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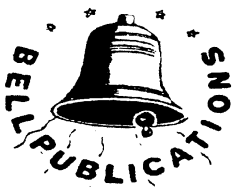
# The Law of Karma

BY EDWIN ARNOLD

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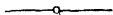


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## Foreword . . . . .

**T**HE fundamental doctrines of ancient science laid particular stress on the indestructability of matter and life. Death and disintegration meant only a change in the form of material and structure. Life existed, but in varying degrees of manifestation and expression. The discoveries of modern scientists serve only to emphasise those teachings. Science today looks upon a world that is living. So astounding are her discoveries that she has not yet appreciated their full significance and stands shading her eyes from the unaccustomed glare that is bursting upon her. Modern scientists preach the presence of

Mind where Life is. Said Dr. Saleeby in his "Evolution, the Master Key" : "If Life is potential in Matter, it is a thousand times more evident that Mind is potential in Matter." Verily, the dreams of the Yogi fathers are coming true, and from the ranks of the materialists are coming material proofs of the spiritual teachings of the Yogas.

These are difficult times, times of racial hatreds and prejudices, when, apparently, the fittest only survive and the weakest 'go to the wall.' At such times there is nothing more stimulating to one as to know that he has within himself the means to create for himself newer and better conditions of life and environment. This is the Law of Karma, which makes each person responsible for his happiness or misery.

"Karma" is a Sanscrit term for the great Law known to Western thinkers as Spiritual Cause and Effect. Relating as it does to the complicated affinities for either good or evil that have been acquired by the soul throughout its many incarnations, it seemingly militates against the religious concepts of the Western World. Yet science is unfolding a lot in its support. Throughout the operations of the Law of Karma the manifestation of Perfect Justice is apparent, very acceptably to all creeds. It teaches that we are not punished *for* our misdeeds, as the current beliefs have it, but instead we are punished *by* our misdeeds. Under the operation of the Law, too, every man is master of his own destiny—he rewards himself—he punishes himself—he builds, tears down and develops his character, always under the influence of the

Almighty. Edwin Arnold, in his beautiful poem, explains the doctrine of Karma from the Buddhist standpoint. Beautifully expressed, it is worth knowing, if not accepting.

DENIS L. KERR





Karma — all that total 'of  
a soul

Which is the things it did,  
the thoughts it had,

The 'self' it wove with  
woof of viewless time

Crossed on the warp invisible  
of acts.





What hath been bringeth  
what shall be, and is,

Worse—better—last for first  
and first for last;

The angels in the heavens of  
gladness reap

Fruits of a holy past.





The devils in the underworld  
wear out

Deeds that were wicked in an  
age gone by.

Nothing endures: fair virtues  
waste with time,

Foul sins grow purged thereby.





Who toiled a slave may  
come anew a prince

For gentle worthiness and  
merit won;

Who ruled a king may wander  
earth in rags

For things done and undone.





Before beginning, and without  
an end,

As space eternal and as  
surety sure,

Is fixed a Power divine  
which moves to good,

Only its laws endure.





It will not be contemned  
of any one :

Who thwarts it loses, and  
who serves it gains ;

The hidden good it pays  
with peace and bliss,

The hidden ill with pains.





It seeth everywhere and  
marketh all:

Do right—it recompenseth!

Do one wrong—

The equal retribution must  
be made,

Though Dharma tarry long.





It knows not wrath nor  
pardon; utter-true

Its measures mete, its faultless  
balance weighs;

Times are as naught, tomorrow  
it will judge,

Or after many days.





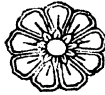
By this the slayer's knife  
did stab himself;

The unjust judge hath lost  
his own defender;

The false tongue dooms its lie;  
the creeping thief

And spoiler rob, to render.





Such is the law which  
moves to righteousness,

Which none at last can turn  
aside or stay;

The heart of it is love, the  
end of it

Is peace and consummation  
sweet. Obey!





The books say well, my  
brothers! each man's life

The outcome of his former  
living is;

The bygone wrongs bring  
forth sorrow and woes,

The bygone right breeds  
bliss.





That which ye sow ye reap.

See yonder fields!

The sesamum was sesamum,  
the corn

Was corn. The silence and  
the darkness knew;

So is a man's fate born.





He cometh, reaper of the  
things he sowed,

Sesamum, corn, so much  
cast in past hirth;

And so much weed and  
poison stuff, which mar

Him and the aching earth.





If he shall labour rightly,  
rooting these,

And planting wholesome  
seedlings where they grew,

Faithful and fair and clean  
the ground shall be,

And rich the harvest due.





If he who liveth, learning  
whence moe springs,

Endureth patiently, striving  
to pay

His utmost debt for ancient  
evils done

In love and truth alway;





If making none to lack,  
he thoroughly purge

The lie and lust of self  
forth from his blood;

Suffering all meekly, rendering  
for offence

Nothing but grace and good :





If he shall day by day  
dwell merciful,

Holy and just and kind  
and true; and rend

Desire from where it clings  
with bleeding roots,

Till love of life have end:





H e—dying—leaveth as the  
sum of him

A life-count closed, whose  
ills are dead and quit,

Whose good is quick and  
mighty, far and near,

So that fruits follow it.





No need hath such to live  
as ye name life;

That which began in him  
when he began

Is finished: he hath wrought  
the purpose through

Of what did make him man.





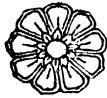
Never shall yearnings torture  
him, nor sins

Stain him, nor ache of  
earthly joys and woes

Inwade his self eternal peace;  
nor deaths

And lives recur. He goes





Unto Nirvana. He is one  
with Life

Yet lives not. He is blest,  
ceasing to be.

Om, Mani Padme Om!  
the dewdrop slips

Into the shining sea!





This is the doctrine of the  
Karma. Learn!

Only when all the dross of  
sin is quit,

Only when life dies like a  
white flame spent,

Death dies along with it.

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