

FRIDAY FRAGMENTS.

Karma is the law of consequences arising from previous actions, not in the sense of constraining one to adopt any particular line of action, but as affording the circumstances in which action is required. Karma loads the gun and you have to decide about aiming it in any desired direction, or firing it off at all.

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Karma is the reconciliation between the two problems of free-will and necessity. Of your own free will you may choose to act in any desired way in any given set of circumstances, or you may choose to refrain from action. What you do will determine the circumstances of your future, and you may find these to be of a limiting character, giving small range of choice. But the freedom of choice still remains, to act in one of several ways, or to refrain from action.

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The reason for the distrust with which many people hear of theosophy is due to their entire ignorance of what theosophy is, or what the Theosophical Society aims at. They jump to the conclusion that what they never previously heard of must be something bad, and they fill out the evil reputation they thus assume by associating with theosophy all the bad things they ever heard of about anything, albeit theosophy may have nothing to do with such things at all.

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The difference between the ideas of Karma and Fatalism is radical. Karma assumes a positive, active view of life while Fatalism involves a negative, passive one. Being on the manifested planes, implies either doing or suffering; Karma is doing, while Fatalism is suffering. Karma implies the fulfilling of the law; Fatalism means mere submission to the law. Karma imparts; Fatalism receives. The two ideas are the result of two differing conceptions of the Deity. The Fatalist bows before a superior Power whose acts he has neither the right nor the ability to question. The believer in Karma recognizes himself as an essential part of that Power, an agent and minister of the Will, which he must endeavour to manifest and obey to the very highest limit of his intelligence.

Most people are waiting for God (or Karma) to come and do something for them. Progress is attained only by action, by doing something for God, by carrying out the law. "Not believers only, but doers."

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The commonest objection to belief in re-incarnation arises from a misconception of the conditions of re-embodiment. The most discontented person will probably prefer his present surroundings to those of his childhood, and would probably be exceedingly disgusted if compelled to attend primary school, and play children's games all day long. Your present life is the life you have grown into. You were not transplanted there suddenly and violently. Re-birth is not a sudden or violent process. The Ego proceeds from stage to stage in the acquisition and assimilation of experience. When the experience accumulated in one body is adequately digested, during the "heaven" period of rest between earth-lives, the Ego returns to earth for a fresh series of experiences. There is variety enough in Nature to provide humanity with ever varying instruction. Those who make the best of their present lives need never fear to be subjected to the same train of events that has been the cause of their griefs and sorrows or satiating pleasures in their present incarnation. We may advance continually, but can only do so through the infinite changes of life and death.

**END OF THE WORLD AND THE
HIGHER AGNOSTICISM.**

If we fall into the sun then we shall be fried; if we go away from the sun, or the sun goes out, then we shall be frozen. So that, so far as the earth is concerned, we have no means of determining what will be the character of the end, but we know that one of these two things must take place in time. But in regard to the whole universe, if we were to travel forward as we have travelled backward in time, and consider things as falling together, we should come finally to a great central mass, all in one piece, which would send out waves of heat through a perfectly empty ether, and gradually cool itself down. As this mass got cool it