

# KARMA AND THE EYE

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It is a curious fact that it is especially in human beings that the cerebral hemispheres and the lateral ventricles have been developed, and that the *optic thalami*, *corpora quadrigemina*, and *corpora striata* are the principal parts which are developed in the mammalian brain. Moreover it is asserted that the intellect of any man may to some extent be gauged by the development of the central convolutions and the fore part of the cerebral hemispheres. It would seem a natural corollary that if the development and increased size of the pineal gland may be considered to be an index of the astral capacities and spiritual proclivities of any man, there will be a corresponding development of that part of the cranium, or an increase in the size of the pineal gland at the expense of the hinder part of the cerebral hemispheres. It is a curious speculation which would receive a confirmation in this case. We should see, below and behind, the cerebellum which has been held to be the seat of all the animal proclivities of a human being, and which is allowed by science to be the great centre for all the physiologically co-ordinated movements of the body, such as walking, eating, etc., etc.; in front, the fore-part of the brain — the cerebral hemispheres — the part especially connected with the development of the intellectual powers in man; and in the middle, dominating them both, and especially the animal functions, the developed pineal gland, in connection with the more highly evolved, or spiritual man.

It must be remembered that these are only physical correspondences; just as the ordinary human brain is the registering organ of memory, but not memory itself. . . .

Now that which the students of Occultism ought to know is that THE "THIRD EYE" IS INDISSOLUBLY CONNECTED WITH KARMA. The tenet is so mysterious that very few have heard of it.

The "eye of Siva" did not become entirely atrophied before the close of the Fourth Race. When spirituality and all the divine powers and attributes of the deva-man of the Third had been made the hand-maidens of the newly-awakened physiological and psychic passions of the physical man, instead of the reverse, the eye lost its powers. But such was the law of Evolution, and it was, in strict accuracy, no FALL. The sin was not in using those newly-developed powers, but in *misusing* them; in making of the tabernacle, designed to contain a god, the fane of every *spiritual* iniquity. And if we say "sin" it is merely that everyone should understand our meaning; as the term *Karma* {1} would be the right one to use in this case; while the reader who would feel perplexed at the use of the term "spiritual" instead of "physical" iniquity, is reminded of the fact that there can be no physical iniquity. The body is simply the irresponsible organ, the tool of the *psychic*, if not of the "Spiritual man." While in the case of the Atlanteans, it was precisely the Spiritual being which sinned, the Spirit element being still the "Master" principle in man, in those days. Thus it is in those days that the heaviest Karma of the Fifth Race was generated by our Monads.

As this sentence may again be found puzzling, it is better that it should be explained for the benefit of those who are ignorant of the theosophical teachings.

Questions with regard to *Karma* and *re-births* are constantly offered, and a great confusion seems to exist upon this subject. Those who are born and bred in the Christian faith, and have been trained in the idea that a new soul is created by God for every newly-born infant, are among the most perplexed. They ask whether in such case the number of incarnating Monads on earth is limited; to which they are answered in the affirmative. For, however countless, in our conceptions, the number of the incarnating monads — even if we take into account the fact that ever since the Second Race, when their respective seven groups were furnished with bodies, several births and deaths may be allowed for every second of time in the aeons already passed — still, there must be a limit. It was stated that Karma-Nemesis, whose bond-maid is Nature, adjusted everything in the most harmonious manner; and that, therefore, the fresh pouring-in, or arrival of new Monads, had ceased as soon as Humanity had reached its full physical development. No fresh Monads have incarnated since the middle-point of the Atlanteans. Hence, remembering that, save in the case of young children, and of individuals whose lives were violently cut off by some accident, no Spiritual Entity can re-incarnate before a period of many centuries has elapsed, such gaps alone must show that the number of Monads is necessarily finite and limited. Moreover, a reasonable time must be given to other animals for their evolutionary progress.

Hence the assertion that many of us are now working off the effects of the evil Karmic causes produced by us in Atlantean bodies. The Law of KARMA is inextricably interwoven with that of Re-incarnation.

It is only the knowledge of the constant re-births of one and the same individuality throughout the life-cycle; the assurance that the same MONADS — among whom are many Dhyān-Chohans, or the “Gods” themselves — have to pass through the “Circle of Necessity,” rewarded or punished by such rebirth for the suffering endured or crimes committed in the former life; that those very Monads, which entered the empty, senseless shells, or astral figures of the First Race emanated by the Pitris, are the same who are now amongst us — nay, ourselves, perchance; it is only this doctrine, we say, that can explain to us the mysterious problem of Good and Evil, and reconcile man to the terrible and *apparent* injustice of life. Nothing but such certainty can quiet our revolted sense of justice. For, when one unacquainted with the noble doctrine looks around him, and observes the inequalities of birth and fortune, of intellect and capacities; when one sees honour paid fools and profligates, on whom fortune has heaped her favours by mere privilege of birth, and their nearest neighbour, with all his intellect and noble virtues — far more deserving in every way — perishing of want and for lack of sympathy; when one sees all this and has to turn away, helpless to relieve the undeserved suffering, one’s ears ringing and heart aching with the cries of pain around him — that blessed knowledge of Karma alone prevents him from cursing life and men, as well as their supposed Creator. {2}

Of all the terrible blasphemies and accusations virtually thrown on their God by the Monotheists, none is greater or more unpardonable than that (almost always) false humility which makes the presumably “pious” Christian assert, in connection with every evil and undeserved blow, that “such is *the will* of God.”

Dolts and hypocrites! Blasphemers and impious Pharisees, who speak in the same breath of the endless merciful love and care of their God and creator for helpless man, and of that God *scourging the good, the very best of his creatures, bleeding them to death like an insatiable Moloch!* Shall we be answered to this, in Congreve's words: —

“But who shall dare to tax Eternal Justice?” *Logic and simple common sense*, we answer: if we are made to believe in the “original Sin,” in *one* life, on this Earth only, for every Soul, and in an anthropomorphic Deity, who seems to have created some men only for the pleasure of condemning them to eternal hell-fire (and this whether they are good or bad, says the Predestinarian), {3} why should not every man endowed with reasoning powers condemn in his turn such a villainous Deity? Life would become unbearable, if one had to believe in the God created by man's unclean fancy. Luckily he exists only in human dogmas, and in the unhealthy imagination of some poets, who believe they have solved the problem by addressing him as —

“Thou great Mysterious Power, who hast *involved*  
The pride of human wisdom, *to confound*  
The *daring scrutiny* and prove *the faith*  
Of thy *presuming* creatures! . . . .”

Truly a robust “faith” is required to believe that it is “presumption” to question the justice of one, who creates helpless little man but to “perplex” him, and to test a “faith” with which that “Power,” moreover, may have forgotten, if not neglected, to endow him, as happens sometimes.

Compare this blind faith with the philosophical belief, based on every reasonable evidence and life-experience, in Karma-Nemesis, or the Law of Retribution. This Law — whether Conscious or Unconscious — predestines nothing and no one. It exists from and in Eternity, truly, for it is ETERNITY itself; and as such, since no act can be co-equal with eternity, it cannot be said to act, for it is ACTION itself. It is not the Wave which drowns a man, but the *personal* action of the wretch, who goes deliberately and places himself under the *impersonal* action of the laws that govern the Ocean's motion. Karma creates nothing, nor does it design. It is man who plans and creates causes, and Karmic law adjusts the effects; which adjustment is not an act, but universal harmony, tending ever to resume its original position, like a bough, which, bent down too forcibly, rebounds with corresponding vigour. If it happen to dislocate the arm that tried to bend it out of its natural position, shall we say that it is the bough which broke our arm, or that our own folly has brought us to grief? Karma has never sought to destroy intellectual and individual liberty, like the God invented by the Monotheists. It has not involved its decrees in darkness purposely to perplex man; nor shall it punish him who dares to scrutinise its mysteries. On the contrary, he who unveils through study and meditation its intricate paths, and throws light on those dark ways, in the windings of which so many men perish owing to their ignorance of the labyrinth of life, is working for the good of his fellow-men. KARMA is an Absolute and Eternal law in the World of manifestation; and as there can only be one Absolute, as One eternal ever present Cause, believers in Karma cannot be regarded as Atheists or materialists — still less as fatalists: {4} for Karma is one with the Unknowable, of which it is an aspect in its effects in the phenomenal world.

Intimately, or rather indissolubly, connected with Karma, then, is the law of re-birth, or of the re-incarnation of the same spiritual individuality in a long, almost interminable, series of personalities. The latter are like the various costumes and characters played by the same actor, with each of which that actor identifies himself and is identified by the public, for the space of a few hours. The *inner*, or real man, who personates those characters, knows the whole time that he is Hamlet for the brief space of a few acts, which represent, however, on the plane of human illusion the whole life of Hamlet. And he knows that he was, the night before, King Lear, the transformation in his turn of the Othello of a still earlier preceding night; but the outer, visible character is supposed to be ignorant of the fact. In actual life that ignorance is, unfortunately, but too real. Nevertheless, the *permanent* individuality is fully aware of the fact, though, through the atrophy of the “spiritual” eye in the physical body, that knowledge is unable to impress itself on the consciousness of the false personality.

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{1} Karma is a word of many meanings, and has a special term for almost every one of its aspects. It means, as a synonym of sin, the performance of some action for the attainment of an object of *worldly*, hence *selfish*, desire, which cannot fail to be hurtful to somebody else. Karma is action, the Cause; and Karma again is “the law of ethical causation”; the *effect* of an act produced egotistically, when the great law of harmony depends on altruism.

{2} Objectors to the doctrine of Karma should recall the fact that it is absolutely *out of the question* to attempt a reply to the Pessimists on other data. A firm grasp of the principles of Karmic Law knocks away the whole basis of the imposing fabric reared by the disciples of Schopenhauer and Von Hartmann.

{3} The doctrine and theology of Calvinists. “The purpose of God *from eternity* respecting all events” (which becomes *fatalism* and kills free will, or any attempt of exerting it for good). . . . “It is the pre-assignment or allotment of men to everlasting happiness or misery” (Catechism). A noble and encouraging Doctrine this!

{4} Some theosophists, in order to make Karma more comprehensible to the Western mind, as being better acquainted with the Greek than with Aryan philosophy, have made an attempt to translate it by *Nemesis*. Had the latter been known to the profane in antiquity, as it was understood by the Initiate, this translation of the term would be unobjectionable. As it is, it has been too much anthropomorphised by Greek fancy to permit our using it without an elaborate explanation. With the early Greeks, “from Homer to Herodotus, she was no goddess, but a *moral feeling* rather,” says Decharme; the barrier to evil and immorality. He who transgresses it, commits a sacrilege in the eyes of the gods, and is pursued by Nemesis. But, with time, that “feeling” was deified, and its personification became an ever-fatal and punishing goddess. Therefore, if we would connect Karma with Nemesis, it has to be done in the triple character of the latter, viz., as Nemesis, Adrasteia and Themis. For, while the latter is the goddess of Universal Order and Harmony, who, like Nemesis, is commissioned to repress every excess, and keep man within the limits of Nature and righteousness under severe penalty, *Adrasteia* — “the inevitable” — represents Nemesis as the immutable effect of causes created by man himself. Nemesis, as the daughter of *Dike*, is the equitable goddess reserving her wrath for those alone who are maddened with pride, egoism, and impiety. (See *Mesomed. Hymn. Nemes.*, V. 2. Brunck, *Analecta II.*, p. 292; *Mythol. de la Grece Antique*, p. 304.) In short, while Nemesis is a mythological, exoteric goddess, or *Power*, personified and anthropomorphised in its various aspects, *Karma* is a highly philosophical truth, a most divine noble expression of the primitive intuition of man concerning Deity. It is a doctrine which explains the origin of Evil, and ennobles our conceptions of what divine immutable Justice ought to be, instead of degrading the unknown and unknowable Deity by making it the whimsical, cruel tyrant, which we call Providence.