely an appendage or attachment to his physical body, as many seem to regard it. That the Soul may exist equally well out of the body as in it, although certain experience and knowledge may be obtained only by reason of a physical existence—hence that existence. That we have bodies now, just because we need them—when we have progressed beyond a certain point, we will not need the kind of bodies we have now, and will be relieved of them. That on the grosser planes of life far more material bodies than ours were occupied by the soul—that on higher planes the soul will occupy finer bodies. That as we live out the experiences of one earth life, we pass out of the body into a state of rest, and after that are reborn into bodies, and into conditions, in accordance with our needs and desires. That the real Life is really a succession of lives—of rebirths, and that our present life is merely one of a countless number of previous lives, our present self being the result of the experiences gained in our previous existences.

The Yogi Philosophy teaches that the Soul has existed for ages, working its way up through innumerable forms, from lower to higher,—always progressing, always unfolding. That it will continue to develop and unfold, through countless ages, in many forms and phases, but always higher and higher. The Universe is great and large, and there are countless worlds and spheres for its inhabitants, and we shall not be bound to earth one moment after we are fitted to move on to higher spheres and planes. The Yogis teach that while the majority of the race are in the unconscious stage of Spiritual Evolution, still there are many awakening to the truth, and developing a spiritual consciousness of the real nature and future of Man, and that these spiritually awakened people will never again have to go through the chain of continued unconscious rebirth, but that their future development will be on a conscious plane, and that they will enjoy to the full the constant progression and development, instead of being mere pawns on the chessboard

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of Life. The Yogis teach that there are many forms of life, much lower than Man—so much lower that we cannot conceive of them. And that there are degrees of life so far above our present plane of development that our minds cannot grasp the idea. Those souls who have traveled over the Path which we are now treading—our Elder Brothers—are constantly giving us their aid and encouragement, and are often extending to us the helping hand—although we recognize it not. There are in existence, on planes beyond our own, intelligences which were once men as are we, but who have now progressed so far in the scale that compared with us they are angels and archangels—and we shall be like unto them sometime.

The Yogi Philosophy teaches that YOU who are reading these lines, have lived many, many lives. You have lived in the lower forms of life, working your way up gradually in the scale. After you passed into the human phase of existence you lived as the caveman, the cliff dweller, the savage, the barbarian; the warrior, the knight; the priest; the scholar of the Middle Ages;—now in Europe; now in India; now in Persia; now in the East; now in the West. In all ages,—in all climes—among all peoples—of all races—have you lived, had your existence, played your part, and died. In each life have you gained experiences; learned your lessons; profited by your mistakes; grown, developed and unfolded. And when you passed out of the body, and entered into the period of rest between incarnations, your memory of the past life gradually faded away, but left in its place the result of the experiences you had gained in it. Just as you may not remember much about a certain day, or week, twenty years ago, still the experiences of that day or week have left indelible traces upon your character, and have influenced your every action since—so while you may have forgotten the details of your previous existences, still have they left their impress upon your soul, and your everyday life now is just what it is by reason of those past experiences.

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After each life there is sort of a boiling down of the experiences, and the result—the real result of the experience—goes to make up a part of the new self—the improved self—which will after a while seek a new body into which to reincarnate. But with many of us there is not a total loss of memory of past lives—as we progress we bring with us a little more of consciousness each time—and many of us to-day have occasional glimpses of remembrance of some past existence. We see a scene for the first time, and it seems wonderfully familiar, and yet we cannot have seen it before. There is sort of a haunting memory which disturbs. We may see a painting—some old masterpiece—and we feel instinctively as if we had gazed upon it away in the dim past, and yet we have never been near it before. We read some old book, and it seems like an old friend, and yet we have no recollection of ever having seen it in our present life. We hear some philosophical theory, and we immediately “take to it,” as if it were something known and loved in our childhood. Some of us learn certain things as if we were relearning them—and indeed such is the case. Children are born and develop into great musicians, artists, writers or artisans, from early childhood, even though their parents possessed no talents of the kind. Shakespeares spring from the families whose members possess no talents, and astonish the world. Abraham Lincolns come from similar walks of life, and when responsibility is placed upon them show the greatest genius. These and many similar things can be explained only upon the theory of previous existence. We meet people for the first time, and the conviction is borne upon us, irresistibly, in spite of our protests, that we have known them before—that they have been something to us in the past, but when, oh! when?

Certain studies come quite easy to us, while others have to be mastered by hard labor. Certain occupations seem the most congenial to us, and no matter how many obstacles are placed in the way, we still work our way to the congenial work. We are confronted with some unforeseen obstacle, or circumstances

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call for the display of unusual power or qualities on our part, and lo! we find that we have the ability to perform the task. Some of the greatest writers and orators have discovered their talents "by accident." All of these things are explained by the theory of Spiritual Evolution. If heredity is everything, how does it happen that several children of the same parents differ so widely from each other, from their parents, and from the relations on both sides of the house? Is it all heredity or reversion? Then pray tell us from whom did Shakespeare inherit—to whom did he revert?

Argument after argument might be piled up to prove the reasonableness of rebirth, but what would it avail? Man might grasp it intellectually and admit that it was a reasonable working hypothesis, but what intellectual conception ever gave peace to the soul—gave it that sense of reality and truth that would enable it to go down in the valley of the shadow of death without faltering—with a smile on its face? No! such certainty comes only from the light which the Spiritual Mind sheds upon the lower mental faculties. The intellect may arrange the facts, and deduce a course of action from them, but the soul is satisfied only with the teachings of the Spirit, and until it receives them must feel that unrest and uncertainty that comes when the intellect unfolds and asks that mighty question "Why?" which it by itself cannot answer.

The only answer to the query "Is re-birth a fact," is "Does your soul recognize it as such?" Until the soul feels of itself that the theory is true—because it coincides with that inner conviction, there is no use in arguing the matter. The soul must recognize it for itself—must answer its own question. It is true that the presentation of the theory (we call it a "theory" although the Yogis know it is a *fact*) will awaken memories in the mind of some—may give them the courage to consider as reasonable the half-formed thoughts and queries which had floated around in their minds for years—but that is all it can do. Until the soul grasps and "feels" the truth of rebirth, it must wander around

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working on the subconscious plane of life, having rebirth forced upon it by its own desires and longings, losing consciousness to a great extent. But after the soul has begun to “feel” the truth, it is never the same—it carries with it memories of the past, sometimes faint and sometimes clear—and it begins to manifest a *conscious* choice in the matter of rebirth. Just as does the plant work on the sub-conscious plane, and the animal on a semi-conscious plane—and the man on the gradually increasing planes of consciousness, so does man gradually evolve from the sub-conscious stage of rebirth, on to the semi-conscious plane, and then on and on, increasing his consciousness from time to time, until he lives on the conscious plane, both in his physical life, and during the rest period, and in the new birth. There are men among us to-day (few, it is true, but many more than most people imagine) who are fully conscious of the past existences, and who have been so since early childhood, only that their days of infancy were passed in a dreamlike state, until their physical brains were sufficiently developed to enable the soul to think clearly. In fact, many children seem to have a dim consciousness of the past, but fearing the comments of their elders, learn to stifle these bits of remembrance until they fail to evoke them.

Those who have not awakened to the truth of rebirth, cannot have it forced upon them by argument, and those who “feel” the truth of it do not need the argument. So we have not attempted to argue the matter in this short presentation of the theory. Those who are reading this lesson are attracted toward the subject by reason of interest awakened in some past life, and they really feel that there must be some truth in it, although they may not as yet have arrived at a point where they can fully assimilate it.

Many of those upon whom the truth of the proposition is borne home by their inmost feelings or fragmentary recollections evince a disinclination to fully accept it. They fear the idea of being reborn without their consent or knowledge.

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But as we have stated to them, this is a groundless fear, for, if they are really beginning to “feel” the truth of rebirth, their period of sub-conscious manifestation on that plane is passing away.

Many say that they have no desire to live again, but they really mean that they would not like to live just the same life that they have—of course not, they do not want the same experiences over again—but if there is a single thing in life that they would like; a single position they would like to fill; a single desire that they feel needs to be satisfied in order to make them happy,—then they do really want to live again to secure the missing thing. They are here because they wanted to be here—or had desires which cried for satisfaction—and they will live again in just the circumstances needed to gratify their desires or wishes, or that are likely to give them the necessary experience for higher spiritual growth.

To the student of this subject of Spiritual Evolution, a great world of interesting facts open itself. Light is thrown upon history and the progress of mankind, and a most fascinating field of research is presented. We must resist the temptation to go into this branch of the subject, as it would lead us in attractive paths which we are forbidden to take up in these elementary lessons owing to the lack of space. We may find room, however, to say a little about these matters.

The earth is one of a chain of planets, belonging to our solar system, all of which are intimately connected with the others in this great law of Spiritual Evolution. Great waves of life sweep over the chain, carrying race after race along the chain, from one planet to another. Each race stays on each planet for a certain period, and then having developed, passes on to the planet next highest in the scale of evolution, finding there conditions best suited for its development. But this progress from planet to planet is not circular—it resembles a spiral, circling round and round and yet rising higher with each curve.

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Let us suppose a soul dwelling upon any of the planets of our planetary chain, in a comparatively undeveloped state of spiritual growth—occupying a low place in the scale of evolution. The soul gains the experiences coming to it in that stage, in a number of incarnations, and then is swept away toward the next highest planet in the chain, together with the rest of its particular race, and is reincarnated there. In this new home it occupies a plane distinctly in advance of the one occupied in the last one—its entire race forming the nucleus of a new race there, some being pioneers while the others follow after. But still this advanced stage (as compared with its stage on the planet just left behind it) may be much lower in the scale of progress than other races dwelling on the same planet with it. Some of the races, lowest in the point of evolution on this earth, may have been much nearer the highest stage of development on the last planet inhabited by them, and still they have progressed greatly by the change—the highest on a lower planet perhaps being less highly developed than the lowest on one farther along the planetary chain. Many of the races that formerly inhabited the Earth, traces of whom we occasionally find, have passed on to a higher stage of development. History shows us that race after race came to the front in the earth's development—played their part upon the stage of action—and then passed on—where? The occult philosophies furnish the missing link of explanation. And our race has grown from the stone-age stage—and still further back—and will continue to progress—and will then pass on, making way for some newer race which may be even now sending out pioneers from some other planet.

This does not mean, necessarily, that each race that history tells us of has passed from the earth. On the contrary, occultists know that some, and in fact most of the races known to history, have incarnated in some of the races today. The confusion is explained by the fact that each race has several sub-races, which really belong to the main race. For instance, occultists

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know that the ancient Egyptians—the Romans—the Greeks—the Atlanteans—the ancient Persians, etc., etc., are now living on this earth—that is the souls which formerly incarnated in these races, are now incarnated in some of the modern races. But there are other races—prehistoric races—which have passed away from the earth's attraction entirely, and have gone on to the higher planes of action in the higher planets. There are a number of planets lower in the scale of progress than our earth, and there are several higher, toward which we are moving. There are of course, other solar systems—other chains of suns—other sub-Universes (if we may be pardoned for using the term), and all this is ahead of every soul, no matter how lowly or how humble.

Our race, at present, is going through a most important period of evolution. It is passing from the unconscious stage of spiritual development, into the conscious stage. Many have already attained their conscious stage, and many more are awakening to it. The whole race will ultimately have it, this being precedent to their moving on. This gradual awakening to spiritual consciousness, is what is causing all this unrest in the world of thought—this breaking away from old ideals and forms—this hunger for the truth—this running to and fro after new truths, and old truths restated. It is a critical period in the history of the race, and many hold that it implies a possible division of the race into two sub-races, one of whom will be possessed of spiritual consciousness, and will move on ahead of the remaining sub-race of slower brothers, who must work up by degrees. But the race will again be united, before it finally passes on from the earth, as it is bound together by the Law of Spiritual Cause and Effect. We are all interested in each other's progress—not only because we are brothers but because our own soul must wait until the whole race develops. Of course the more rapidly developed soul does not have to be reincarnated simply because its slower brother has to do so. On the contrary the highly developed soul spends a long

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period of waiting on the higher planes of the Astral World while its slower brother works out his evolution in repeated births, the sojourn in the higher planes giving the developed soul great happiness and benefit, as explained in other lessons. Many of these “waiting souls,” however, choose to sacrifice their well-earned rest, by coming back to earth to help and uplift their brethren, either in the form of Astral Helpers, or even by a deliberate and conscious re-birth (which is not needed for their development) they deliberately taking on the body of flesh, with all its burdens, in order to assist their weaker brothers toward the goal. The great teachers of the races, have been largely composed of these self-sacrificing souls, who voluntarily “renounced heaven” for the love of their fellow man. It is very hard to imagine what a great sacrifice this is—this coming back to a comparatively low developed civilization, from a high plane of spiritual development. It is like Emerson doing missionary work among the Bushmen.

Toward what goal is all this evolution tending? What does it all mean? From the low forms of life, to the highest—all are on The Path. To what place or state does The Path lead? Let us attempt to answer by asking you to imagine a series of millions of circles one within the other. Each circle means a stage of life. The outer circles are filled with life in its lowest and most material stages—each circle nearer the center holding higher and higher forms—until men (or what were men) become as gods. Still on, and on, does the form of life grow higher, until the human mind cannot grasp the idea. And what is in the center? The brain of the entire Spiritual Body—The Absolute—God!

And we are traveling toward that center!

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THE THIRTEENTH LESSON.

SPIRITUAL CAUSE AND EFFECT.

LIFE IS the constant accumulation of knowledge—the storing up of the result of experiences. The law of cause and effect is in constant operation, and we reap what we sow—not as a matter of punishment, but as the effect following the cause. Theology teaches us that we are punished *for* our sins, but the higher knowledge shows us that we are punished *by* our mistakes instead of *for* them. The child who touches the hot stove is punished by reason of the act itself, not by some higher power *for* having “sinned.” Sin is largely a matter of ignorance and mistake. Those who have reached the higher plane of spiritual knowledge have borne upon them such a convincing knowledge of the folly and unwisdom of certain acts and thoughts, that it becomes almost impossible for them to commit them. Such persons do not fear there is some superior being waiting to strike them to the earth with a mighty club for doing certain things, simply because that intelligence has laid down an apparently arbitrary law forbidding the commission of the act. On the contrary they know that the higher intelligences are possessed of nothing but intense love for all living creatures, and are willing and ready to always help them, so far as is possible under the workings of the law. But such

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persons recognize the folly of the act, and therefore refrain from committing it—in fact, they have lost the desire to commit it. It is almost exactly parallel to the example of the child and the stove. A child who wants to touch the stove will do so as soon as he finds an opportunity, notwithstanding the commands of the parent, and in spite of threatened punishment. But let that child once experience the pain of the burn, and recognize that there is a close connection between a hot stove and a burnt finger, and it will keep away from the stove. The loving parent would like to protect its child from the result of its own follies, but the child-nature insists upon learning certain things by experience, and the parent is unable to prevent it. In fact, the child who is too closely watched and restrained, usually “breaks out” later in life, and learns certain things by itself. All that the parent is able to do is to surround the child with the ordinary safeguards, and to give it the benefit of his wisdom, a portion of which the child will store away—and then trust to the law of life to work out the result.

And so the human soul is constantly applying the test of experience to all phases of life—passing from one incarnation to another, constantly learning new lessons, and gaining new wisdom. Sooner or later it finds out how hurtful certain courses of action are—discovers the folly of certain actions and ways of living, and like the burnt child avoids those things in the future. All of us know that certain things “are no temptation to us,” for we have learned the lesson at some time in some past life and do not need to re-learn it—while other things tempt us sorely, and we suffer much pain by reason thereof. Of what use would all this pain and sorrow be if this one life were all? But we carry the benefit of our experience into another life, and avoid the pain there. We may look around us and wonder why certain of our acquaintances cannot see the folly of certain forms of action, when it is so plain to us—but we forget that we have passed through just the same stage of experience that they are now undergoing, and have outlived the desire and ignorance—

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we do not realize that in future lives these people will be free from this folly and pain, for they will have learned the lesson by experience, just as have we.

It is hard for us to fully realize that we are what we are just by the result of our experiences. Let us take one single life as an example. You think that you would like to eliminate from your life some painful experience, some disgraceful episode; some mortifying circumstances; but have you ever stopped to think that if it were possible to eradicate these things, you would, of necessity, be forced to part with the experience and knowledge that has come to you from these occurrences. Would you be willing to part with the knowledge and experience that has come to you in the way mentioned? Would you be willing to go back to the state of inexperience and ignorance in which you were before the thing happened? Why, if you were to go back to the old state, you would be extremely likely to commit the same folly over again. How many of us would be willing to completely wipe out the experiences which have come to us? We are perfectly willing to forget the occurrence, but we know that we have the resulting experience built into our character, and we would not be willing to part with it, for it would be taking away a portion of our mental structure. If we were to part with experience gained through pain we would first part with one bit of ourselves, and then with another, until at last we would have nothing left except the mental shell of our former self.

But, you may say, of what use are the experiences gained in former lives, if we do not remember them—they are lost to us. But they are not lost to you—they are built into your mental structure, and nothing can ever take them away from you—they are yours forever. Your character is made up not only of your experiences in this particular life, but also of the result of your experiences in many other lives and stages of existence. You are what you are to-day by reason of these accumulated experiences—the experiences of the past lives and of the

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present one. You remember some of the things in the present life which have built up your character—but many others equally important, in the present life, you have forgotten—but the result stays with you, having been woven into your mental being. And though you may remember but little, or nothing, of your past lives, the experiences gained in them continue with you, now and forever. It is these past experiences which give you “predispositions” in certain directions—which make it very difficult for you to do certain things, and easy to do others—which cause you to “instinctively” recognize certain things as unwise or wrong, and to cause you to turn your back upon them as follies. They give you your “tastes” and inclinations, and make some ways seem better than others to you. Nothing is lost in life, and all the experiences of the past contribute to your well-being in the present—all your troubles and pains of the present will bear fruit in the future.

We do not always learn a lesson at one trial, and we are sent back to our task over and over again, until we have accomplished it. But not the slightest effort is ever lost, and if we have failed at the task in the past, it is easier for us to accomplish it to-day.

An American writer, Mr. Berry Benson, in the Century Magazine, of May, 1894, gives us a beautiful illustration of one of the features of the workings of the law of Spiritual Evolution. We reprint it, herewith:

“A little boy went to school. He was very little. All that he knew he had drawn in with his mother’s milk. His teacher (who was God) placed him in the lowest class, and gave him these lessons to learn: Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt do no hurt to any living thing. Thou shalt not steal. So the man did not kill; but he was cruel, and he stole. At the end of the day (when his beard was gray—when the night was come) his teacher (who was God) said: Thou hast learned not to kill, but the other lessons thou hast not learned. Come back tomorrow.

“On the morrow he came back a little boy. And his teacher (who was God) put him in a class a little higher, and gave him these lessons to

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learn: Thou shalt do no hurt to any living thing. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not cheat. So the man did no hurt to any living thing; but he stole and he cheated. And at the end of the day (when his beard was gray—when the night was come) his teacher (who was God) said: Thou hast learned to be merciful. But the other lessons thou hast not learned. Come back tomorrow.

“Again, on the morrow, he came back, a little boy. And his teacher (who was God) put him in a class yet a little higher, and gave him these lessons to learn: Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not cheat. Thou shalt not covet. So the man did not steal; but he cheated and he coveted. And at the end of the day (when his beard was gray—when the night was come) his teacher (who was God) said: Thou hast learned not to steal. But the other lessons thou hast not learned. Come back, my child, tomorrow.

“This is what I have read in the faces of men and women, in the book of the world, and in the scroll of the heavens, which is writ with stars.”

The great lesson to be learned by every soul, is the truth of the Oneness of All. This knowledge carries with it all the rest. It causes one to follow the precept of the Son of Mary, who said: “And thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength;” and “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” When man grows into a consciousness of the truth that All is One—that when one loves God he is loving the Whole Thing—that his neighbor is indeed himself—then he has but a few more classes to pass through before he passes into the “High School” of Spiritual Knowledge. This conviction of the Oneness of All, carries with it certain rules of action—of divine ethics—which transcend all written or spoken human laws. The Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man become a reality rather than a mere repetition of meaningless words. And this great lesson must be learned by all—and all are learning it by degrees. And this is the aim of the present stage of Spiritual Evolution—to know God as He is; to know your relationship with others—to know what

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we are. There are greater schools, colleges and universities of spiritual knowledge beyond us, but these truths are the lessons taught in the grades in which we are at present. And all this pain, and trouble and sorrow, and work, has been but to teach us these truths—but the truth once gained is seen to be well worth even the great price paid for it.

If you ask the Yogis what is one's duty toward God (meaning God in the grandest conception of Him) they will answer "Love Him, and the rest will be made clear to you—and to know him is to Love him, therefore learn to Know Him." And if you ask them what is one's duty toward his fellow-men they will answer, simply: "*Be Kind*—and you will be all the rest." These two precepts, if followed, will enable one to live the Perfect Life. They are simple, but they contain all that is worth knowing concerning one's relations with the Infinite Power and with one's fellow-men. All the rest is froth and sediment—the worthless rubbish which has accumulated around the Divine Flame of the Truth. We mention them in this place, because they sum up the idea of the consciousness which all the race is striving hard to acquire. If you are able to make them a part of yourself, you will have made great progress on the Path—will have passed the Great Examination.

The doctrine of Spiritual Cause and Effect is based upon the great truth that under the Law each man is, practically, the master of his own destiny—his own judge—his own rewarder—his own awarder of punishment. That every thought, word or action, has its effect upon the future life or lives of the man—not in the nature of a reward or punishment (as these words are generally understood)—but as the inevitable result of the great Law of cause and effect. The operation of the Law in surrounding us with certain sets of conditions in a new birth, is influenced by two great general principles: (1) The prevailing desires, aspirations, likes and dislikes, and longing of the individual at that particular stage of his existence, and (2) By the influence of the unfolding Spirit, which, pressing forward

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eagerly for fuller expression and less restraint, brings to bear upon the reincarnating soul an influence which causes it to be governed in its selection of the desirable conditions of its new birth. Upon the apparently conflicting influences of these two great forces rests the whole matter of the circumstances and conditions surrounding the rebirth of the soul, and also many of the conditions surrounding the personality in the new life—for these conditions are governed greatly all through life by these conflicting (or apparently conflicting) forces.

The urge of the desires, aspirations, and habits of the past life, is strongly pressing the soul towards incarnation in conditions best fitted for the expression and manifestation of these likes, tastes and desires—the soul wishes to go on along the line of its past life, and naturally seeks circumstances and surroundings best fitted for the freest expression of its personality. But, at the same time, the Spirit, within the soul, knows that the soul's unfoldment needs certain other conditions to bring out certain parts of its nature which have been suppressed or not developed, and so it exerts an attraction upon the reincarnating soul, drawing it a bit aside from its chosen course, and influencing that choice to a certain degree. A man may have an overpowering desire for material wealth, and the force of his desire will cause him to choose circumstances and conditions for a rebirth into a family where there is much wealth, or into a body best suited for the attainment of his desires, but the Spirit, knowing that the soul has neglected the development of kindness, will draw it a little aside, and cause it to be brought into the sweep of circumstances which will result in the man being made to suffer pain, disappointment and loss, even though he attain great wealth in his new life, to the end that he may develop that part of his nature.

We may see illustrations of this last mentioned occurrence in some of the very rich men of America. They have been born into circumstances in which they have had the freest expression of the desire for material wealth—they have

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possessed themselves of faculties best adapted to that one end, and have managed to be surrounded with circumstances best calculated to give the freest manifestations of those faculties. They have attained their heart's desire, and have piled up wealth in a manner unknown to former ages. But yet they are most unhappy and dissatisfied as a rule. Their wealth is a weight around their neck, and they are tormented by fears of losing it and the anxiety of attending to it. They feel that it has brought them no real happiness, but has on the contrary separated them from their fellow-men, and from the happiness known to those of moderate means. They are feverish and restless and constantly on the search for some new excitement which will divert their minds from the contemplation of their real condition. They feel a sense of their duty toward the race and although they do not quite understand the feeling behind it all, they endeavor to balance matters by contributing to colleges, hospitals, charities, and other similar institutions which have sprung up in response to the awakening consciousness of the race to the reality of the Brotherhood of Man and the Oneness of All. Before the end comes, they will feel in the depths of their soul that this success has not brought them real happiness, and in the period of rest which will follow their departure from the physical body, they will "take stock" of themselves, and readjust their mental and spiritual affairs, so that when they are again born they will no longer devote their entire energies toward the piling up of wealth that they cannot use, but will live a more balanced life, and will find happiness in unexpected quarters and will develop more spiritually. This is not because they have been impressed with the sense of any special "wickedness" in abnormal money getting, but because the soul has found that it did not secure happiness in that way, and is seeking elsewhere for it, and because it has lived out the desire for wealth, and has turned its attention to other things. Had the Spirit not exerted its influence, the man might have been born into the conditions tending to produce wealth, and yet not have been

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made to see the one-sidedness of such a life, in which case it would have continued to be possessed of such an abnormal desire for wealth that it would have been born again and again, with increasing power each time, until it would have become practically a money demon. But the Spirit's influence always counteracts abnormal desires, although sometimes several incarnations have to be lived through before the soul wears out its desire, and begins to be influenced by the Spirit to a marked extent. Sometimes the Spirit's influence is not sufficiently strong to prevent rebirth into conditions greatly favoring old desires, but in such cases it is often able to manage affairs during the life of the man, so as to teach him the lesson needed to call a halt upon his unbridled desires, by bringing him into the sweep of the Law of Attraction and causing certain pain to befall him—certain disappointment—certain failures—that will cause him to realize the pain, disappointment, failures and sorrow of others, and to bring upon him a course of living which will help to unfold his higher faculties. Many of the sudden strokes of "misfortune" are really brought about by this higher principle of the man, in order to teach him certain lessons for his own good. It is not necessarily a higher power which makes a man realize these lessons of life, but it is generally his own higher self—the Spirit within him—which brings about these results. The Spirit knows what is really best for the man, and when it sees his lower nature running away with him, tries to swing him from his course, or to bring him to a sudden stop if necessary. This is not as a punishment, remember, but as the greatest kindness. The Spirit is a part of that man, and not an outside power—although it is of course the Divine part of him—that part of him in nearest touch with the great overruling Intelligence which we call God. This pain is not brought about because of any feeling of righteous indignation, revenge, impatience or any similar feeling on the part of the Spirit, but is akin to the feeling of the most loving parent, who is forced to take from the hands of the little child some dangerous thing which may injure the

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little one—it is the hand which draws back the child from the brink of the precipice, although the little one screams with rage and disappointment because its desires are frustrated.

The man or woman in whom the Spiritual Mind is developed, sees this condition of things, and instead of fighting against the Spirit, yields himself or herself to it without friction, and obeys its guiding hand, and is thus saved much pain. But those who know not, rage and rebel at the restraining and guiding hand, strike at it, and attempt to tear away from it, thereby bringing upon themselves bitter experience made necessary by their rebellion. We are so apt to resent outside influence in our affairs that this idea of restraint is not pleasant to us, but if we will only remember that it is a part of *ourselves*—the higher part of us—that is doing this directing, then we may see the thing in a different light. And we must remember this: That no matter how adverse circumstances or conditions seem to be for us, they are exactly what we need under just the circumstances of our lives, and have for their only object our ultimate good. We may need strengthening along certain lines, in order to round us out—and we are apt to get just the experiences calculated to round out that particular part of us. We may be tending too much in one direction, and we are given a check and an urge in another direction. These little things—and great things all mean something. And then our interests are bound up more or less with those of others, owing to the laws of attraction, and our acts may be intended to reflect upon them, and theirs upon us, for our mutual development and ultimate good. We will have more to say on this subject a little later on.

If we will stand still, and calmly consider our past life (the present life, we mean) we will see that certain things have led to certain other things, and that small things have led to great things—that little turning points have resulted in an entire change in our life. We may trace back the most important thing in our life to some trifling incident or occurrence. We are able to look back and see how the painful experiences of the past have

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strengthened us, and have brought us to a larger and fuller life. We are able to see how that particular thing in the past, which seemed needlessly cruel and uncalled for, was the very thing which has brought us to some great thing in the present. All that is needed is the perspective of years. And if we get so that we are able to see this, we will be able to bear with a far greater degree of philosophy the pains and disagreeable occurrences of the present, knowing that they mean ultimate good. When we cease to think of these things as punishment, or a wanton interference of some outside power, or the cruelty of Nature, and begin to see them as either the consequences of our own past lives, or the result of the Spirit's directing hand, we will cease to protest and struggle as we have been doing in the past, and will endeavor to fall in with the working of the great Law, and will thereby avoid friction and pain. And no matter what pain, sorrow or trouble we may be undergoing, if we will open ourselves to the guidance of the Spirit, a way will be opened out for us—one step at a time—and if we follow it we will obtain peace and strength. The Law does not heap upon a back more than it can bear, and not only does it temper the wind to the shorn lamb, but tempers the shorn lamb to the wind.

We have spoken of our interests being bound up with those of others. This also is a principle of the law of Spiritual Cause and Effect. In our past lives we have attached ourselves to certain others, either by love or hate—either by kind action or by cruelty. And these people in this life have certain relationships to us, all tending toward mutual adjustment and mutual advancement and development. It is not a law of revenge, but simply the law of cause and effect which causes us to receive a hurt (when a hurt is needed) from the hands of some one whom we have hurt in some past life—and it is not merely a law of reward for good, but that same law of cause and effect, that causes some one to bind up our wounds and comfort us, whom we have comforted and helped in some past life. The person who is caused to hurt us, may have no intention of doing so, being

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a perfectly innocent party, but we are brought into conditions whereby we receive pain from the acts of that person, although he be unconscious of it. If he hurts us consciously, and still in obedience to the law, it is because he is still on that plane, and is willing to hurt us, and is brought by the Law of Attraction into a condition whereby we may receive hurt from him. But even that hurt is calculated to benefit us, in the end, so wonderful is this law of cause and effect constituted. Of course, if we once reach the position where we see the truth, we do not need so many of these lessons, and their necessity having passed, the law allows us to escape that which would otherwise have given us pain.

The above mentioned condition of affairs may be illustrated by the case of one who in a past incarnation deliberately won the love of another, for selfish reasons, and then having gratified the desire willfully threw aside the other one, as one would a worn-out toy. While not pretending to explain the exact working of the law in any particular case, we have been informed by those who have watched these matters from a higher point of view, that in such a case as above mentioned, the betrayer would probably in this life, fall violently in love with the person who was the victim in the last life, but the latter would be utterly unable to return that affection, and the former would suffer all the pain that comes to one who loves in vain, the result being that he would be brought to a realization of the sacredness of human affection, and the unkindness of trifling with it. It will be noticed in this case that the person causing pain in the present life is a perfectly innocent party to the whole thing and thereby does not start new causes and effects.

Those whom we have loved and have been friendly to in past lives are very apt to be connected with our present life, being kept near us by the law of attraction. The people who are brought into close relations with us are, in all probability, those with whom we have been close in past lives. Sudden likes and

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dislikes, so often observed between people, may be accounted for on this theory of rebirth, and many of the occurrences of our every day lives come under this law of spiritual cause and effect. We are constantly bound up with the lives of others, for pain or happiness, and the law must work out its course. The only escape from the complete working out of the law is the acquirement of the knowledge of the truth on our part, and the consequent modeling of our lives on the lines of this higher truth, in which case we are relieved of the unnecessary lessons, and we ride on the top of the wave, instead of having it submerge us.

Let us beware how we start into operation this law of cause and effect by Hate, Malice, Jealousy, Anger, and general Unkindness toward others. Let us be as Kind as we can, in all justice to ourselves and others, and let us avoid feelings of Hate and a desire for Revenge. Let us live on, bearing our burdens with as much grace as we can summon, and let us always trust in the guidance of the Spirit, and the help of the highest Intelligence. Let us know that all is working together for good, and that we cannot be deprived of that good. Let us remember that this life is as but a grain of sand in the desert of time, and that we have long ages ahead of us, in which we will have a chance to work out all our aspirations and high desires. Be not discouraged for God reigns, and all is well.

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THE FOURTEENTH LESSON.

THE YOGI PATH OF ATTAINMENT.

THE STUDENT who has carefully acquainted himself with the fundamental principles of the Yogi Philosophy, as set forth in these lessons, will readily see that anyone who grasps and accepts these teachings, and makes them a part of his everyday life, will naturally live a very different life from one to whom this present earth-life is all, and who believes that death extinguishes individuality, and that there is no future life or lives. It will also lead one to live his life rather differently from the person who believes that we are but creatures of a rather capricious Providence, having but little responsibility of our own, and that our “salvation” depends upon a perfunctory “belief” in certain teachings, and a set form of attendance at certain forms of religious worship. Remember, now, please, that the Yogi Philosophy has no fault to find with *any* form of religion—it teaches that *all* forms of religion are good, and each has its particular place to fill—each fills the need of humanity in some of its stages. It believes that no matter what form of worship is followed—no matter what conception of Deity is held—that every man really worships the One Great Intelligence, which we know under many names, and that the varying forms of such

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worship are immaterial, the motive behind each being the real test to be applied.

But the Yogi Philosophy, and, in fact, the teachings of all occultists, to whatever race they may belong, or what particular creed may be favored by them, hold that man is a responsible being, that he really makes his own conditions and bestows his own rewards and punishments, as a natural consequence of his acts. It also teaches that man cannot escape his own good, and that though he may slip backward a hundred times, still will he always make some little progress, and in the end will conquer his material nature, and then move steadily forward to the great goal. It teaches that we are all God's children, no matter what form of worship we may favor—that there are none of God's children destined to be utterly cut off or damned. It teaches that we are punished *by* our sins instead of *for* them, and that the law of cause and effect brings its inevitable result. It emphasizes the teachings that “as we sow so shall we reap,” and shows just how and why we reap what we have sown. It shows how our lower desires and passions will weigh us down, and surround us with environments that will cause us to outlive them, and make us so thoroughly sick and tired of them that the soul will, eventually, recoil in horror from its past life of material grossness, and in so doing will receive an impetus in the right direction. It shows us that we have the Spirit always with us, anxious and willing to give us help and guidance, and that, through the Spirit, we are always in close connection with the source of all life and power.

Men are of varying temperaments, and the course that will best suit one will not be adapted to the requirements of another. One will seek progress and development in one direction, and another in a different way, and a third by a still different course. The Yogi Philosophy teaches that the way that seems to appeal the most to a man's general temperament and disposition is the one best adapted to his use at the present time. They divide the Path of Attainment into three paths leading up to the great

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main road. They call these three paths, (1) Raja Yoga; (2) Karma Yoga; (3) Gnani Yoga; each of these forms of Yoga being a path leading to the Great Road, and each being traveled by those who may prefer it—but all lead to the same place. In this lesson we will give a brief description of each of the three paths, which together are known to the Yogis as “The Threefold Path.”

Some of the teachers treat what is known as “Bhakti Yoga” as if it were a separate path, but we prefer thinking of it as being an incident of each of the three paths, as “Bhakti Yoga” is really what we might call the “religious” form of Yoga, teaching the love and worship of God, according to how he appears to us through the colored glasses of our own particular creed. We fail to see how one may follow any of the several Yoga paths without being filled with love and reverence for the great Centre of all Life—the Absolute—God—by whatever name we know it. The term “Bhakti Yoga” really means the “way of devotion.” Let us trust that all our students, no matter which of the three paths they may elect to follow, will carry with them the devotion inculcated in the “Bhakti Yoga” of the particular religious body with which they are affiliated, and not feel that the “Threefold Path” calls for their renouncing that which has been dear to them from childhood. On the contrary, we think that a careful study of the Yogi Philosophy will awaken a new interest in religion, and cause many to understand much that they formerly but blindly “believed,” and will cause them to develop a deeper religious spirit, rather than a lesser one.

“Raja Yoga” is devoted to the development of the latent powers in Man—the gaining of the control of the mental faculties by the Will—the attainment of the mastery of the lower self—the development of the mind to the end that the soul may be aided in its unfoldment. It teaches as its first step the care and control of the body, as taught in “Hatha Yoga,” holding that the body should be rendered an efficient instrument, and under good control, before the best results may be attained along mental and psychic lines. Much that the Western World

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has been attracted to in late years under the name of "Mental Science" and similar terms, really comes under the head of "Raja Yoga." This form of Yoga recognizes the wonderful power of the trained mind and will, and the marvelous results that may be gained by the training of the same, and its application by concentration, and intelligent direction. It teaches that not only may the mind be directed outward, influencing outside objects and things, but that it may also be turned inward, and concentrated upon the particular subject before us, to the end that much hidden knowledge may be unfolded and uncovered. Many of the great inventors are really practicing "Raja Yoga" unconsciously, in this inward application of it, while many leaders in the world of affairs are making use of its outward, concentrated application in their management of affairs.

But the follower of the "Raja Yoga" path is not content alone with the attainment of powers for either of the above uses. He seeks still greater heights, and manages by the same, or similar processes, to turn the searchlight of concentrated mind into his own nature, thus bringing to light many hidden secrets of the soul. Much of the Yogi Philosophy has really been brought to light in this way. The practice of "Raja Yoga" is eminently practical, and is in the nature of the study and practice of chemistry—it proves itself as the student takes each step. It does not deal in vague theories, but teaches experiments and facts from first to last. We hope to be able to give to our students, in the near future, a practical work on the subject of "Hatha Yoga," for which work there seems to be a great need in the Western world, which seems to be waiting to be told "how" to do those things which have been stated to be possible by numerous writers who had grasped the theory but had not acquainted themselves with the practice accompanying the theory.

"Karma Yoga" is the "Yoga" of Work. It is the path followed by those who delight in their work—who take a keen interest in "doing things" with head or hand—those who believe in

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work “for work’s sake.” “Karma” is the Sanscrit word applied to the “Law of Spiritual Cause and Effect,” of which we have spoken in a preceding lesson. “Karma Yoga” teaches how one may go through life working—and taking an interest in action—without being influenced by selfish consideration, which might create a fresh chain of cause and effect which would bind him to objects and things, and thus retard his spiritual progress. It teaches “work for work’s sake” rather than from a desire for results. Strange as this may seem to many of our Western readers, it is a fact that many of the men of the Western world who have accomplished much, have really been possessed of this idea, without realizing it and have really worked for the joy of the action and creative effort, and have really cared but little for the fruit of their labors. Some of them say that they “have worked because they could not help it,” rather than from the mere desire for material gain. The follower of “Karma Yoga,” seems to himself, at times, as if he were not the real worker, but that his mind and body were doing the work, and he,—himself—were standing off and watching himself work or act. There are lower and higher phases of “Karma Yoga”, which cannot be explained here, as each branch of Yoga is a great subject in itself.

“Gnani Yoga” is the “Yoga” of Wisdom. It is followed by those of a scientific, intellectual type, who are desirous of reasoning out, proving, experimenting, and classifying the occult knowledge. It is the path of the scholar. Its follower is strongly attracted toward metaphysics. Examples of the idea of “Gnani Yogi”—apparently widely differing examples—are to be seen in the great philosophers of ancient and modern times, and in the other extreme, those who have a strong tendency toward metaphysical teachings. As a matter of fact, nearly all students of the Yogi Philosophy are more or less attracted to “Gnani Yoga”, even though they be said to be following one of the other of the three paths. These lessons, for instance, are a part of the “Gnani Yoga” work, although they are combined with other forms of Yoga. Many Yogis combine in themselves the

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attributes of the followers of several forms of Yoga, although their natural tendencies cause them to favor one of the paths more than the others.

Of the three forms of Yoga, the second, or “Karma Yoga” is perhaps the easiest one to follow, for the student. It requires less study, and less practice—less of the research of “Gnani Yoga”, and less of the training of “Raja Yoga.” The Karma Yogi simply tries to lead a good life, doing his work to the best of his ability, without being carried away with the hope of reward—he grows into a realization of the truth regarding his nature, and is content to gradually unfold, like a rose, from life to life, until he reaches a high stage of attainment. He does not long for unusual powers, and consequently does not endeavor to develop them. He does not long for the solution of the great problems of nature and life, but is content to live on, one day at a time, knowing and trusting that all will be well with him—and it will. Many of the “New Thought” people of America, are really Karma Yogis. The Raja Yogi, on the contrary, feels a desire to develop his latent powers and to make researches into his own mind. He wishes to manifest hidden powers and faculties, and feels a keen longing to experiment along these lines. He is intensely interested in psychology and “psychic phenomena”, and all occult phenomena and teachings along similar lines. He is able to accomplish much by determined effort, and often manifests wonderful results by means of the concentrated will and mind. The Gnani Yogi’s chief pleasure consists in metaphysical reasoning, or subtle intellectual research. He is the philosopher; scholar; preacher; teacher; student; and often goes to extreme lengths in following his favorite line of work, losing sight of the other sides of the subject.

The man best calculated to make general advancement along occult lines is the one who avoids running to extremes in any one of the branches of the subject, but who, while in the main following his own inclinations toward certain forms of “Yoga”, still keeps up a general acquaintance with the several phases of

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the great philosophy. In the end, man must develop on all his many sides, and why not keep in touch with all sides while we journey along. By following this course we avoid one-sidedness; fanaticism; narrowness; short-sightedness, and bigotry.

Yogi students may be divided into three general classes: (1) Those who have made considerable progress along the same lines, in past incarnations, and who have awakened to consciousness in the present life with the strongest tendencies toward occultism and similar subjects. These people learn rapidly and are conscious of the fact that they are but relearning some lesson learned in the past. They grasp occult truths intuitively and find in such studies food for the hunger of the soul. These souls are, of course, in various stages of development. Some have but an elementary acquaintance with the subject, their knowledge in the past incarnation having been but slight; others have progressed further, and are able to go much further in their present work than those who are less developed; still others are quite highly developed, and lack but little of having reached the "conscious" stage of incarnation, that is, the state of being able to awaken to a conscious knowledge of past lives. The last mentioned sub-class are apt to be regarded as "queer" by their associates, particularly in early life—they appear "old" and "strange" to their companions. They feel as if they were strangers in a strange land, but sooner or later are sure to be brought into contact with others, or made acquainted with teachings, which will enable them to take up their studies again.

(2) Those who awaken to a conscious knowledge, to a greater or lesser degree, of their past lives, and what they have learned there. Such people are comparatively rare, and yet there are far more of them than is generally supposed, for these people are not apt to bestow their confidence upon chance acquaintances, and generally regard their knowledge and memory of the past as something sacred. These people go through the world, sowing a little seed here, and a little there, which seed falling

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on fertile ground bears fruit in the future incarnations of those who receive them.

(3) Those who have heard some occult truths in past incarnations—some words of wisdom, knowledge or advice dropped by some of those who have advanced further along the path. In their mental soil, if rich, they let these seed-thoughts sink deep into them, and in the next life the plant appears. These people are possessed of an unrest, which makes them dissatisfied with the current explanations of things, and which causes them to search here and there for the truth, which they intuitively know is to be found somewhere. They are often led to run after false prophets, and from one teacher to another, gaining a little truth here, having an error corrected there. Sooner or later they find an anchorage, and in their rest they lay up stores of knowledge, which (after being digested in the period of soul-rest in the Astral World) will be of great value to them in their next incarnation.

It will be readily recognized that it is practically impossible to give detailed directions suited for the varying needs of these different students. All that can be done (outside of personal instruction from some competent teacher) is to give words of general advice and encouragement. But do not let this discourage you. Remember this—*it is a great occult truth*—when the student is ready the teacher appears—the way will be opened to you step by step, and as each new spiritual need comes into existence, the means to satisfy it will be on the way. It may come from without—it may come from within—but come it *will*. Do not let discouragement creep over you because you seem to be surrounded by the most unfavorable environments, with no one near to whom you can talk of these great truths that are unfolding before your mental vision. This isolation is probably just what you need in order to make you self-reliant and to cure you of that desire to lean upon some other soul. We have these lessons to learn—and many others—and the way that seems hardest for us to travel is very often

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the one laid out for us, in order that we may learn the needed lesson well and “for good.”

It follows that one who has grasped the fundamental ideas of this philosophy will begin to find Fear dropping from him—for when he realizes just what he is, how can he fear? There being nothing that is able to really hurt him, why should he fear? Worry, of course, follows after Fear, and when Fear goes, many other minor mental faults follow after it. Envy, Jealousy and Hate—Malice, Uncharitableness and Condemnation—cannot exist in the mind of one who “understands”. Faith and Trust in the Spirit, and that from which the Spirit comes, must be manifest to the awakened soul. Such a one naturally recognizes the Spirit’s guidance, and unhesitatingly follows it, with fear—without doubt. Such a one cannot help being Kind—to him the outside world of people seem to be as little children (many of them like babes unborn) and he deals with them charitably, not condemning them in his heart, for he knows them for what they are. Such a one performs the work which is set before him, knowing that such work, be it humble or exalted, has been brought to him by his own acts and desires, or his needs—and that it is all right in any event, and is but the stepping-stone to greater things. Such a one does not fear Life—does not fear Death—both seem as but differing manifestations of the same thing—one as good as the other.

The student who expects to make progress, must make his philosophy a part of his every day life. He must carry it around with him always. This does not mean that he should thrust his views and opinions upon others—in fact, that is expressly contrary to occult teachings, for no one has the right to force opinions upon others, and it is contrary to natural growth and freedom of the individual soul. But the student should be able to carry with him an abiding sense of the reality and truth of his philosophy. He need not be afraid to take it with him *anywhere*, for it fits into all phases of life. If one cannot take it with him to work, something is wrong with either the philosophy or the

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work, or the individual. And it will help us to work better—to do more earnest work—for we know that the work is necessary for the development of some part of us—otherwise it would not be set before us—and no matter how disagreeable the task, we may be able to sing with joy when we realize just what we are and what great things are before us. The slave chained to the galley—if he have peace in his soul and the knowledge in his mind—is far less to be pitied than the king on his throne who lacks these things. We must not shirk our tasks, not run away from our destiny—for we cannot really get rid of them except by performing them. And these very disagreeable things are really strengthening our character, if we are learning our lesson aright. And then, remember “even these things shall pass away.”

One of the greatest hindrances to the progress of the student into the higher stages of occultism, particularly the phenomenal phases, is the lack of self-control. When one wishes to be placed in possession of power, which, if carelessly used or misused, may result in the hurt of oneself or others, it is the greatest importance that such a one should have attained the mastery of self—the control of the emotional side of his nature. Imagine a man possessed of high occult powers losing his temper and flying into a rage, sending forth vibrations of Hate and Anger intensified by the increased force of his developed powers. Such exhibitions, in a man who has attained occult powers, would be very harmful to him, as they would, perhaps, be manifested upon a plane where such things have an exaggerated effect. A man whose investigations lead him on to the Astral Plane, should beware of such a loss of self-control, as a failing of this kind might be fatal to him. But, so nicely is the world of the higher forces balanced that a man of violent temper, or one who lacks self-control, can make but little progress in occult practices—this being a needed check. So one of the first things to be accomplished by the student who wishes to advance is the mastery of his emotional nature and the acquirement of self-control.

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A certain amount of courage of the higher sort is also needed, for one experiences some strange sights and happenings on the astral plane, and those who wish to travel there must have learned to master fear. One also needs calmness and poise. When we remember that worry and kindred emotions cause vibrations around us, it may readily be seen that such conditions of mind are not conducive to psychical research—in fact the best results cannot be obtained when these things are present.

The occultist who wishes to attain great powers must first purge himself of selfish grasping for these things for the gratification of his own base ends, for the pursuit of occult powers with this desire will bring only pain and disappointment and the one who attempts to prostitute psychic power for base ends will bring upon himself a whirlwind of undesirable results. Such forces, when misused, react as a boomerang upon the sender. The true occultist is filled with love and brotherly feeling for his fellow men, and endeavors to aid them instead of to beat them down in their progress.

Of all the numerous books written for the purpose of throwing light on the path of the student of occultism, we know of none better fitted for the purpose than that wonderful little book called "Light on the Path", written down by "M. C.", at the instigation of some intelligences far above the ordinary. It is veiled in the poetic style common to the Orientals, and at first glance may seem paradoxical. But it is full of the choicest bits of occult wisdom, for those who are able to read it. It must be read "between the lines", and it has a peculiarity that will become apparent to anyone who may read it carefully. That is, it will give you as much truth as you are able to grasp to-day; and tomorrow when you pick it up it will give you more, from the same lines. Look at it a year from now, and new truths will burst upon you—and so on, and on. It contains statements of truth so wonderfully stated—and yet half-concealed—that as you advance in spiritual discernment—and are ready for greater

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truths each day—you will find that in this book veil after veil will be lifted from before the truth, until you are fairly dazzled. It is also remarkable as a book which will give consolation to those in trouble or sorrow. Its words (even though they be but half-understood) will ring in the ears of its readers, and like a beautiful melody will soothe and comfort and rest those who hear it. We advise all of our students to read this little book often and with care. They will find that it will describe various spiritual experiences through which they will pass, and will prepare them for the next stage. Many of our students have asked us to write a little book in the way of an elementary explanation of “Light on the Path”—perhaps the Spirit may lead us to do so at some time in the future—perhaps not.

It is not without a feeling of something like sadness that we write these concluding lines. When we wrote our First Lesson, we bade our students be seated for a course of talks—plain and simple—upon a great subject. Our aim was to present these great truths in a plain, practical simple manner, so that many would take an interest in them, and be led toward higher presentations of the truth. We have felt that love and encouragement, which is so necessary for a teacher, and have been assured of the sympathy of the Class from the first. But, on looking over our work it seems that we have said so little—have left unsaid so much—and yet we have done the best we could, considering the small space at our disposal and the immense field to be covered. We feel that we have really only begun, and yet it is now time to say “good-bye”. Perhaps we have made some points a little clear to a few who have been perplexed—perhaps we have opened a door to those who were seeking entrance to the temple—who knows? If we have done even a little for only one person, our time has been well spent.

At some future time we may feel called upon to pass on to you a higher and more advanced presentation of this great subject—that is a matter which depends much upon your own desires—if you need us you will find us ready and willing to

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join you in the study of the great truths of the Yogi Philosophy. But, before you take the next step onward, be sure that you understand these elementary lessons thoroughly. Go over and over them, until your mind has fully grasped the principles. You will find new features presenting themselves with each reading. As your minds unfold, you will find new truths awaiting you even in the same pages that you have read and re-read several times. This, not because of any special merit in our work (for this work is crude, very crude, to our idea), but because of the inherent truth of the philosophy itself, which renders any thing written upon it to be filled with subject for thought and earnest consideration.

Good-bye dear students. We thank you for your kindness in listening to us during the term of this Class. We have felt your sympathy and love, as many of you must have felt ours. We feel sure that as you read these lines—filled with our earnest thoughts of kinship to you—you will feel our nearness to you in the Spirit—will be conscious of that warm hand-clasp which we extend to you across the miles that separate us in the flesh.

Remember these words, from "Light on the Path": "When the disciple is ready to learn, then he is accepted, acknowledged, recognized. It must be so, for he has lit his lamp and it cannot be hidden."

Therefore, we say "Peace be with You."

CLASS NOTES.

Since sending out our "Special Notice" in August, we have received kindly letters from hundreds of our friends and students, asking us about the continuance of our work. Many suggestions were offered, a number of which have been adopted. We thank all of our friends for their kind wishes and sympathy. We were undecided about continuing the work for another year, as it meant much work and expense, and the prices which we have been charging for our books, etc., left but a very small margin after the printers' bills and postage had been paid. But

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we have received so many requests to continue, that we do not see how we can escape, and we have determined to again place our shoulder to the wheel, and help to push along the load.

We have determined to publish the remainder of the set of "Yogi Books," beginning with "Raja Yoga," upon which we have begun work, and which will be followed by books taking up the main features of each branch of Yoga, as outlined in our Fourteenth Lesson. "Raja Yoga" will deal with the psychic and mental planes of the Yogi Philosophy, and will go into the side of the subject that; deals with psychic phenomena—thought power—personal magnetism—thought-transference—concentration—"mental science"—development of the sub-conscious power—and similar subjects. It will be, to many, the most interesting book of the series. We cannot promise it at any special time, but the work of preparing it will go ahead steadily (now that we have finally determined to push the work vigorously) and it will be announced in due time—probably before the Winter months reach us. Don't trouble to ask us just when we expect to publish it—you will be notified in plenty of time.



We call your attention to an announcement (on another page) of our new "Advanced Course" lessons. This will be one of our most important works, and will be on a higher plane than our 1904 Lessons, and is intended to lead the students of the latter course still further along the path. We ask all to read carefully what we have to say on the subject.



In addition to the principal books of the Yogi series, we will from time to time issue smaller books on subjects touching upon points of the Yogi Philosophy and Oriental Occultism, such as "Psychic Healing"—"Regeneration" or Conservation of the Life Energy, etc. We may also, before very long, publish a little book explaining the doctrine laid down in "Light on the Path"—that wonderful little manual of occult teaching. Many

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of our students have asked for some teaching for beginners, which would explain the “hard things,” and “dark sayings” of the little manual. While we have no idea of attempting to add to the wisdom conveyed in that little book, we may be able to throw some light on the parts which have puzzled beginners. We may publish a number of other books during the next twelve months, or so, but we will be governed altogether by the workings of the spirit” in the matter. If there arises a need for any special teaching, you may rest assured that it will be supplied by those best fitted for the work. This is the Law.



We call your attention to the fact that we are about to issue a limited edition of the “1904 Lessons” bound in book form. (See notice on another page.) This book will be bound in regular book form (stiff covers), the binding being Vellum de Luxe. It will make quite a large book—over 275 pages—and will present a handsome appearance. Special price to class members, only one dollar. Better order it at once, before the edition is exhausted. Do not bother about the money—pay for it when you get ready—you know our plan of doing business “on trust.”



The “Special Combination” offer for subscriptions to the Class Lessons still remains open, and Members may take subscriptions for the Lessons and the Premium Books at the Special Price—\$1.00, of which we get 50 cents, and the Class Member retains 50 cents as his or her commission. You remember the offer, do you not? To make sure we reprint the notice on another page of this booklet. The fact that the Lessons are all issued, should not interfere with the work of securing new members, as the Lessons are always as good as new, and the dollar’s worth is always a very good dollar’s worth. And the fifty cent rate to agents is just as good now as it was when it was made. It is the best dollar’s worth of books ever offered the public, and the commission offer is the most liberal of which we have any knowledge. You sell the customer \$1.85

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worth of our books, and charge him only \$1.00 for them—then you take 50 cents out of the dollar, and send us the remaining 50 cents. This leaves us by 50 cents for \$1.85 worth of goods. If you wish to realize just how cheap these books are at fifty cents, net, to us, just take the bundle around to some printer whom you know, and ask him how much it will cost to print them. You will be surprised at the result. Send for more application blanks if you need them.



We were delayed in getting our new book, "Hatha Yoga" from the press, and consequently could not get it into the mails at the time promised. Our students, however, bore with us most patiently under the circumstances, and seemed to instinctively realize just what was the trouble, the only anxiety expressed being that possibly the book had been lost in the mails. However, they are all mailed, finally, and we trust that every purchaser has received his or her copy, and is pleased with it. It makes a larger book than we had anticipated—but so much the better for those who ordered it. If any purchasers of the book have failed to receive it, we ask that we be notified, and we will make good the loss. We allow no one to lose money by dealing with us, and we request all purchasers of our publications to promptly notify us of any failure to receive what they have ordered.

ADVANCED COURSE IN OCCULTISM.

We have decided to publish a continuation of our "Yogi Lesson" work, which will lead the student on to higher planes of the subject, and which will touch upon the deeper phases of Occultism. The Class Course, just completed, was of necessity quite elementary, and was designed to acquaint the student with the fundamental principles underlying the study of the occult philosophy. We have been urged by many of our students to take them from the kindergarten stage up to the more advanced planes of the study, and we have received the approval and encouragement of certain minds for which we

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have the profoundest respect, in this contemplated advanced work. Much of the advanced teaching which we have in store for our students is scarcely fitted for the general public, and we have taken the precaution of requiring that all applicants for this advanced course must have acquainted themselves with our elementary course. In other words, we will not accept subscriptions for this new course from persons who have not studied the elementary course (the Lessons of the 1904 Class). This rule will be rigidly adhered to, now and in the future. Only those who are students of the 1904 Class are eligible to membership in the new Class. Others who are desirous of taking the new course (and who have not studied the old one) must first take the 1901 Course, and certify to us that they have carefully studied same, before we will accept their subscriptions for the Advanced Course. This may seem like an arbitrary rule, but we have carefully considered it, and feel that we have good reasons for our position. The Advanced Course will take up the higher and deeper phases of the subject, and is not exactly the kind of work that should be scattered broadcast among people who have not prepared themselves by preliminary reading and study. We do not intend to widely advertise this advanced course, nor will we publish in advance the titles of the lessons, as we have no desire to attract the attention of those who seek sensational reading. We want only earnest students of the occult truths, who may feel themselves drawn to the subject. Those for whom these teachings are intended will feel attracted to them and will find out about them by the operation of the Law of Attraction. If you feel a drawing toward us in this work, we will be glad to enroll you on our list of subscribers to the course, but we have no desire to urge it upon you. The matter is one entirely for the guidance of your Higher Self—let it decide for you. The Advanced Course Lessons will consist of twelve lessons—one each month commencing with October 1, 1904, and continuing on the first of every month thereafter. They will be printed in booklet form, 32 pages in each lesson clear, plain

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type, the size of the pages being the same as in "Hatha Yoga"—that is, Slightly larger than our 1904 Lessons—and on finer paper. The price of the Advanced Course will be One Dollar (special) to students of the 1904 Class only. If you feel attracted toward the work, we will be glad to enter you on the roster. We enclose an Application Blank to be filled up by the applicant.