

creative force, man and his environments are ; and the latter appears to us to be the fact. Instead of saying that each man reaps exactly as he has sown, we should urge that mankind are what they are, not merely as the result of their own conduct, but also in consequence of their general surroundings. Hence the necessity of each and all living active, useful and pure lives, so that thereby the legitimate operation of the law of cause and effect may be fully realized.

To say that Theosophy, with its theory of Karma, is a "working hypothesis," is to indulge in vague and misleading language. John Stuart Mill, in his "System of Logic," says : "An hypothesis is any supposition which we make (either without actual evidence or on evidence avowedly insufficient) in order to endeavor to deduce from it conclusions in accordance with facts which are known to be real, under the idea that, if the conclusions to which the hypothesis leads are known truths, the hypothesis itself must either be, or at least is likely to be, true. . . . An hypothesis being merely a supposition, there are no other limits to hypotheses than those of the human imagination. We may, if we please, imagine, by way of accounting for an effect, some cause of a kind utterly unknown, and acting according to a law altogether fictitious" (Book III., chap. 14).

It is, in our opinion, equally as misleading to speak of the "ego passing into such physical and mental environment as it deserves." It is here assumed that the "ego" is an entity independent of the body. But where is the evidence that it is so? Professor Ribot, in his book on "The Diseases of Personality," writes :—"The ego is not an entity acting where it chooses or as it pleases, controlling the organs in its own way, and limiting its domain according to its own wish. On the contrary, it is a resultant, even to such a degree that its domain is strictly determined by the anatomical connections with the brain" (p.45). But if the "ego" were an entity, it would be influenced in its nature by the organization which contained it. Supposing it were transmitted from one body to another it would be surrounded by "fresh" conditions, which must necessarily affect the very nature of the "ego." This appears to us to show the utter fallacy of the Theosophic notion of re-incarnation, which means that we shall continue our present "ego" in other organizations. But how can we reasonably suppose that a person who dies to-day will reappear, say, a hundred years hence, as the same individual? The conditions having changed, the result must be different. Besides, the link in the progress from a lower to a higher form of existence would be broken. For instance, a person dies in a licentious and drunken condition ; will he reappear in the same wretched state? If so, where is "the expression of eternal justice"? Has a reformation taken place? If so, what has been reformed? Not the Karma, surely ; for that is supposed to be the reforming agency. It cannot be the "ego," inasmuch as, apart from the brain, nerves, and the entire organization (which, after death, no longer exist), it has no functional reality.

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