

✈ N.M.Layne ✈
3615 Alexia-San Diego-Calif

5/8/45-

Dr Franklin Merrell-Wolff
C/ Richard R. Smith
120 E. 39th St.
New York City.

Dear Dr Merrell-Wolff:

Concernin g the enclosed verses, "autor ipse
hoc esse nihil scit". But they represent a personal
attempt to express what you have called the substantial
actuality of satisfaction. I have touched a little
on the outer fringes of this kind of reality.

There are things which puzzle me, in your chapter
XLIX of PATHWAYS -- but I can hardly assume that the
man who wrote that book has leisure or inclination
for the questions of strangers. But I should like to
thank you for so extraordinary and so instructive a
book. After some two decades of study of so-called
occult subjects, your book came to me in rather an odd
way, at a moment when it proved of very great value.
It is a great service and I am sure many persons are
grateful to you.

Yours very truly

N.M.Layne
(Ph.D)

ALDEBARAND IN FAERY

By MEADE LANE

Waking at midnight, wise Aldebarand
(Learned in all the nine books of the Law,
Light of all Disputation) turned and saw
There from his lonely pallet, how the Moon
Swung in a honied crescent, and one star
Glittered alone beneath its amber horn.

All else was velvet darkness, and forlorn
Of any slight of sound, or whispering
Of wind or wing, or leaf beneath the dew.
Yet such a mystery closed in, he knew
All in a moment, magic was afoot.
The news of it went hurrying all around,
The mountain and the meadow were in-put
With ripe enchantment, and the sky and stream.
His was a wakening more fair than dream,
And Joy went flowing like a tide at full,
And Laughter, or its spirit worshipful.
And lo, these two were as substantial things,
For he could swim in them as in a sea,
Gather them up with hands of ecstasy,
Taste of them sweetly, breathe them deep as air,
And all the soul of all luxuriousness.
Of richness and rare savour, gathered there,
Heart of the heart of pleasure, tho unnamed,
A pulse of timeless motion and delight
Strange and uncaused, and measureless as Night,
An essence and rapt spirit and a flame.

And when the moment or the hour was gone—
"How shall I turn my face to garish things,
"I who would live forever and forever
"There where the clear star swings
"A pendant to the silver horn of the moon.
"Strange night, strange land, Joy lost too soon
"Oh, I have eaten of the lotus root!
"How shall I leave my heart in faery land?"

Thus lonely wept the great Aldebarand,
Weary of learning, when the night was late,
Prisoned by Faery there, but here by Fate.

THE ROUND ROBIN

A Bulletin of Contact and Information for Students of
Psychic Research and Parapsychology. Issued monthly,
N. Meade Layne, Ed., 3615 Alexia Pl., San Diego, Calif.
6 months \$1.00. Mimeographed. Copy 25c.

San Fernando, Calif.,
May 26, 1945.

Dear Dr. Layne:

Thank you for your appreciative letter relative to "Pathways through to Space." I am much impressed with your poem, "Aldebarand in Faery". I recognize through it that you have acquaintance with that which men do not often find and, finding, do not always understand. And since, generally, the milieu understands less or not at all, the price paid is psychical solitude which is greater among men than in the waste places of nature. To speak directly is to be judged queer - a matter quite damaging to professional functioning. - But, fortunately, one may speak in poetry in the third person and those who do not understand will accept it as a play of fantasy, while those who do will see deeper. In addition, it is a beautiful poem. Yes, it is not easy to live in the world of garish things, either by fate or free choice, once having known the Great Heart, or Soul or Essence of All. But it is possible, more or less, to do so, and there is work to be done, much of it simply by living here.

Most certainly, I do not stand aloof from answering questions of "strangers" when related to "Pathways". I do not count him who is interested a stranger. Further, I very much wish to know the problematic issues which arise in the reader's mind when he reads "Pathways". Much in the book is far too synoptic to supply an adequate treatment. This I knew at the time and even then had in view a supplementary volume. Such I have now, largely finished, in manuscript form, in which I do handle the problematic features, as far as they appear to me or have been brought to my attention. But there most probably are other problems which need attention and I feel that it is quite important that I should know them.

I hesitate to guess at the problem you have in mind in connection with the section on Sleep and Death and should appreciate it if you would present it more explicitly.

Very sincerely yours,

Franklin Merrell-Wolff

Box 628,
San Fernando, Calif.



TALBOT 2872



The Round Robin

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3615 ALEXIA PLADE

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*Reception
Psychic +
Parapsychology*

Dr. Franklin Merrell-Wolff
San Fernando
California.

6/4 / 45

Dear Sir:

It was very gratifying to receive your letter of May 26, and also to find that you are still resident in California, and not very far away from my own home. And I want to thank you for your comment on the verse I sent you, and your generous understanding of it. My own experiences with the states of the higher consciousness have been very transitory, and certainly not under adequate control. Nevertheless, whoever opens the Door ever so slightly, and for a moment only, often acquires an unforgettable experience, as indeed you know far better than I.

I worked for several years with the Qabalistic Tree of Life as a meditation glyph, and have several times effected a brief "projection" of consciousness into an etheric or astral body, but without being able to establish full clarity of consciousness while in this state. And of course I have had involuntary experiences, some of which were similar to those described under the blind of the verses. I mention these matters, only by way of giving you a kind of clue to my own personality.

Coming now to the matters which puzzle me somewhat, in your Section XLIX of PATHWAYS, and which you are kind enough to take an interest in: they are not of a particularly philosophical character, and in fact are rather incidental to the main thesis of your book -- so that I almost hesitate to raise them. Perhaps I can summarize them by saying that I do not understand the teaching concerning the condition of consciousness after death, for the "average" person. Or, that I can't integrate my understanding of them with my own tentative ideas and supposed information. You have of necessity touched this subject lightly; but on the other hand perhaps further ~~my~~ reflection and study of your book would clear it up for me.

To summarize from your page 108: if one has not learned to make a conscious integration while in this life, death involves entering a state like dreamless sleep... unconscious for the personality, except for a sort of dreaming consciousness of a

subject-object type..... that this must be so is clear from epistemological considerations.... consciousness may awaken after a time to function in the new mode, but there will be no basis for recognizing the new entity as being the same individual who experienced in terms of the former mode.... Consciousness does not cease in the higher or spiritual sense yet the individual (personality?) has proved to be no more than a mortal being.... Those who have not mastered cross-correlation have a dream-like consciousness, and this state constitutes the ordinary heaven-worlds...it is a continuation of subject-object consciousness, tho blissful...

Now, this seems to say that there is a clear break (for the masses of mankind) with the personality, or earth-consciousness, so identity as continuity is lost, and memory is a moribund faculty. The continuity of consciousness in the Higher Self, and also the fading out of earth memories in the "Devachan" regions are, I believe, commonly accepted in esoteric doctrine. But if there is a break-off of identity (memory, characteristics of personality) at the time of death, then nearly all of our alleged data about after-death conditions seems to be invalidated. ^{that}

To express the same matter a little differently; practically all our supposed factual information seems to come from three sources; (1) communication with incarnate entities (2) astral exploration by the here-living (3) clairvoyance in its various forms. My own studies and experiences have led me to believe that all these modes are at times genuine and available. And my impression is, that there is a fairly substantial agreement (by such means) on a few points.

These points would include (1) a period of sleep in many cases, of indeterminate length (2) a clear state of personal consciousness, with memory of earth life, and usually an ability to perceive earth objects (or their etheric duplicates) (3) a later withdrawal from these lower interests.

Now, all that may be a very conventionalized view (an "occult" convention), and perhaps a very naive one. But since it is held, with modifications of course, by nearly all students of esoteric subjects, it is of great importance to discover what is radically wrong with it. Other readers of your book, with whom I have been in correspondence, also seem uncertain as to your true meaning, and greatly interested in getting a more explicit (or elementary) exposition.

May I mention too (in a spirit of inquiry only) your point, that the eschatology derives from epistemological considerations (p.108), -- that an abrupt change from one mode of consciousness to another must result in the second mode being (at first) a total loss of self-consciousness, and (later) a complete disjunction from the primary mode. There can be no question about this as a matter of logic. But do we not have here some factual data also -- is there not some empirical knowledge available about the after-death conditions? And does this knowledge conform to what logic alone would indicate? Is the personality actually thrust into a mode of consciousness which is basically different? If that premise is correct, the conclusion is doubtless sound -- but it seems so much at variance with the usual opinion, that I am impelled to ask you about it.

It seems to me that if (as I believe) factual knowledge about the death experience is to be had, its presentation to the world is of great importance. But I of course realize that the import of your book is something greater than this -- and indeed of far more concern to me personally.

On page 111 the text seems to indicate that there is at times a real continuity of consciousness, and that some of the states entered during sleep (a close analogue of death) are more truly waking than any other. Here again the necessary brevity of your references makes the teaching hard to integrate; the statements don't seem to fit in with ideas of loss of identity and memory.

And at risk of even greater tediousness, I would like very much to know how you would characterize the state of consciousness during astral "projection" -- where there is an instantaneous transfer of consciousness to another "vehicle" and the body remains in trance. Would you say that this constitutes "cross-transference during the trance state"? (p.109) And if consciousness and memory remain clear while in the etheric or astral vehicle, is that a true analogue to the after-death condition? If the etheric "cord" were broken (causing death) would there be any change in the (astral) consciousness of the experimenter? Or, is there any real difference between the consciousness of the astral traveller (whose dense body is entranced) and that of the newly dead? So far as I know, no such difference is alleged -- and the point has a bearing on the other issues I have referred to.

You understand, I am sure, that there is nothing controversial about my questions, and perhaps they are not matters of first importance; I raise them only for the sake of any comment you may care to make, and because of your very friendly and interested letter. If all this is too much an intrusion on your time, I can understand that perfectly, and no doubt your forthcoming book will clear up these and many other matters for me. -- I have been a student of these subjects for some three decades, have done some desultory and unimportant writing on them, and was formerly a department head in one of the small universities. And I have tried - and cease not trying - for some hint and semblance of the experience you yourself have plainly obtained. The methods of "Western Yoga", exemplified by the glyph of the Otz Chiim, where the meditation proceeds by symbols and images, has proved most congenial to my own mind. But your book has been a Light on the pathway, for which I am profoundly grateful.

"Praise to the unfathomable Universe" was Walt Whitman's prayer. I think that one utters it with increased fervour, with every smallest ray of light and particle of new knowledge.

Sincerely yours

W.M. Layman

San Fernando, Calif.,
June 9, 1945.

Dr. Meade Layne,
San Diego, Calif.

Dear Dr. Layne:

Your letter of June 6th is of the sort I am especially glad to receive. You have developed a problem which well may arise in the mind of others as, you say, already has happened. Accordingly I worked out a general discussion of the problem which I hope will be clarifying and I enclose a copy of this. I suspect there may be a number of such problems in the book and often I do not foresee them until someone presents them. This is not the first time I felt called upon to develop a special elaboration. "Pathways" is not a treatise and, if it were, would definitely have to be much larger. I think the reviewer of the New York Times was largely correct when he called it a "prolonged soliloquy". In a considerable degree it was a communion between myself and myself opened to the public since it seemed that the book might throw some light on the problems of the Way of more than individual value. The thinking is often a sort of short-hand thinking that is quite clear in the lucid state but which may well be far from clear to the more usual intellectual consciousness.

I am glad that you told me something of yourself and of your meditative practice. It is quite true that there is more than one Way, in the technical sense, and the individual must use that which works with him.

There are some points in your letter which go beyond the general discussion inclosed. Upon these I shall touch to some extent. You ask: "Is the personality actually thrust into a mode of consciousness which is basically different?" I would suggest that he is not "thrust" but rather faces an opportunity to accept a consciousness which is basically different. Practically, if he has not prepared to accept this consciousness during life the probability is that he will be repelled by it. The inconceivable Beauty also brings a clear seeing of one's own personal impurity and the Self-judgment may be more than the little self can take. The opportunity if accepted would bring about the Mystic Death of the Transformation.

I quite agree with you that means exist for the securing of factual information concerning after-death states by individuals who still live in physical bodies. Those who have developed the necessary psychical capacity, however, if not trained in the use of their faculties may fail to read aright. There are many levels and states and problems of cross-interpretation. We may rest assured in these matters that observation requires a greater, rather than a less, exacting discipline than that required of our physical scientists. It is said that even Swedenborg made serious errors because he was not a trained occultist, though a genuine mystic and seer. Also I agree with you as to the value

of factual information provided that one may be sure that it is competent. But difficulty arises in connection with the question of competency. Mistaken information may be positively dangerous since it may lead to a self-hypnosis having the power to affect after-death experiences. We may rest assured that good Christians will find substantially the kind of heaven and hell they expect, but it will be a self-projected dream. One is on safer ground when he derives the necessary implications of Principles. Objective criticism is possible in the latter case and the general Principle is more easily and more surely knowable. It also affords a criterion in the criticism of more concrete material whether self-derived or reported by others.

Concerning the dream-states of greater reality-qualia than ordinary waking states, it is quite true that they imply the possibility of continuity of consciousness transcending the ordinary after-death states. I have in mind here those dream-states, so-called, definitely connected with the Mystical Awakening. I believe the inclosed discussion has covered the question of apparent contradiction.

Your question as to astral "projection" introduces a fairly complicated subject. Personally, I am without experience of the trance state and do not recommend its use without competent technical supervision. It is not necessary for Transcendental Realization, though clearly necessary for certain technical purposes. Instantaneous transfer of consciousness, or of the consciousness principle is not necessarily identical with astral projection, though it may take this latter form. The latter is certainly a practice to be used with great caution as injury to the projected astral (assuming you mean the *linga sharir(a)*) may act by repulsion upon the physical body in quite serious ways. Transference of the consciousness-principle may be in the form of temporary or permanent occupation of a vacated body, superposition of consciousness upon the consciousness of another being with or without the awareness of the latter, and projection in an Illusion Body, as well as the astral projection proper. The results in these different forms are naturally not identical. The transfer of consciousness in the astral projection would not be cross-transference in the sense in which I used the term in "Pathways", since I was referring to a transference between Consciousness as identity between subject and object, cross-translated in subject-object terms. The astral consciousness is still dualistic. Undoubtedly, the consciousness in astral projection may parallel some of the after-death states. The state of those who have died by accident, such as soldiers killed in battle, is really very close to objective earth-consciousness. But one who had the power to explore realm of the exceptions to general rules would find he could not reach into the realm of the second-death by astral projection. A greater power is required for that. So far as I know, there is no great difference between the consciousness of the astral traveler and those newly dead by unnatural means, save that the conscious astral traveler would know where he was. But I am assuming in this technical proficiency. I would not recommend the practice, particularly to one who is seeking the Transcendental Realization. These technical powers are more likely to be a barrier than a help, since they divert energy.

Yours sincerely,

Franklin Merrell-Wolff

P.S. Further ideas have come to me which may throw some light upon the meaning of death. We may think of the personal man as an encapsulated consciousness consisting of more objective and more subjective levels. Death in the ordinary sense is a movement from the more objective to the more subjective, but all within the subject-object type of organization. In this there is no radical break in the primary consciousness-pattern. Rebirth parallels the process in the crysalis in that there is a disintegration of the contents of the capsule, followed by its reintegration. This involves break in continuity in the sense that we have a new personal ego with a new psychical-complex, but there is continuity in the sense of psychical material and causal connection. We have, then, a series of personal egos, not tied together by personal self-consciousness. That justifies us in saying that, in the ordinary case, the personal ego is mortal. Now, the encapsulated consciousness may be viewed as a microcosm or differentiated monad in the sense of Leibnitz. In the ordinary condition its psychical sustenance is by, what we might call, osmosis from the superambient plenum of the ~~xx~~ macrocosm. In this case we will consider the osmotic process as equivalent to an unconscious process. Recognition, or Yogic Realization, is equivalent to breaking out a door in the shell of the capsule into one or more levels of Transcendental Zones. In this case, there is an impact between two or more types of consciousness-organization. Shift of self-identity to the higher level is equivalent to the attainment of relative immortality. This is an attainment for the personal man, as the Higher Man already abides in a much vaster order of duration. Cross-correlation during objective life between these two levels of consciousness means that physical death results in the continuation of the reality-qualia, which in ordinary cases is lost by entering essential dreaming. The personal ego attains participation in the life of the Higher Ego.

In the case of Recognition conscious ties are established between the encapsulated consciousness and the superambient consciousness in greater or less degree. In the terms of analytic psychology this is equivalent to reinforcement of consciousness in the sense that the later is contrasted to the psychological unconsciousness. If for any considerable time there was a failure on the part of humanity to supply a certain minimum number of individuals who could achieve the break-through the unconscious would capture the encapsulated consciousness. This is spiritual death - a real danger to our humanity. Life, in the unconscious sense, does not die, but the effort of Nature to evolve self-conscious entities would, to that extent, have failed. Doubtless, the effort would be repeated, but time is lost and there is much avoidable suffering.

I do not know whether this will help to clarify the conception. Too much dependence upon the empiric habits of thought leads to important misconception. This is the weakness in the generally valuable contributions of Dr. Rhine. The empiric can never really capture the Transcendent, though it may find enough to know that there is more Beyond.

Do not hesitate to write further relative to this or other.

problems arising from the reading of "Pathways". I have a duty, as well as a wish, to guard against any misconceptions which that book may produce in the reader's mind. Any effort to formulate these more metaphysical things involves responsibility. Further, you have the ability and art to present relevant and fruitful questions.

Responsibility, not to a superior, but to one's own conscience.
Ideals lost p214

"Pathways" Problems

ESSENTIAL DYING

In the discussion of "Sleep and Death" (Section XLIX) it is stated: "If a man, while embodied, has not learned to integrate consciously the embodied with the disembodied levels of percipience, then so far as the personal consciousness is concerned, death involves entering a state like dreamless sleep." It is further stated that the resultant state is not an unconscious one in the higher sense but is unconscious in the personal sense except for a sort of dreaming consciousness organized along the lines of subject-object consciousness. This results in the radical interruption of the continuity of self-consciousness and the individual, as individual, has proved to be no more than a mortal being.

An especially thoughtful reader of "Pathways" has brought to my attention the fact that the above thesis appears to be contrary to the general outline of after-death states as given in authentic esoteric sources, for in the latter a radical break of continuity of self-consciousness after physical death is not indicated, but the reverse. This point is a very important one and I appreciate its presentation. I can see how confusion could arise because of the very great brevity of the discussion. But a careful reading of the third sentence of the paragraph beginning on page 108 will reveal the fact that I was not speaking of death in the usual sense of dissolution of the physical body. That sentence states: "But it is a fact that I cannot too strongly emphasize that the essence of dying is not dissolution of the physical body". Next it is said: "Fundamentally, it is a change of level of percipience and apperpercipience." I think that with this point in mind we can clear the issue.

The discussion in "Pathways" is oriented, primarily, to death in the mystical sense and the effort was made to show that mere physical dissolution does not solve nor help to solve the problem of the mystical re-integration of consciousness. All too many among men seem to think that death, in the physical sense, will solve man's metaphysical problems, without preparation during life. This is a grievous mistake since, on the contrary, preparation for death is the most important business of life, in the ordinary sense. The state of consciousness, after physical death, being generally but one of effects does not afford a condition in which new causes may be set up. The process of the Second Birth must be at least started during physical life or there is no hope until a later embodiment when there is a new opportunity.

In the sense of "change of level of percipience and apperpercipience", physical death is no true death. The dropping of the physical body is scarcely more than taking off an overcoat. As a rule, it appears that the immediately following state, when not one of sleep, is essentially a continuation of the kind of consciousness known on earth with certain changes of content. A second death follows the exhaustion of the astral vehicle, leaving the man, in a sense, disrobed, but still having an embodied organization of consciousness. This is the consciousness like a blissful dream

organized on the pattern of the subject-object consciousness. The esoteric teaching is clear on the point that this is a reward (or penalty) for the personal individual whereby injustices (pleasant or unpleasant) incurred during physical life are balanced. This period lasts until effects are exhausted and then, and not till then, the real death of the personal entity (the "I am I and none other") takes place. In the ordinary rebirth this particular "I am I and none other" is not born again. The psychical complexes which made up the old personality are reorganized to form the new "I am I and none other" of the new personality. This is radical interruption of continuity of self-consciousness and there is more than mere suppression of memory involved. The old John Smith or "I am I and none other" is gone and is not reborn nor does he dwell anywhere, save as a sort of impress in the astral light. (However, resurrection is possible by means of the Recognition or Mystical Birth in a subsequent life of the Inner Entity. This is a part of the ~~dark~~ meaning of the dark saying that through Realization man redeems his ancestors. But Nature does not bestow this. Man achieves it.)

I do not remember reading, or having heard, anywhere in the esoteric teachings the explicit statement that the real death of the personal entity takes place, not before, but at the conclusion of the Devachanic interlude. But the implication is there for anyone who stops to reflect. And here there is a manifest break in the continuity of the personal self-consciousness. Otherwise, memory of past lives would be the rule and not the exception. The compound decay and reintegration of the psychical complex which forms the personal entity involves continuity of what, we might call, the raw-material but not of the organized structure of personal consciousness. In this connection refer to the Buddha's discussion of the subject, especially, in the Sutras from the Pali.

I said in "Pathways" that ordinary death involves entering a state like dreamless sleep. It is not identical with dreamless sleep, else there could not be the Devachanic dream. But something leaves the man that was with him during objective life. This is the power of discrimination which is a projection from the Higher Man. It is this subtle part of objective consciousness which vanishes for the personal consciousness in the Devachanic state. It is this vital part of the empiric man that is veiled from the Devachanic as the consciousness of dreamless sleep is veiled from the ordinary personal consciousness. He who would follow this "Life-line" must, while living (in general) have achieved the power to shift from level to level of perception and apperception. Now, because of the Life-line of Discrimination from Above, the personal self-consciousness of the objective physical man is not exclusively personal. Recognition or the Mystical Awakening effects a stringing of the personal self-consciousness upon the Life-line, thereby achieving the conditional immortality. The opportunity for doing this is during physical life, possibly a period immediately after death and in rare cases where the Devachanic is so high as to fuse in something of the Turya or even Nirvanic. But, in general, it is not possible after physical death.

It is important to remember the helplessness of the Higher

Man during objective embodiment. He is a prisoner of the lower man, escaping at times during dreamless sleep and after ordinary death. If the Higher Man achieves His possibilities during objective life, it is the lower man who renders this possible. The latter must cease to be the jailor, and this is really the whole meaning of the self-sacrifice of the ~~Rthx~~ Path until and unless the Great Renunciation is made. If the lower man makes the necessary sacrifices there is a great reward, though this cannot be the motive. The lower man achieves immortality and assimilates, as far as possible, the consciousness of the Higher Man. Ultimately the sacrifice is found to be insignificant.

Many persons are appalled by the esoteric eschatology. It is quite different from the traditional Christian teaching and certainly does require self-induced and self-directed work-effort upon the part of the individual. But, whereas the Christian eschatology offers the hope of being nothing more than a perpetual babe, the esoteric and true teaching opens a way of unlimited possibility. Furthermore, no sincere effort is without fruit. To be sure, few may in any one life attain the highest possibility, for this is not easy. But it is not hard to break the power of the dream. He who cannot attain to Turya or the Nirvanic (fixed or not fixed) states may yet achieve the permanent astral and be born in a series of lives without the radical break in consciousness, although memory may be more or less blocked. And, also, failing this, he may achieve a Devachan without the complete break of the line of Discrimination in which case a certain continuity is retained in following lives, which is more than is true of the ordinary incarnations. No sincere student has the merely ordinary after-death state nor is subject to the radical discontinuity of the ordinary man. Further, there are Helpers who help those who help themselves - by self-forgetfulness and striving.

I hope the foregoing discussion will clarify the confusion. In the original article the subject was approached from a more metaphysical point of view that is usual and from that angle the problem is much more simple than from the objective perspective. Much that is very simple from the Subjective perspective is quite complex when approached from the objective base, and there is also much where the reverse is true. It is important that the objective and Subjective should join hands for thereby the Crossing is rendered much easier.



TALBOT 2872



The Round Robin

MEADE LAYNE, M. A., EDITOR

3615 ALEXIA PLACE

SAN DIEGO 4, CALIFORNIA

Dr Franklin Merrell-Wolff
San Fernando
California

6/19/45

Dear Dr Merrell-Wolff:

This is, for the most part, only to acknowledge your letter, and enclosure, of June 9, and to express my gratitude for it. You have taken a great deal of trouble in answering my inquiries, and have gone over them with much care and detail, and I am under real indebtedness to you. It may be that I shall take advantage of your offer and write you again on some of these matters, after I have had more time for reflection and for the study of PATHWAYS.

It seems to me quite clear, on the basis of what is called the esoteric tradition, that reincarnation spells mortality of the personality, even tho it be delayed until the end of the Devachan phase. And it is my impression that many esotericists, particularly the Theosophical writers, exercise a certain canny reserve about making an explicit statement on that point. But the impact of this teaching on our daily life is very great; it not only supplies the sanctions of moral conduct, but reminds us that our present life is really our "main chance" for the perpetuation of the personality, through some degree of integration with a higher level of consciousness. It is in this sense that I understand your expression, that 'the main business of life is preparation for death'- that is, for a shift in the levels of consciousness. This, of course, is to express the matter in its simplest terms. But one of the chief effects of your book has been to expand and strengthen this concept in my own mind. And I might enumerate a good many other points too, on which I am deeply indebted to your work, and doubtless shall become more indebted in proportion as I more thoroughly assimilate your thought... Let me add, that I appreciate and understand your comment about the limitations of the empirical approach (the methodology of the sciences), and I do not myself take a very deep interest in purely empirical studies. But these are obviously part of the Path of the Western mind, whose dharma seems to be

the conquest of the objective world, and for this very reason it is the approach in which some of us can best be of service. My own interest - or aspiration, rather - is toward "the knowledge and the conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel", but I am not qualified to help others on that level of effort, but only (if at all) in ways that are much simpler.

I suppose the central question, in all basic esoteric thinking, is the relation between the Self (the Egoic consciousness) and the personality, since the method and objective of meditation depend on it, and the fate of the personality, and whatever hope of personal immortality man can rightfully cherish. I think you have stated somewhere, that the initiative of contact (Awakening, Illumination) rests always with the Higher Self -- and yet, until the lower self prepares the way, the Self is helpless or well-nigh so. But I know what a great amount of writing and subtleties of doctrine center about this, and in a general way it is the theme of PATHWAYS too - so I am not propounding it here as a question to you... I suppose there are a few to whom comes the experience of the Damascene road, but for most of us "pathways" is the problem, or how to make the approach from below, so to speak, or how best to open the door to the Divine Stranger.

Well, I did not intend to write you at such length, and will only thank you again for your generous interest and detailed reply to my last letter.

In Nomine Adonai

W.M. Layne



TALBOT 2872



The Round Robin

MEADE LAYNE, M. A., EDITOR

3615 ALEXIA PLACE

SAN DIEGO 4, CALIFORNIA

January 14, 1946

Sarah A. Merrell-Wolff
Box 628
San Fernando

Dear Madam:

I am in receipt of your very kind note of January 10, with its enclosed check for \$10.00. I shall send you issue 11, Vol. I (Dec.), and also the January issue (No. 1 vol II).

I feel as though I should apologise for the December number, which is not typical of the Bulletin as a whole.

In cooperation with a number of psycho-physicists and serious students of occult matters, I propose to issue a quarterly Flying Roll of more or less confidential nature, not for sale to the public. With your permission I shall send Dr Merrell-Wolff and yourself a copy.

I shall enter you for an indefinite subscription to Round Robin, and to the Flying Roll if the latter proves to be of any interest to you. Dr Merrell-Wolff at one time was kind enough to write me at length concerning certain passages in PATHWAYS; I have always appreciated this a great deal, and have thought several times of sending him the Round Robin, but decided that its semi-popular nature would not interest him. It is a great encouragement to me, to learn that he thinks the publication worth while.



TALBOT 2872



The Round Robin

MEADE LAYNE, M. A., EDITOR

3615 ALEXIA PLACE

SAN DIEGO 4, CALIFORNIA

- 2 -

I must say a further word about your generous enclosure of \$10.00. The Round Robin is published at a small loss (though it is growing slowly), but I have never attempted to commercialize it or to solicit contributions of money. I receive them at rare intervals, and always try to make clear that they are devoted to the 'cause' of public enlightenment in psychic matters, and not to my personal profit. If it was your intent, or if you now prefer that I should simply deduct a subscription price, for one year or more, and refund the balance, I shall be very willing to do so. But unless you let me know to the contrary, I shall put the \$10. into the Round Robin - and please accept my sincere thanks, in either case.

The bulletin has made several references to PATHWAYS, and I have intended to attempt a more comprehensive notice of the book (300-500 words), sending it first to Dr Merrell-Wolff for alterations and permission to print. I assume that this is all right in principle, while if the review itself does not meet with his approval it can easily be cancelled.

Sincerely Yours

M. A. Layne

To Jan. 1950

Jan. 14

1946

RECEIVED of Mr F. Merrell-Wolff

Ten dollars + 4 yrs subscr. Dollars
To Round Robin, unless applied in
part to the Flying Roll also

\$10⁰⁰

N. M. Layne
3615 Alexia-San Diego-Calif
N. M. Layne



TALBOT 2872



The Round Robin

MEADE LAYNE, M. A., EDITOR

3615 ALEXIA PLACE

SAN DIEGO 4, CALIFORNIA

May 5, 1946

Dr. Franklin Merrell-Wolff
San Fernando
Calif.

Dear Dr. Merrell-Wolff:

The enclosed is self-explanatory. Neither I nor this correspondent has the faintest claim on your time - but as far as I am concerned, this is one of those inquiries where I can say nothing useful, and yet cannot refuse to make an effort to help. I hope it is not an imposition to send it to you. Your correspondence is doubtless very heavy (even my own is more than I can handle) and I hesitate to add to it... If on reflection you consider that nothing can be done for this man (who after "forty years" of occult studies can still write so naive a letter - and yet a pathetic one), perhaps you can handle the matter in a sentence or two and so not find it too burdensome.

With many thanks

Meade Layne

May 5, 1946

Mr Wm. C. Crump
1529 Maple St.
Pasadena.

My Dear Friend:

I have your note of April 1, and I am very sorrowful because of your perplexities and ill health - and also because there is so little that I personally can say or do to help you. With your background in occult knowledge, you of course realize that you will not find any formula, or words of wisdom that will of themselves unlock the Door as if by a miracle. The wisest books or teachers can but give us the clue to some mode of life and thought, which we must then pursue for ourselves. And yet some teacher, far wiser than myself, might find the right word to give you - not to work a miracle, but to give a clear and true light. If it is true that you have touched the borders of Recognition, you have made great attainment and should not despair. Neither should you be in haste, tho I know well how slow one's progress seems... And I think only an Adept, or near-Adept who knew you personally and could evaluate all the psychological and physical conditions, could give you good and dependable advice.

I have decided, under all the circumstances, to send your note to Dr. Franklin Merrell-Wolff. He is the author of Pathways Through to Space and various other books. I know him only by correspondence, but he helped me with various inquiries and perhaps will write to you also. I have no claim on him at all and he is a very busy man - but also one who has himself attained Recognition, a man of great abilities, and of good will. If he prefers to write to me, I can give you the gist of his reply. In the meantime, be of good cheer, and if there is any way in which I can be of real service to you, let me know.

Sincerely

San Fernando, Calif.,
May 16, 1946.

Dr. Meade Layne;
3615 Alexia Place,
San Diego, Calif.

Dear Dr. Layne:

Upon returning from a protracted stay near Mt. Whitney I found your letter awaiting me here together with the copy of the "Flying Roll" and the last two numbers of the "Round Robin". Before taking up the problem of Mr. Crump I should like to commend you upon your work. The balance between critical discrimination and open-mindedness is hard to hold in work of the sort in which you are engaged. In this respect I like, very much, the tone of your discussions. One may easily be in error in his tentative interpretations of this border-line material but so long as he remembers their conditional character and does not become attached to them in the sense of a credo the research attitude, I believe, is sound. In such a case even an erroneous conception may be a stepping stone to something sounder. However, I do not believe that more than heuristic hypotheses can be derived in this way, especially in the case of border-line stuff. The occult is the occult simply because its true understanding calls for the activity of a generally latent organ, faculty or function. Without this, one may determine by objective scientific means that something not understood is, but not what it is. But determining thus much is positive gain over general skepticism and ignorance and is valuable work.

With respect to Mr. Crump I am writing you since my contact is with you and in this field something analagous to military channels in military correspondence. ^{applies} Mr. Crump's letter is not full enough for adequate diagnosis. He does not say whether or not his efforts to contact his mother had any psychic effects. It would probably be best if his results in this respect were entirely negative. He might have contacted a mere "shell" or negative psychical forces or entities with bad results to himself or, as an off-chance, he might have actually contacted the woman herself with bad effects upon her gestation period, thereby making bad karma. But the letter does not tell us enough.

The negative effects from the breath-control practice is in line with extensive experience in the West. I have seen enough to conclude ~~that~~ that such practice by a Westerner, especially on one's own independent initiative without direct personal supervision of a Proficient who knows the western psycho-physical organism, is very dangerous indeed and to be discouraged. It is too much like a child playing with atom-bombs. It is quite possible that this practice had a causal connection with respect to the T.B. as Mr. Crump suggests. But all this is water under the bridge. The question is, What may be done?

Now, while it is true that there are those who can heal by their powers, yet, under the Great Law the right to this must be earned. Only principles and advice can be formulated and given freely. In

my experience I have found a course of action that has proved effective, though it is slow and far from spectacular. Overstimulation must be counter-balanced by its opposite. In other words, I would suggest discontinuance of study and thinking along occult or metaphysical lines. Establish extended physical contact with the earth and direct the mind into simple secular interests. Nature will do the healing, but the patient should make himself vegetate as much as possible. The moral attitude should be the cultivation of selfless detachment. To renounce for one's self the attainment and to seek it for humanity is excellent. I know of no more powerful formula. It opens the way for special help.

In a former letter you spoke of intending to make a review of Pathways, first having me pass upon it. I should be very greatly interested in such a review but it is quite unnecessary to have me pass upon it before publication. You need no permission from me. So far as I am concerned, the book belongs to those who read it and find it of use. I am just as much interested in adverse criticism as favorable, just so long as it is sincere. From such reviews and comments I can learn a great deal. Although I naturally know what I mean, I do not know what meaning the reader derives until he speaks or writes. I can hardly deal with problems and objections that have not been present to my own mind unless those who have them speak out. I would not want to censor anything you might say. Of course, there is implied, though only slightly developed in Pathways, a philosophy which is at variance with most currently popular systems. I do claim the right to defend this, in the logical sense, when criticised, or to clarify it when misunderstood. But I definitely welcome free discussion.

Very sincerely yours,

Franklin Merrell-Wolff



TALBOT 2872



The Round Robin

MEADE LAYNE, M. A., EDITOR

3615 ALEXIA PLACE

SAN DIEGO 4, CALIFORNIA

Feb 2
~~January 5, 1947~~

Dr. and Mrs. Merrell-Wolff
Box 628
San Fernando, Calif.

Dear Dr. and Mrs. Merrell-Wolff:

I have been out of town several days, and on my return find your very generous check for \$2000, in support of Flying Roll and Round Robin. I want to thank you on behalf of the readers and contributors as well as for myself. It is such help that makes these non-profit publications possible, and though they are small I have reason to believe that they are doing a useful work.

Professor Ryan informs me that several of the faculty of the Theosophical University at Covina have entered on a renewed study of Pathways. Dr. F.I. Regardie, whom I saw in Los Angeles, expressed his admiration for the book and his intention to study it more carefully. The Adept (or so I take him to be) F.G. Hehr also tells me he subscribes to your basic concepts and feels that the book is of very great value. Other correspondents also, in the middle West, have expressed a very lively interest in this work... After some hesitation, I decided that your letters to me, explanatory of certain passages in Pathways, were much too valuable to remain in my private files: I loaned them to a few friends, then finally printed them, feeling sure of your permission. One subscriber wrote me that this single article was worth more than the whole year's subscription price. That may be a crude way of evaluating your letter, but it represents the opinion of a considerable number of readers, and it is a satisfaction to me personally to help, tho ever so slightly, in disseminating such material.

My best wishes for your continued success and prosperity.

Cordially

M. M. Layne