

## READERS' QUESTIONS

### *The Purpose of Physical Existence; Dangerous Pests*

**Q**UESTION: I see quite clearly how we can learn great lessons concerning this physical expression of life, but do not see why the physical world is necessary to teach us ethics or morals. And if it were possible to learn ethics and morals in the higher worlds, just why is a physical world, or what we call the physical expression, necessary?

While formulating this question it occurred to me that all other worlds might be said to be physical by those who inhabit them. Would this be the answer?

**A**nswer: Yes, and no. All other worlds are not by any means physical even to those who inhabit them. It is perfectly true that one feels the hand-clasp of a friend in the invisible world just as we do here, but that is because we think resistance into the hand of the other party and our own. We do this quite unconsciously, of course, but the effect is the same. It lends a resistance to our hands and our hand stops where it meets the other's, just as it would be stopped by the solid flesh and bone here in this world. But did we not, when we clap our friend on the back in the first joy of greeting, think this resistance, our hand would go straight through his body, and we can at any time we wish interpolate our own body into his or any one else's without inconvenience to ourselves or to them.

Here in the physical world such a thing is of course impossible. Here everything is rigid and solid, comparatively speaking, but it is this very quality that imparts value to the physical world, as a school in right and accurate thinking—for that is what it is, as has been explained in the *Rosicrucian*



Oil on canvas (1495). Jacopo Bellini. Museo Capodimonte, Naples

*A Mathematician Monk*

Franciscan Luca Pacioli applies observation and deductive reasoning to practical human affairs. He printed mathematical textbooks and devised a system of double accounting.

*Cosmo-Conception.* The illustration was there given of how an inventor may mould in his mind, from mindstuff, an engine or a machine which he has designed to do a certain work. The machine which he thus visualized has wheels that revolve perfectly and the whole thing works smoothly, but when he comes to put his ideas down on paper so that workmen may execute his design, it is probable he will find alterations are necessary in this plan, and later, when the wheels have physical form in iron and steel, it is quite likely that some of them will rub against each other and cannot be put into the places where he had designed in his mind stuff because those places are already occupied with other wheels; so then it is necessary for him to remodel his idea in such a manner as his physical machine shows him to be necessary, until he has it running perfectly.

Thus his thought and idea is corrected by the mistakes as shown in the physical world. Had there been no physical world he would have had no means of correcting his inaccurate conception of what that machine should be, and it is very important that he should learn to think accurately and correctly, for by and by when we are sufficiently evolved we

shall not stand laboriously and fashion things with our hands but we shall conceive the idea of what we want to create in our minds and then we shall speak the word that will bring it into being.

Nor will these our creations be mere machines, but they will be living things, and if we do not learn to think correctly we shall create monstrosities that will have to be destroyed because of the evil nature they would develop in whatever spirit inhabits them.

And that brings us to your question about ethics and morals. It is said that "handsome is that handsome does," and also that "beauty is only skin deep." At the same time it cannot be denied that the face is an expression of the soul. We all speak about someone as having a good face and others as having an evil expression, showing the power of thought to mould the flesh in accordance with the morals and ethics of the person. Therefore we are learning morals and ethics here and must learn them in order that we may understand how to use them to mould the form and features of the things that we shall create.

But in order to become thoroughly efficient tools our morals and ethics must be intensified a thousand-fold, just as we have already seen is the case with thought. Thought is all-powerful in its own subtle realm, but is hampered when working on the resistant material of the physical world. Similarly morals and ethics are also handicapped. They are however being developed by exercise as the muscle grows and there could be no exercise if they were not used in a world where there is resistance. That is a slow process but it makes for efficiency,

But if you remember the law of infant mortality you will also recollect that the little children, who die because an accident or other unfortunate circumstances prevented them from living their purgatory after their previous life, are taken straight into the First Heaven and there taught by compassionate ones the moral lessons that they should have learned in their previous purgatory. Let us suppose that one of the lessons that a soul had to learn is sympathy, because it had been cruel and hard in its previous life. Perhaps it had tortured animals physically or human beings mentally and found great pleasure in so doing.

Such a little child would then be taken to purga-

tory at a time when a soul of similar propensities was living its purgatory and expiating acts of cruelty. The child's body would then probably be interpolated into the desire body of the other one and it would feel what he or she would feel, the suffering of the tortured animals on account of their physical pain and the sufferings of his human victims in mental anguish.

Thus the child would pick up very quickly the lessons that had to be learned, and be made ready for rebirth in a short time. So both the invisible and the visible world play their part in teaching us ethics and morals and there is no doubt that both are indispensable, or the wise beings who guide us on the path of evolution would find other means of more efficiency to teach us the needed lessons.

### DANGEROUS PESTS

**Question:** Should we let roaches, flies, mosquitoes, mice, rats, et cetera, live in our houses and not try to get rid of them? Ever since I have been a vegetarian I have been squeamish about killing anything; but I am afraid, living in the south, we would be overrun if we did nothing to get rid of these pests. What shall I do about it?

**Answer:** As our friends are again asking this question in relation to the disposal of bothersome pests, we are giving a paraphrased answer based on Max Heindel's reply when the same question was presented to him.

The Rosicrucian teaching has always conformed to the teaching of the Bible, "Thou shalt not kill"; but we have never felt that this injunction was intended to include pests, vermin, bacilli, or other microorganisms which take such a toll of human life. The bacilli of infectious diseases are particularly the embodiment of fear and hate, and therefore they can be effectually vanquished by applying the opposite forces of courage and love.

Beasts of prey and poisonous reptiles should never be permitted to go about when they would endanger human life, and it is perfectly right to exterminate them should the occasion really demand it. What we do insist upon, however, is that it is wrong to kill for profit, for sport, for food, or for the gratification of vanity; that is, using animal skins for personal adornment. □