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be destroyed. Special groupings and appearances are transitory ; it is their intrinsic and constructive essence which is permanent. . . . We shall argue that personality or individuality itself dominates and transcends all temporal modes of expression, and so is essentially eternal wherever it exists.

No science asserts that our personality will cease a quarter of a century hence, nor does any science assert that it began half a century ago. Spiritual existence 'before all worlds' is a legitimate creed.

No science maintains that the whole of our personality is incarnate here or now ; it is, in fact, beginning to surmise the contrary, and to suspect the existence of a larger transcendental individuality, with which men of genius are in touch more than ordinary men. We may be all partial incarnations of a larger self.

SIR OLIVER LODGE  
(*Man and the Universe*).

AS regards Reincarnation, it is probably a mistake to suppose that the same individual whom we knew in bodily form is likely to appear again, at some future date. There may be exceptions, but as a rule that seems unlikely to happen. What may happen, however, is that some other portion of the larger self becomes incarnate ; and if so, it would be likely to feel a strong affinity, though often in a vague and puzzled way, with some other portion which had been embodied previously. And again, if this second incarnate portion happened to include some part of what had gone to make the previous individual, then there might not only be a sense of affinity, but some kind of reminiscence, some memory of places and surroundings which had previously been familiar. . . .

This idea seems to help us to contemplate the Platonic doctrine of Reminiscence as a possible reality in some cases. . . . Indeed, some such doctrine may be necessary to explain the aptitudes and powers and instincts both

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of animals and of children, especially when those children show signs of exceptionally early precocity. When they can calculate, for instance, or play a musical instrument, without having learnt. . . .

How large a subliminal self may be, one does not know, but one can imagine that in some cases it is very large, so that it contains the potentiality for the incarnation not only of a succession of ordinary individuals, but of really great men. It would be a mistake to suppose that Dante and Tennyson were reincarnations of Virgil, but one might, though presumptuously, imagine that all three were incarnations of one great Subliminal Self, which was able to manifest itself in different portions, having a certain family likeness, though without any necessary bodily consanguinity or inheritance in the ordinary sense.

The heredity link appears to be of quite different order from the subliminal link ; and mother and son need have no spiritual or subliminal relationship, in spite of their great similarity. The similarity of the bodily instrument would be sufficient, in that case, to account for the similarity of that portion of the son's larger self which automatically solicited this means of manifestation. And the importance of parenthood, in providing a suitable corporeal instrument or vehicle for the manifestation of a really great personality, can hardly be over-estimated. But the indwelling spirit need not come from the parents at all.

SIR OLIVER LODGE  
*(The Making of Man).*

LONG, long ago you lived in Italy ;  
You were a little princess in a state  
Where all things sweet and strange did congregate,  
And in your eyes was hope or memory  
Or wistful prophecy of things to be ;  
You gave a child's blank 'no' to proffered fate,  
Then became grave, and died immaculate,  
Leaving torn hearts and broken minstrelsy.

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But Love that weaves the years on Time's slow loom  
Found you again, reborn, fashioned and grown  
To your old likeness in these harsher lands ;  
And when Life's day was shadowed in deep gloom  
You found me wandering, heart-sick and alone,  
And ran to me and gave me both your hands.

LORD ALFRED DOUGLAS.

WHAT is a span of ten thousand years, or ten times ten thousand years, in the history of time? It is as naught—it is as the mists that roll up in the sunlight ; it fleeth away like an hour of sleep or a breath of the Eternal Spirit. Behold the lot of man ! Certainly it shall overtake us, and we shall sleep. Certainly, too, we shall awake, and live again, and again shall sleep, and so on and on, through periods, spaces and times, from æon unto æon, till the world is dead, and the worlds beyond the world are dead, and naught liveth save the Spirit that is Life.

Time hath no power against Identity, though sleep the merciful hath blotted out the tablets of our mind, and with oblivion sealed the sorrows that else would hound us from life to life, stuffing the brain with gathered griefs till it burst in the madness of uttermost despair. . . . The wrappings of our sleep shall roll away . . . and the voices shall be heard, when down the completed chain, whereof our each existence is a link, the lightning of the Spirit hath passed to work out the purpose of our being ; quickening and fusing those separated days of life, and shaping them to a staff whereon we may safely lean as we wend to our appointed fate.

SIR RIDER HAGGARD  
(*She*).

"YOU know me and my story," I muttered at last.  
"No," he answered ; "at least not more than  
I know that of many men with whom I chance to  
be in touch. That is, I have not met you for nearly



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eleven hundred years. A thousand and eighty-six, to be correct. I was a blind priest then, and you were the captain of Irene's guard."

At this news I burst out laughing, and the laugh did me good.

"I did not know I was so old," I said.

"Do you call that old?" answered Jorsen. "Why, the first time that we had anything to do with each other, so far as I can learn, that is, was over eight thousand years ago, in Egypt before the beginning of recorded history."

"I thought I was mad, but you are madder," I said.

"Doubtless. Well, I am so mad that I managed to be here in time to save you from suicide, as once in the past you saved me, for thus things come round." . . .

That was how I came to know Jorsen.

Sure knowledge has come to me about certain epochs in the past in which I lived in other shapes. . . .

They do not all come back to me with equal clearness, the earlier lives being, as one might expect, the more difficult to recover and the comparatively recent ones the easiest. Also they seem to range over a vast stretch of time, back indeed to the days of primeval, prehistoric man. . . .

To take a single instance of what I do know: once this spirit of mine, that now by the workings of destiny for a little while occupies the body of a fourth-rate auctioneer, and of the editor of a trade journal, dwelt in that of a Pharaoh of Egypt—never mind which Pharaoh. Yes, although you may laugh and think me mad to say it, for me the legions fought and thundered; to me the peoples bowed and the secret sanctuaries were opened that I and I alone might commune with the gods; I who in the flesh and after it myself was worshipped as a god.

I sat upon the borders of the Road . . . and watched the dead go by.



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There were many that night. Some plague was working in the East and unchaining thousands. . . . The knowledge which I have told me that one and all they were very ancient souls who often and often had walked the Road before, and therefore, although as yet they did not know it, were well accustomed to the journey. No, I am wrong, for here and there an individual did know. Indeed, one deep-eyed, wistful little woman, who carried a baby in her arms, stopped for a moment and spoke to me.

"The others cannot see you as I do," she said. "Priest of the Queen of queens, I know you well; hand in hand we climbed by the seven stairways to the altars of the moon."

"Who is the Queen of queens?" I asked.

"Have you forgotten her of the hundred names whose veils we lifted one by one; her whose breast was beauty and whose eyes were truth? In a day to come you will remember. Farewell till we walk this Road no more."

"Stay—where did we meet?"

"When our souls were young," she answered, and faded from my ken like a shadow from the sea."

SIR RIDER HAGGARD  
(*The Mahatma and the Hare:  
A Dream Story*).

I SHALL return to thee,  
Earth, O dearest  
Mother of mine!

I who have loved thee with joy everlasting,  
Endless discovery, newness diurnal;  
I who with every delight of my heart,  
As with strands of gold, have enwoven the fairest  
Flowers of thy beauty, whose sorrows yearn for thee,  
See, with no gesture  
Of long resignation, of farewell eternal,  
Now I depart,

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But as to some new festival hasting  
I bid them fall from me, disentwine  
The withered garland, the worn vesture.

Not as a warrior  
Lost and defeated,  
Out of thy legions  
Perished and gone,

Lady, I pass from the fight into regions  
Hid from its roar—but the battered armour  
Bruises the limbs, the sword is broken.  
Loose me them gently, cast them undone,  
After thy manner,  
Into the crucible, the seven-times heated.  
I to the front, to thy face still address  
Shall await the recall, shall watch for the token,  
Leap at the word. I ask not for rest,  
But a trustier steel—and back to the banner!

I shall still blindly fumble and wait  
Till the true door open, the true voice call again;  
And back to the human high estate,  
Back to the whole of the soul, resurgent,  
O Earth! O dearest! I shall return,  
I shall return to thee, Earth, my mother.

MARGARET L. WOODS  
(*Vale Atque Ave*).

**A** MAN has a soul, and it passes from life to life, as a traveller from inn to inn, till at length it is ended in heaven. But not till he has attained heaven in his heart will he attain heaven in reality.

Many children, the Burmese will tell you, remember their former lives. As they grow older, the memories die away and they forget, but to the young children they are very clear. I have seen many such. . . .

I met a little girl not long ago . . . about seven years old, and she told me all about her former life when she was a man. Her name was Maung Mon, she said,

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and she used to work the dolls in a travelling marionette show. It was through her knowledge of and partiality for marionettes that it was first suspected, her parents told me, whom she had been in her former life. She could even as a sucking-child manipulate the strings of a marionette doll. But the actual discovery came when she was about four years old, and she recognised a certain marionette booth and dolls as her own. She knew all about them, knew the name of each doll, and even some of the words they used to say in the plays. . . .

H. FIELDING HALL  
(*The Soul of a People*).

**R**ED Anarchy! what meaneth thy mad quest,  
Through seas of blood, for some dim isle of rest—  
Through hell's red pit, for heavens of the blest?

Hearken! O wild-eyed spirit of red hell!  
The way to happiness is not where dwell  
The grinning ghouls who toll the funeral bell!

Only with love can hate be overcome,  
Time only solve Life's long perplexing sum,  
And never till the dogs of war are dumb!

When the red flames engulf the works of man,  
When the red knife cuts short life's little span,  
Barbarians we, as when the world began!

Go, Anarchy! we hate thy awful name,  
Thy red flag is a winding-sheet of shame—  
Make one last fire and perish in its flame!

And we will slowly mount Life's spiral stair,  
Evolving into worlds sublimely fair,  
With natures fit to breathe Elysian air!

HERBERT THOMAS  
(*To Mad Anarchy*).  
(From *Ballads of Evolution*.)



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**R**EINCARNATION unites all the family of man into a universal brotherhood. . . . It promotes the solidarity of mankind by destroying the barriers that conceit and circumstances have raised between individuals, groups, nations, and races. All are alike favoured with perfect poetic justice. The children of God are not ordained some to honour and others to abasement. There are no special gifts. Physical blessings, mental talents, and moral successes are the laborious result of long merit. Sorrows, defects, and failures proceed from negligence. The upward road to the glories of spiritual perfection is always at our feet, with perpetual invitations and aids to travel higher. The downward way into sensual wreckage is but the other direction of the same way. We cannot despise those who are tending down, for who knows but we have journeyed that way ourselves? It is impossible for us to scramble up alone, for our destiny is included in that of humanity, and only by helping others along can we ascend ourselves.

E. D. WALKER

(*Reincarnation :*

*A Study of Forgotten Faith*).

**L**IFE presents us with many problems which, on any other hypothesis than this of reincarnation, seem utterly insoluble ; this great truth does explain them, and therefore holds the field until another and more satisfactory hypothesis can be found. . . .

We understand that our present life is not our first, but that we each have behind us a long line of lives, by means of the experiences of which we have evolved from the condition of primitive man to our present position. Assuredly in these past lives we shall have done good and evil, and from every one of our actions a definite proportion of result must have followed under the inexorable law of justice. From the good follow always happiness and further opportunity ; from the evil follow always sorrow and limitation. . . .

It is in reality a most comforting doctrine. . . .

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Objectors chiefly found their protest on the fact that they have had so much trouble and sorrow in this life that they will not listen to any suggestion that it may be necessary to go through it all again. But this is obviously not argument ; we are in search of truth, and when it is found we must not shrink from it, whether it be pleasant or unpleasant, though, as a matter of fact, as said above, reincarnation rightly understood is profoundly comforting.

C. W. LEADBEATER  
(*An Outline of Theosophy*).

ARRIVED from far, he trod the remembered ways  
Of that grave town, where he was wont to be  
With heroes old of far-resounding days,  
Gathered for wandering wars of land and sea.

There, crumbling o'er a sculptured tomb, he found  
The rusted armour he himself did wear,  
Battling, long since at Troy, and underground  
Lay his own body, long since crumbling there.

Even so, in wandering through the haunted nave  
Of time's old church, I saw against a stone  
A panoply of love, hung o'er a grave  
Where lay a rigid body, once my own.

Why waste a thought on long-forgotten men,  
Or spell the record of those fading lines?  
Sweet life is sweeter to me now than then,  
And round my heart a nobler armour shines.

H. W. NEVINSON  
(*Pythagoras at Argos*).

THE doctrine of the ascensional life of the soul through series of existences is the common feature of esoteric traditions and the crown of theosophy. I will add that it is of the utmost importance to us. For the man of the present day rejects with

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equal scorn the abstract and vague immortality of philosophy and the childish heaven of an infant religion. And yet he abhors the dryness and nothingness of materialism. Unconsciously he aspires to the consciousness of an *organic immortality* responding at once to the demands of his reason and the indestructible needs of his soul.

. . . . .

Greek poetry, so profound and luminous in its symbolism, compared the soul sometimes to the winged insect, sometimes to the earth-worm, and again to the heavenly butterfly. How often has it been a chrysalis, and how often a winged creature of light? Though it will never know this, it still feels that it has wings!

. . . . .

The heavenly life of the soul may last hundreds or thousands of years, according to its degree or strength of impulse. It belongs, however, only to the perfect, to the most sublime souls, to those which have passed beyond the circle of generations, to prolong it indefinitely. . . . The rest are carried along by an inflexible law to reincarnation, in order to undergo a fresh trial, and to rise to a higher rung or to fall lower if they fail.

The spiritual, like the terrestrial life, has its beginning, its apogee, and its decline. When this life is exhausted, the soul feels itself overcome with heaviness, giddiness, and melancholy. An invisible force once again attracts it to the struggles and sufferings of earth. This desire is mingled with terrible dread and a mighty grief at leaving divine life. But the time has come; the law must be obeyed. The heaviness increases, a sensation of dimness is felt. The soul no longer sees its companions of light except through a veil, and this veil, ever denser and denser, gives a presentiment of the coming separation. It hears their sad farewells; the tears of the blest, the loved ones whom it is leaving, fall over it like



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heavenly dew which will leave in its heart the burning thirst of an unknown happiness. Then, with solemn oaths, it promises to *remember*—to remember the light when in the world of darkness, to remember truth when in the world of falsehood, and love when in the world of hatred. The return, the immortal crown, can only be acquired at this cost. It awakens in a dense atmosphere; ethereal constellations, diaphanous souls, oceans of light—all have disappeared. And now it is back on earth, in the abyss of birth and death. . . .

Terrestrial birth is death from the spiritual point of view, and death is a celestial resurrection.

. . . . .

Lives follow without resembling one another, but a pitiless logic links them together. Though each of them has its own law and special destiny, the succession is controlled by a general law, which might be called the repercussion of lives. . . . There is no word or action which has not its echo in eternity, says a proverb. According to esoteric doctrine, this proverb is literally applied from one life to another.

. . . . .

What, then, is the final end of man? After so many lives, deaths, rebirths, periods of calm, and poignant awakenings, is there any limit to the labours of Psyche? Yes, say the initiates, when the soul has definitely conquered matter, when, developing all its spiritual faculties, it has found in itself the principle and end of all things, then, incarnation being no longer necessary, it will enter the divine state by a complete union with the divine intelligence. . . . The soul which has become pure spirit does not lose its individuality, but rather perfects it as it rejoins its archetype in God.

EDOUARD SCHURÉ

(*Pythagoras and the Delphic Mysteries*).

(Translated by FRED ROTHWELL.)

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[Behind them they left a heap of carnage to be shared by the black raven, with its dusky plumage and hooked beak, and the dun-coated, white-tailed eagle . . . and by that grey beast, the wolf of the forest.—*The Battle of Brunanburh*; N. Kershaw's translation.]

'T WAS a thousand years ago  
    (My mad dreaming knows it so)  
    When my fame was for the dinging of the lyre,  
I was silenced in that battle  
Where our foe was driven cattle.  
*But listen to the dead skald now.*

From the mountain flew War's eagle,  
Odin's wind-cleaving beagle,  
To his feast near the billows of the sea.  
He was white-tailed, and his breast  
Shone with crimson from the West.  
*But listen to the dead skald now.*

And the grey wolves of the wild,  
Those defilers and defiled,  
Sniffed carnage on a sudden salt wind.  
Ere the moon allured the wave  
They were feasting on the brave.  
*And those grey wolves are men-wolves now.*

And the ravens flew in flocks  
From the pine-woods on the rocks.  
Croak, croak where the dead lay high!  
So compassionless and loud  
They wrought shame upon the proud.  
*God! save me from those ravens now.*

HERBERT EDWARD PALMER  
(*Various Reincarnations*).

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PRESENTLY I became aware that some communication was passing between my consciousness and the consciousness of the newly-arrived spirit. It did not take place in words but in thought, though only by words can I now-represent it.

"Yes," said the other, "you do well to rest and be happy; is it not a wonderful experience?—and yet you have been through it many times already, and will pass through it many times again."

I suppose that I did not wholly understand this, for I said: "I do not grasp that thought, though I am certain it is true: have I, then, died before?"

"Yes," said the other, "many times. It is a long progress; you will remember soon, when you have had time to reflect, and when the sweet novelty of the change has become more customary. You have but returned to us again for a little; one needs that, you know, at first; one needs some refreshment and repose after each one of our lives, to be renewed, to be strengthened, for what comes after."

All at once I understood. I knew that my last life had been one of many lives lived at all sorts of times and dates, and under various conditions; that at the end of each I had returned to this joyful freedom.

It was the first cloud that passed over my thought. "Must I return again to earth?" I said.

"Oh, yes," said the other, "you see that; you will soon return again—but never mind that now; you are here to drink your fill of the beautiful things which you will only remember by glimpses and visions when you are back in the little life again."

And then I had a sudden intuition. I seemed to be suddenly in a small and ugly street of a dark town. I saw slatternly women run in and out of the houses; I saw smoke-stained, grimy children playing in the gutter. . . . I knew in a sad flash of thought that I was to be born there, to be brought up as a wailing child, under sad and sordid conditions, to struggle into



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a life of hard and hopeless labour, in the midst of vice, and poverty, and drunkenness, and hard wage. It filled me for a moment with a sort of nervous dread, remembering the free and liberal conditions of my last life, the wealth and comfort I had enjoyed.

"No," said the other, for in a moment I was back again, "that is an unworthy thought—it is but for a moment; and you will return to this peace again."

But the sad thought came down upon me like a cloud. "Is there no escape?" I said. And at that, in a moment, the other spirit seemed to chide me, not angrily, but patiently and compassionately.

"One suffers," he said, "but one gains experience; one rises,"—adding more quietly: "we do not know why it must be, of course—but it is the Will; and, however much one may doubt and suffer in the dark world there, one does not doubt of the wisdom or the love of it here." And I knew in a moment that I did not doubt, but that I would go willingly wherever I should be sent.

A. C. BENSON  
*(The Thread of Gold).*

WHEN the time for birth comes, a body is chosen of a special type, suitable for the soul's acquirement of the experience needed at that special time. . . . It is not that the body by long-continued effort is wrought into the likeness of the soul, though there is some truth in this view also, but that the type of body is arranged beforehand to suit and express the type of Personality which requires manifestation during this earth-life. In short, the body is made to fit the Personality just as a suit of clothes is made to fit the body; and, since this is the case, it is not to be wondered at that the shape, size, structure, and contour of the body and its parts should show the character of the person who uses that body as a vehicle.

. . . . .

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The inner or real man is brought into touch with his physical environment by means of his physical body. . . . The not-yet-incarnate soul, descending towards birth, requires a physical body to bring it into touch with the physical world, and until it has acquired one the physical side of things can make no impression upon it. . . . The soul brings its various faculties with it when it is born upon this earth, but its possibility of using them efficiently depends upon the kind of body that is given to it. . . . We have apparently to see in body a kind of physical epitome or expression for the whole of the soul's character, or rather for so much of it as succeeds in manifesting during the space of one lifetime. . . . Body is a living mask which hides, and yet at the same time expresses, the man who wears it.

ALAN LEO  
(*Esoteric Astrology*).

**W**HAT we are, what we have, all our good qualities, are the result of our own actions in the past. What we lack in physical, moral, or mental excellence may yet be ours in the future.

Exactly as we cannot do otherwise than take up our lives each morning where we laid them down the preceding night, so by our work in previous lives have we made the conditions under which we now live and labour, and are at present creating the conditions of our future lives. . . .

Genius is the hall-mark of the advanced soul. . . . It reveals a glimpse of the degree of attainment which will be the common possession of the Coming Race. . . .

The twin laws of Rebirth and Consequence solve, in a rational manner, all the problems incident to human life as man steadily advances towards the next stage in evolution—the Superman. . . .

Spirits incarnate only to gain experience ; to conquer the world ; to overcome the lower self—attain self-mastery. When we realise this we shall understand

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that there comes a time when there is no further need for incarnation, because the lessons have all been learned. . . .

A man who has evolved so far as to have an individual, separate soul cannot turn back in his progress and enter the vehicle of animal or plant, which are under a group-spirit. The individual spirit is a higher evolution than the group-spirit, and the lesser cannot contain the greater.

MAX HEINDEL

*(The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception).*

AND in the ecstatic void the vision of the whole cycle of my existence began to be revealed to me, rolling itself backwards into the unguessed deeps of the past, so that I might learn. I saw the endless series of my lives, recurring and recurring in sequences of three—the imprisonment in the double envelope, the partial freedom of the single radiant envelope, and the freedom. The last an ageless realisation, the second a long purgation, the first an ordeal brief but full of fate! . . . I ceased to be Morrice Loring, and became a legion. These lives flashed up before me, one anterior to another, mere moments between the vast periods that separated them. . . . And one life was not more important to me than another. All were equally indispensable and disciplinal. The variety of those imprisonments seemed endless. Some were fevers of desire; others had almost the calmness of a final wisdom. Some were cruel; some were kind. In some the double barriers were so thin that the immortal prisoner shone through them, and men wondered. And in the next the walls might be hopelessly thick again. . . . Undulations in the curve of evolution.

But as the remoter past swam towards me in this vision, the development of that prisoner which was I showed unmistakable. He had seemed to be helplessly isolated in the prison named Morrice Loring, but in



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the light of comparison it was not so. Far back in the chain his captivity had far more closely resembled death, and his powers had far more closely resembled utter impotence.

And still at each dissolution of the prison a radiant envelope escaped, and the prisoner escaped from the radiance into the uncoloured light, and ultimately gazed amid an invisible splendour, as now he gazed, at the spectacle of his evolution, to gather the harvest of experience.

ARNOLD BENNETT  
(*The Glimpse*).

“ I CAN see no wisdom or purpose in anything now but to get to one’s journey’s end as quickly and as bravely as one can. And even then, even if we do call life a journey, and death the inn we shall reach at last in the evening when it’s over ; that, too, I feel will be only as brief a stopping-place as any other inn would be. Our experience here is so scanty and shallow—nothing more than the moment of the continual present. Surely that must go on, even if one does call it eternity. And so we shall all have to begin again. . . . There are so many of us, so many selves, I mean ; and they all seem to have a voice in the matter.”

“ But surely,” she began in a low voice, still steadily sewing, “ that was our compact last night—that you should let me help, that you should trust me just as you trusted the mother years ago who came in the little cart with the shaggy, dusty pony to the homesick boy watching at the window. Perhaps,” she added, her fingers trembling, “ in this odd shuffle of souls and faces, I *am* that mother, and most frightfully anxious you should not give in.” . . . “ What worlds we’ve seen together, you and I. And then—another parting. . . .

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It has all, my one dear, happened scores of times before—mother and child and friend—and lovers that are all these too, like us.”

WALTER DE LA MARE  
(*The Return*).

“ARCHDALE has been endowed with tremendous gifts. If I believed in reincarnation, I should be willing to admit that he is ‘one of the best,’ that, in short, his amazing pre-eminence would indicate—how shall I put it?—evidence of an accumulation of talents and rewards.”

Thellusson laughed and shrugged his shoulders.

“You represent accumulations also.”

“I do—I do. It’s amazing. And if one knew a little more——”

“Happiness is as contagious as influenza; probably more so. But, mind you, I could not have been really happy had I not believed in reincarnation. The doctrine permeates nearly all philosophies and has been accepted by the greater portion of the human race. To me it explains adequately the mysteries of sin and suffering, and the apparent injustice involved in lives widely and cruelly differentiated.”

H. A. VACHELL  
(*The Other Side*).

OLD is the soul, and otherwhere  
Read once with shining eyes  
The Word’s compounded meanings rare  
And her own mysteries.

FROM the deeps within ourselves,  
Above the common interests of sense,  
Strange pasts at times well up, of leaf and bud,  
And we who know not truly what we are  
Know also not, yet guess, what once we were.

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'TIS scarcely true that souls come naked down  
To take abode up in this earthly town,  
Or naked pass—all that they wear denied :  
We enter slip-shod and with clothes awry,  
And we take with us much that by and by  
May prove no easy task to put aside.

A. E. WAITE.  
(*Collected Poems*).

IF it be admitted that the soul of the savage is destined to live and to evolve, and that he is not doomed for eternity to his present unjust state, but that his evolution will take place after death and in other worlds, then the principle of soul-evolution is conceded, and the question of the place of evolution alone remains. . . . The Ancient Wisdom teaches, indeed, that the soul progresses through many worlds, but it also teaches that he is born in each of these worlds over and over again, until he has completed the evolution possible in that world. The worlds themselves, according to its teaching, form an evolutionary chain, and each plays its own part as a field for certain stages of evolution. Our own world offers a field suitable for the evolution of the mineral, vegetable, animal, and human kingdoms, and therefore collective and individual reincarnation goes on upon it in all these kingdoms. Truly, further evolution lies before us in other worlds, but in the divine order they are not open to us until we have learned and mastered the lessons our own world has to teach.

. . . . .

Just as the memory of some of the present life is indrawn beyond the reach of the waking consciousness . . . so is the memory of the past lives stored up out of reach of the physical consciousness. It is all with the Thinker, who alone persists from life to life ; he has the whole book of memory within his reach, for he is the only ' I ' that has passed through all the experiences recorded



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therein. . . . The difficulty of memory does not lie in forgetfulness, for the lower vehicle, the physical body, has never passed through the previous lives of its owner ; it lies in the absorption of the present body in its present environment, and in its coarse irresponsiveness to the delicate thrills in which alone the soul can speak. . . .

Memory of their own past lives, however, is possessed by a considerable number of people who . . . have learned how much richer life becomes when memories of past lives pour into it, when the friends of this brief day are found to be the friends of long ago, and old remembrances strengthen the ties of the fleeting present. Life gains security and dignity when it is seen with a long vista behind it, and when the loves of old reappear in the loves of to-day. Death fades into its proper place as a mere incident in life, a change from one scene to another, like a journey that separates bodies but cannot sunder friend from friend. The links of the present are found to be part of a golden chain that stretches backwards, and the future can be faced with a glad security in the thought that these links will endure through days to come and form part of that unbroken chain.

With reincarnation man is a dignified, immortal being, evolving towards a divinely glorious end ; without it, he is a tossing straw on the stream of chance circumstances, irresponsible for his character, for his actions, for his destiny.

ANNIE BESANT  
*(The Ancient Wisdom).*

THE right way of looking on Reincarnation is that it is a theory of immortality, a theory of the way in which the human spirit unfolds his powers in an endless life. . . . The experience gained in one life, according to this theory, is carried through the gateway

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of death . . . the man passing from life to life gathering experience, and, out of the body in which experience is gathered, assimilating the whole of it, so that it becomes the faculties of the soul. . . . Such a theory is eminently just. It puts no one man at a disadvantage over against another. And it makes everyone's position depend, first, on the time that lies behind him—a necessary factor—and then on the effort that he makes to lead the human rather than the animal life. . . . Looked at thus, the highest genius is only the victor in innumerable combats; the noblest saint is only the conqueror in innumerable battles. The character that a man brings with him at birth is the character that he has made during his past. Emphatically everyone is self-made, made from within, building character life after life.

. . . . .

You have forgotten your childhood, though you have the same physical brain now. In another life you had a different brain. . . . It is only the Spirit which passes from life to life, with its three great qualities of Will, Cognition, and Activity. The whole of the rest of you is new with each birth, and before the Heavenly Life is over all the experience which has been changed into character is handed on to the Spirit that dies not. . . . If, then, you are to remember, you must reach the memory of the Spirit.

ANNIE BESANT

(From a Lecture on *Reincarnation*).

**I** HOLD that when a person dies  
His soul returns again to earth;  
Arrayed in some new flesh-disguise,  
Another mother gives him birth.  
With sturdier limbs and brighter brain  
The old soul takes the road again.

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Such is my own belief and trust ;  
This hand, this hand that holds the pen,  
Has many a hundred times been dust  
And turned, as dust, to dust again ;  
These eyes of mine have blinked and shone  
In Thebes, in Troy, in Babylon.

All that I rightly think or do,  
Or make, or spoil, or bless, or blast,  
Is curse or blessing justly due  
For sloth or effort in the past.  
My life's a statement of the sum  
Of vice indulged, or overcome.

I know that in my lives to be  
My sorry heart will ache and burn,  
And worship unavailingly  
The woman whom I used to spurn,  
And shake to see another have  
The love I spurned, the love she gave.

And I shall know, in angry words,  
In gibes, and mocks, and many a tear,  
A carrion flock of homing-birds,  
The gibes and scorns I uttered here.  
The brave word that I failed to speak  
Will brand me dastard on the cheek.

And as I wander on the roads  
I shall be helped and healed and blessed ;  
Kind words shall cheer and be as goads  
To urge to heights before unguessed.  
My road shall be the road I made,  
All that I gave shall be repaid.

So shall I fight, so shall I tread,  
In this long war beneath the stars ;



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So shall a glory wreath my head,  
So shall I faint and show the scars,  
Until this case, this clogging mould,  
Be smithied all to kingly gold.

JOHN MASEFIELD  
(*A Creed*).

IT is, I think, a really consoling idea that our present capacities are determined by our previous actions, and that our present actions again will determine our future character. It seems to liberate us from the bonds of an external fate and make us the captains of our own destinies. If we have formed here a beautiful relation, it will not perish at death, but be perpetuated, albeit unconsciously, in some future life. If we have developed a faculty here, it will not be destroyed, but will be the starting-point of later developments. Again, if we suffer, as most people do, from imperfections and misfortunes, it would be consoling to believe that these were punishments of our own acts in the past, not mere effects of the acts of other people, or of an indifferent nature over which we have no control. The world on this hypothesis would at least seem juster than it does on the positivist view, and that in itself would be a great gain.

. . . . .

Of all the dawns that I have watched in the mountains, never was one like that I saw to-day. I forgot the glacier, and was aware only of the stars. Through the chinks in my prison wall they blazed brighter and brighter, till where they shone it fell away, and I looked out on the Past. I knew myself to be more than myself, an epitome of the generations; and I travelled again, from the source, my life which is the life of Man. I was a shepherd pasturing flocks on star-lit plains of Asia; I was an Egyptian priest on his tower conning the oracles of the sky; I was a Greek sailor with Boötes

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and Orion for my guides ; I was Endymion entranced  
on mountains of Arcady. I saw the star of Bethlehem  
and heard the angels sing ; I spoke with Ptolemy, and  
watched the night with Galileo. A thousand times I  
had died, a thousand times been born. By those births  
and deaths my course was marked through the night  
of Time.

PROFESSOR G. LOWES DICKINSON  
(*Religion and Immortality*).

WHILE I gaze  
I seem to watch unfold  
Some long-forgotten life I lived of old  
In beauty-worshipping Athenian days.

O godlike voice of wisdom ! Master-Sage !  
Break from the dream that binds thee now ; return  
Here to this earth and all the hearts that yearn.  
The world is waiting, worn : redeem this age—  
Ah, quench the bitter thirst with which we burn ;  
And with thy wisdom make us re-aspire  
To all things high and beautiful and strong ;  
Bring back the joy that we have lost so long—  
Teach us to love, and with thy spirit of fire  
Cleanse the whole world ;—or, if this may not be,  
Gather about thyself some ardent few  
That seek the Good, the True,  
As in those garden-lawns that here we see,  
And once, two thousand years ago, we knew.

CLIFFORD BAX  
(*The School of Plato*, written after seeing the  
great fresco,  
*L'Ecole de Platon*, by Jean Delville).

EARTH is the great primeval revelation  
Set for the soul, considering, to divine,  
And we, too slow for wise interpretation,  
Take now from earth our sign ;

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Take now assurance of that Pervading Spirit,  
At Whose word April with impulsive breath  
Stirs the white world, how all things here inherit  
Alternate life and death.

Wherefore shalt thou, new-born in after ages,  
Weave of new words a second golden fleece,  
As once he taught, the kingliest of all sages,  
In the noon-time of Greece.

Yea, the mute lyre that we have heard, have cherished,  
Again shall make man brother to sea and earth—  
A little while sleep on! Thou art not perished,  
Not dead, but waiting birth.

CLIFFORD BAX

*(Threnody on the Death of Swinburne).*

THIS, the unageing spirit, alone  
Divines a glory that none has known,  
For only with eyes of eternal youth  
Does any gaze on beauty or truth.

Itself unshaken by death and birth,  
It looks through time at the soul on earth,

And, like one tale among many, hears  
The dream that moves her to joy or tears.

Was it a single dream that wrought  
This I, this tangle of sense and thought?

Though all but the last may lie unguessed,  
The immortal self is a palimpsest

That many a hand in many a clime  
Covered with tragic or laughing rhyme.



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Death shall close the outward eyes,  
But nothing which can see death dies.

CLIFFORD BAX  
(*The Traveller's Tale*).

WHAT though I vaunted that I could prove any proposition to which I then subscribed? Poetry, like the sea, undermined those intellectual sand-castles; and when I read

Oh, light our life in Babylon, but Babylon has taken wings,  
While we are in the calm and proud procession of eternal things,

I might still have adduced objections to the theory of reincarnation, but something within me had apprehended that it is true.

A man became for me now the protagonist of a stupendous saga. . . . Behind him I saw innumerable lives that stretched far back beyond even the first ages of the earth, an endless record of slow descent into matter, a chain of cause and effect that had its origin only in the Darkness Thrice Unknown from which the whole universe had once been emanated: and before him I saw the unborn æons through which he should travel on the 'homeward way'; life after life rising like a vision of mountain-peaks beheld from the top of the Apennines, and fading into the dim bloom of a distance immeasurably withdrawn, until at last, transformed from a filth-eating fool to a spirit of unimaginable beauty, he should put on the gnostic 'Robe of Glory' and be lost in the central light.

CLIFFORD BAX  
(*Inland Far*).

GUEST: It's not only the poor it pays to be careful with. You can't say for a certainty, who any man might have been in his last existence, nor what he is doing on earth.

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*Leah* : Grandmother, every one of us is born to a long life of many many years. If he die before his years are done, what becomes of the life he has not lived, do you think? What becomes of his joys and sorrows, and all the thoughts he had not time to think, and all the things he hadn't time to do . . . ? No human life goes to waste. If one of us dies before his time, his soul returns to earth to complete its span, to do the things left undone and experience the happiness and griefs he would have known. . . .

*Messenger* : The souls of the dead *do* return to earth, but not as disembodied spirits. Some must pass through many forms before they achieve purification. (*Leah listens with ever-increasing attention.*) The souls of the wicked return in the form of beasts, or birds, or fish—of plants even, and are powerless to purify themselves by their own efforts. They have to wait for the coming of some righteous sage to purge them of their sins and set them free. Others enter the bodies of the newly-born, and cleanse themselves by well-doing.

*Leah* : (In tremulous eagerness) Yes . . . Yes. . . .

*Messenger* : Besides these, there are vagrant souls which, finding neither rest nor harbour, pass into the bodies of the living, in the form of a Dybbuk, until they have attained purity.

*Rabbi Azrael* : Every day of a man's life is the Day of Atonement, and every word he speaks from his heart is the name of the Lord. Therefore the sin of any man, whether of commission or of omission brings the ruin of a whole world in its train. (*His voice becomes weaker and weaker.*) Through many transmigrations, the human soul is drawn by pain and grief, as the child to its mother's breast, to the source of its being, the Exalted Throne above. But it sometimes happens that a soul

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which has attained to the final state of purification suddenly becomes the prey of evil forces which cause it to slip and fall. And the higher it has soared, the deeper it falls.

S. ANSKY

(*The Dybbuk*).

(Translated from the Yiddish by  
HENRY ALSBERG and WINIFRED KATZIN.)

LONG ere from immanent silence leapt  
Obedient hands and fashioning will,  
The giant god within us slept,  
And dreamt of seasons to fulfil  
The shaping of our souls that still  
Expectant earthward vigil kept ;  
Our wisdom grew from secrets drawn  
From that far-off dim-memored dawn.

JOHN DRINKWATER.

THERE is a certain amount of valuable evidence on the subject of reincarnation memories, quite apart from the plausibility of the hypothesis on general grounds. I would not, however, suggest that evidence of this kind has ever been put together sufficient, either in quantity or quality, to afford anything like conclusive proof. The most important argument must still remain that from the *à priori* probabilities of the case. The position claimed is that reincarnation explains the problems of life as no other solution propounded has ever yet done, that it is neither inconsistent with the most advanced theories of science, nor with religion in its highest form, that it offers a stimulus to human effort which we look for in vain elsewhere, and that, at a time when the materialistic hypothesis has hopelessly broken down, it stands before the world as the only coherent and rational alternative



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to this hypothesis that so far, at any rate, has been submitted for approval to the considered judgment of mankind.

HON. RALPH SHIRLEY  
(*The Occult Review*, May 1913).

DEEP Womb of Promise! back to thee again  
And forth, revived, all living things  
Do come and go,  
For ever wax and wane into and from thy garden;  
There the flower springs,  
Therein does grow  
The bud of hope, the miracle to come,  
For whose dear advent we are striving, dumb  
And joyless: Garden of Delight  
That God has sowed!  
In thee the flower of flowers,  
The apple of our tree,  
The banner of our towers,  
The recompense for every misery,  
The angel-man, the purity, the light  
Whom we are working to, has his abode:  
Until our back and forth, our life and death  
And life again, our going and return  
Prepare the way: until our latest breath,  
Deep-drawn and agonised, for him shall burn  
A path: for him prepare  
Laughter and love and singing everywhere;  
A morning and a sunrise and a day!

JAMES STEPHENS  
(*A Prelude and a Song*).

HIS body lying very still, he began to remember, but it was remembering with a deeper and fuller pulse than was ordinarily the case. He remembered that younger brother who was dead, and not him alone, but many another, kindred and friends and associates.

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The past lived again, but lived with a difference. What multitudes of kindred, and friends, and associates! The meeting went deep and wide. Had he touched all those in one life, or had it been in many lives? . . . However it might be, it was a world transmuted and without pain.

“ And when the last human being has crossed? ”

“ Then will the others come on into humanity—they that we call the animals. And those behind them will lift to where they were. But our wave goes on into the spiritual world that is the world of subtler matter, vaster energy, understanding at last, love at last, beauty at last.”

As Curtin rode he thought that he faintly remembered all the forests of the world. “ Is it infectious? Is it because in some sort Drew remembers, or is it because I have been—and surely I *have* been—in all the forests of the world? ”

The momentary outlines shifted. There fell a sense of having done this times and times and times, a sense of hut and cave, so often, so long, in so many lands, that there was a feel of eternity about it. Rain and the cave and the fire, and the inner man still busied with his destiny! There was something that awed in the perception that ran from one to another, that held them in a swift, shimmering band. ‘ How old—how old! How long have we done this? ’

The rhythm of the storm, the rhythm of the room, the rhythm of the fire, passed into a vast, still sense of ordered movement. ‘ Of old, and now, and to-morrow—everywhere and all time—until we return above time and place, and division is healed.’

MARY JOHNSTON  
(*Sweet Rocket*).

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WE piled the crackling brushwood sticks,  
With the dead brown stalks of fern,  
Into a heap, and lighted six  
Matches to make it burn.

And I stood on the windward side,  
And you upon the lee ;  
The blue smoke drifted like a tide  
Ebbing to you from me.

Through eddying wreaths I saw your eyes  
Narrowed, as if you were  
In mirth, or pain, or sharp surprise,  
Or fear too keen to bear.

The hazel leaves had a stir and thrill  
As if they watched men die ;  
And the centuries tumbled at a shrill,  
Sharp, long-forgotten cry.

The lit twigs cracked, the flame put out  
A quivering glutton's tongue ;  
The cruel beech-trees pressed about  
To see you burn so young.

The red fire leapt and lit your face ;  
I winced—you were so white  
To have come once more to the ancient place  
Of red pain and black night.

But sudden the flaming gates of hell  
That had opened, closed again ;  
For, breaking through the still trees, fell  
Big-dropped, the blessed rain.



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And hell's door and time's door  
They both crashed to together,  
And the devil's oven was no more  
Than a bonfire spoilt by weather.

The great drops hurrying through the trees  
Were like the noise of feet,  
As if back through the centuries  
A strayed hour beat retreat.

I heard you speak from miles away—  
A strange, far, hollow sound.  
You said it was no use to stay,  
The bonfire was quite drowned.

ROSE MACAULAY  
(*The Door*).

NO planet knows that this  
Our wayside planet, carrying land and wave,  
Love and life multiplied, and pain and bliss,  
Bears, as chief treasure, one forsaken grave.

Nor, in our little day,  
May His devices with the heavens be guessed,  
His pilgrimage to thread the Milky Way,  
Or His bestowals there be manifest.

But in the eternities,  
Doubtless we shall compare together, hear  
A million alien Gospels, in what guise  
He trod the Pleiades, the Lyre, the Bear.

O, be prepared, my soul!  
To read the inconceivable, to scan  
The million forms of God those stars unroll  
When, in our turn, we show to them a Man.

ALICE MEYNELL  
(*Christ in the Universe*).

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IF those shape-changings yet may be  
That Ovid and his kindred sing,  
Make me a broad bird-haunted tree,  
Earth-rooted, yet with heart to spring  
So heavenly high that, when the glades  
Hold it as truth that all is right,  
I may assert above their shades  
The flouted legend of the light.

If those shape-changings may be still  
That Ovid and his kindred sang,  
Make me a calm exalted hill  
Where secret-symbolled curtains hang  
So thick that mortals travel-proud  
In vain my sky-tranced summit seek,  
But judge by its enfolding cloud  
The hidden stature of the peak.

JAMES H. COUSINS  
(*Metamorphoses*).

IN the dusky path of a dream I went to seek the love  
who was mine in a former life.  
Her house stood at the end of a desolate street.  
In the evening breeze her pet peacock sat drowsing  
on its perch, and the pigeons were silent in their corner.  
She set her lamp down by the portal and stood  
before me.  
She raised her large eyes to my face, and mutely  
asked, "Are you well, my friend?"  
I tried to answer, but our language had been lost  
and forgotten.  
I thought and thought; our names would not come  
to my mind.  
Tears shone in her eyes. She held up her right hand  
to me. I took it and stood silent.  
Our lamp had flickered in the evening breeze and died.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE  
(*The Gardener*).

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THOSE who, by means of meditation, rise to that which unites man with spirit are bringing to life within them the eternal element which is limited by neither birth nor death. Only those who have had no experience of it themselves can doubt the existence of this eternal element. Thus meditation becomes the way by which man also attains to recognition and contemplation of his eternal, indestructible, essential being. . . . Gnosis and Theosophy tell of the eternal nature of this essential being, and of its reincarnation. The question is often asked: 'Why does a man know nothing of those experiences which lie beyond the borders of birth and death?' Not thus should we ask, but rather: 'How may we attain to such knowledge?' The entrance to the Path is opened by right meditation.

RUDOLF STEINER  
(*The Way of Initiation*).

THE comings out and the goings into matter are no more than the systole and diastole of the ego-heart; and, speaking from the standpoint of eternity, they are relatively as brief. To you a lifetime is a long time. It used to seem so to me, but it does not seem so now. . . .

You should get away from the mental habit of regarding your present life as the only one, get rid of the idea that the life you expect to lead on this side, after your death, is to be an endless existence in one state. . . .

Many people resent the idea that the life after death is not eternal, a never-ending progression in spiritual realms; though few who so object have much of an idea what they mean when they talk of spiritual realms.

Life everlasting is possible to all souls—yes; but it is not possible to go on for ever in one direction. . . . Unless you are willing to go in and out of dense matter,



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you will never learn to transcend matter. There are those who can stay in or out at will, and, relatively speaking, as long as they choose ; but they are never those who shrink from either form of life.

I used to shrink from what I called death. There are those on this side who shrink from what *they* call death. Do you know what they call death? It is rebirth into the world. Yes, even so.

*Letters from a Living Dead Man*  
(Written down by ELSA BARKER).

THE darkness draws me, kindly angels weep  
Forlorn beyond receding rays of light,  
The torrent of the earth's desires sweep  
My soul through twilight downward into night.

Once more the light grows dim, the vision fades ;  
Myself seems to myself a distant goal ;  
I grope among the bodies' drowsy shades,  
Once more the old Illusion rocks my soul.

Once more the Manifold in shadowy streams  
Of falling waters murmurs in my ears ;  
The One Voice drowns amid the roar of dreams  
That crowd the narrow pathway of the years.

I go to seek the starshine on the waves,  
To count the dewdrops on the grassy hill ;  
I go to gather flowers that grow on graves ;  
The world's will closes round my prisoned will.

Yea, for the sake of the wild western wind,  
The spherèd spirit scorns her flame-built throne ;  
Because of primroses in time of mind,  
The Lonely turns away from the Alone.

Who once has loved the cornfield's rustling sheaves,  
Who once has heard the gentle Irish rain  
Murmur low music in the growing leaves,  
Though he were god, comes back to earth again.

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Oh earth, green wind-swept Erin, I would break  
The tower of my soul's initiate pride  
For a gray field and a star-haunted lake,  
And those wet winds that roam the country-side.

I who have seen am glad to close my eyes,  
I who have soared am weary of my wings ;  
I seek no more the secret of the Wise,  
Safe among shadowy, unreal human things.

Blind to the gleam of those wild violet rays  
That burn beyond the rainbow's circle dim,  
Bound by dark nights, and driven by pale days,  
The sightless slave of time's imperious whim ;

Deaf to the flowing tide of dreams divine  
That surge outside the closed gates of birth,  
The rhythms of Eternity, too fine  
To touch with music the dull ears of Earth—

I go to seek with humble care and toil  
The dreams I left undreamed, the deeds undone,  
To sow the seed and break the stubborn soil,  
Knowing no brightness whiter than the sun—

Content in winter if the fire burns clear,  
And cottage walls keep out the creeping damp,  
Hugging the old Illusion, warm and dear,  
The Silence and the Wise Book and the Lamp.

EVA GORE-BOOTH  
(*Re-incarnation*).

**I**N the days of Atlantis, under the wave,  
I was a slave, the child of a slave.

When the towers of Atlantis fell  
I died, and was born again in hell.

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From that sorrowful prison I did escape,  
And hid myself in a hero's shape.

But few years had I of love or joy,  
A Trojan, I fell at the siege of Troy.

I came again in a little while,  
An Israelite slave on the banks of the Nile.

By the Ganges I was an outcast born,  
A wanderer and a child of scorn.

By the waters of Babylon I wept,  
My harp among the willows slept.

In the land of Greece I opened my eyes  
To reap the fields of Plotinus the wise.

When the great light shattered the world's closed bars,  
I was a shepherd who gazed at the stars.

For lives that were lonely, obscure, apart,  
I thank the Hidden One in my heart.

That always and always under the sun  
I went forth to battle and never won.

One thing I have learnt the long years through,  
To know the false words from the true ;

The slave who toiled on the banks of the Nile  
With wisdom gladdened his long exile ;

From Buddha at eve at the Ganges' side  
An outcast learnt the worth of the world's pride ;

Amongst the stars on a Syrian night,  
A shepherd found the Light of Light ;



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From dream to dream, o'er valley and hill,  
I followed the Lord Christ's wandering will.

Behold, there are kings who would change with me  
For love of the ancient mystery.

Shepherd and reaper and slave I have been,  
There are few who have seen what I have seen.

Beggar and reaper and shepherd and slave,  
I am one who rests not in any grave ;

I will follow each stormy Light divine,  
And the secret of all things shall be mine.

These things have I seen. Would you bid me mourn  
That I was never an Emperor born ?

EVA GORE-BOOTH  
(*The Vagrant's Romance*).

EVERY spiritual vibration in the self is immortal, therefore the inner spiritual essence of the self, the real Ego in us, of eternal life, cannot die, and continues from one 'generation,' or birth, to another. But every false vibration dies out. The whole self is like a plant cut down to its roots to grow again next year. The plant grows again, altered in many ways by different weather and earth conditions. It is the same in tendency, modified by different stimuli. The new psyche is what belongs to one by right ; it is the result of every one of one's will vibrations in the Universal Element. Therefore the new psyche holds, in unconsciousness, the whole history of one's past psychic and spiritual living. Will is, of course, the sum of millions of vibrations of desire in a given direction, so that the sum of one's desires seems to be the material out of which one's animal life is built, now, and in the future.

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Thus to know yourself is to gain knowledge of the vibrations of past lives. . . .

These vibrations are the temptations to evil within us; they are also what we call our natural good instincts, as they form our natural characters: and their inter-relations with the desires of other lives work out into the circumstances and events of our lives. . . .

It is only in this life that we suffer the results of our mistakes in living . . . there is no pain in eternal or real life, the life of lives. . . . On its negative side, this eternal life that Christ offers to all men, now at once, is a deliverance from reincarnation, from the life and death circle of this earthly living, not from any torments of a bodiless state, but simply from the body of this death.

The suggestion of the idea of a form of reincarnation as a substitute for the hell of the Middle Ages, and as explanation of those strange sentences in which Christ seems to attach conditions to the attainment of Eternal Life, will doubtless seem unfamiliar and even forbidding to modern readers, though to the Jews and the Greeks such an idea would be familiar enough. The Church doubtless cast it out as a heresy, perhaps because of its connection with Greek philosophy as well as Jewish tradition. But then so strong was their horror of anything connected with the heathen world, that the early fathers also condemned washing, presumably because of the association of the baths with the immoral everyday life of heathen Rome. . . . But there is so very much in the New Testament that seems to give colour and authenticity to such a doctrine, that I would appeal to followers of Christ to overcome any shrinking from a conception usually associated with Pagan thought, and give the suggestion full and honest consideration in their study of the Gospels and Epistles. . . .

The idea of a succession of lives and deaths, following one another, for those who have not yet attained real life—are not yet Sons of God and children of the Resurrection—seems to illuminate, in a curious way, some of

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Christ's most profound and seemingly paradoxical teaching on the destiny and the hope, the life or death, of the human psyche.

EVA GORE-BOOTH

*(A Psychological and Poetic Approach to the Study of Christ in the Fourth Gospel).*

**D**EATH is the absence of Love. Love brings us back to life, again and again, through Reincarnation, till in the end Love gains that great response from the love in us, which flings us into the circle of transmuting Force that is in God, and we are raised to Eternal Love, Truth, and Life.

At the beginning of each incarnation we have the wine of youth, a beautiful and joyous thing. But what is that to the Wine of Eternal Life, at the end of all incarnations, the noble or beautiful wine, as St. John called it?

EVA GORE-BOOTH

*(The Inner Kingdom).*

**H**OW all the stars did glitter and gleam  
Through the gate of ivory, open wide,  
Last time I died,  
Cradled in the soft arms of a dream.

Through the gate of horn in mercy and ruth,  
May the One Light shine from a blue sky  
Next time I die,  
Clasping the feet of the Beautiful Truth.

Love, all our little lives forgive,  
On pain and failure be Thy radiance shed,  
Raise Thou the Dead,  
Give Truth to all the world, that all may live.

EVA GORE-BOOTH

*(Yesterday and To-morrow).*

*(From The Shepherd of Eternity.)*



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THE souls that united in a common work in Greece scattered and have since gone forth into many nations. The sculptors and painters reincarnated in the middle ages in Italy as the great masters of painting; the architects appeared as the great cathedral builders of France, Germany, and Italy. A few of her dramatists were the Elizabethan dramatists of England; and in many countries of Europe the souls that co-operated in the Renaissance were mainly egos from Greece. Every so often individual Greeks still appear in the nations, and their temperament is unmistakable. Goethe, Schiller, and Lessing in Germany, and Byron, Keats, and Shelley in England, are typical of these returned Greeks. But there is no reincarnation of the Periclean Greeks as a body, making a separate nation; Greece was as a forcing-house, and her brilliant egos were selected out of all nations, and were returned to their normal homes to carry back with them the leaven that Greece gave.

Nations come and nations pass away; but nations are reborn too. By what we do in them now to serve them we earn the right to be their inspirers and leaders in their future transformations. Time may pass us by, and we grow old and 'die'; but that is only an illusion. We are immortal souls, and the world's history is only the alphabet of our speech, and we fashion the future as we will to fashion it. . . .

For this is the power the Divine Wisdom gives to all who love her—to greet life in all time not as the elders of the sunset, but as the children of the dawn.

C. JINARAJADASA

(*History and Reincarnation*).

(From *Theosophy and Modern Thought*.)

THE man is an Ego, an imperishable circle in the sphere of Divinity; 'long, long ago, indeed, he had his birth, he verily is now within the germ.' He has lived on earth in many a past life, and there thought

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and felt and acted both good and evil ; he has set in motion forces that help or hinder both himself and others. He is bound and not free. But he lives on from age to age to achieve an ideal, which is his Archetype. Just as for plant and animal life there are archetypes of the forms, so are there archetypes for the souls of men. One shall be a great saint of compassion, another a teacher of truth, a third a ruler of men ; artist and scientist, doer and dreamer, each has set before him his archetype, that thought of God Himself of what each man shall be in the perfection of his God-given temperament. And each Ego achieves his archetype by finding his work. For this it is that we, as Egos, come into incarnation—to discover our work and to release the hidden powers within us by battling with circumstances as we achieve our work. . . .

Helps and handicaps, joys and pains, opportunities or privations, are the bricks of the Ego's own making for his temporary habitation ; the Lords of Karma add nothing and take nothing away ; they but adjust the forces of the soul's making so that his ultimate destiny, his archetype, shall be achieved as swiftly as may be as he treads the round of births and deaths.

C. JINARAJADASA

(*The Problem of Heredity*).

(From *Theosophy and Modern Thought*.)

ALL my life I have had an awareness of other times, and places. I have been aware of other persons in me. . . . I, whose lips had never lisped the word 'king,' remembered that I had once been the son of a king. More—I remembered that once I had been a slave and a son of a slave, and worn an iron collar round my neck. Still more, when I was three, and four, and five years of age, I was not yet I. I was a mere becoming, a flux of spirit not yet cooled solid in the mould of my particular flesh and time and place. In that period all that I had ever been in ten thousand lives before strove

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in me, and troubled the flux of me, in the effort to incorporate itself in me and become me.

I, like any man, am a growth. I did not begin when I was born nor when I was conceived. I have been growing, developing, through incalculable myriads of millenniums. All these experiences of all these lives have gone to the making of the soul-stuff or the spirit-stuff that is I. . . . I am this spirit compounded of the memories of my endless incarnations. . . .

I am all of my past, as every protagonist of the Mendelian law must agree. All my previous selves have their voices, echoes, promptings in me. My every mode of action, heat of passion, flicker of thought is shaded, toned—infinitesimally shaded and toned—by that vast array of other selves that preceded me and went into the making of me. . . .

I am man born of woman. My days are few, but the stuff of me is indestructible. I have been woman born of woman. I have been a woman and borne my children. And I shall be born again. Oh, incalculable times again shall I be born; and yet the stupid dolts about me think that by stretching my neck with a rope they will make me cease.

JACK LONDON  
(*The Jacket*).

THE antipathies and sympathies of To-day, the sudden affinities like falling in love at sight, and the sudden hostilities that apparently had no sense—all were due to relationship in some buried Yesterday, while those of To-morrow could be anticipated, and so regulated, by the actions of To-day. Even to the smallest things.

Le Vallon lived in eternal life. He knew that it stretched infinitely behind his present 'section,' and



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infinitely ahead into countless other 'sections.' The results of what lay behind he must inevitably exhaust. Be that harvest painful or pleasant, he must reap what he had sown. But the future lay entirely in his own hands, and in his power of decision; chance or caprice had no word to say at all. And this consciousness of being in eternal life now, at the present moment, master of fate, potentially at least deific—this has remained a part of me, whether I will or no.

To Julius Le Vallon the soul was indeed unconquerable, and man master of his fate. Death lost its ugliness and terror; the sense of broken, separated life was replaced by the security of a continuous existence, whole, unhurried, eternal, affording ample time for all development, accepting joy and suffering as the justice of results, but never as reward or punishment.

ALGERNON BLACKWOOD

(*Julius Le Vallon*).

'OLD Souls' and 'Young Souls' was a classification that ruled my mind in this period. . . . In the Old lay innate the fruits, the results, the memories of many, many previous lives, and the ripeness of long experience showed itself in certain ways—in taste, in judgment, in their standard of values, in that mysterious quality called tact: above all, perhaps, in the type and quality of goods they desired from life. Worldly ambitions, so-called, were generally negligible in them. What we label to-day as the subconscious was invariably fully charged; also, without too much difficulty, accessible. It made them interesting, stimulating, not easily exhausted. Wide sympathies, spread charity, and understanding were their hall-marks, and a certain wisdom, as apart from intellect, their invariable gift; with, moreover, a tendency to wit, if not that rare quality wit itself, and humour, the power of seeing, and therefore laughing at, oneself. The cheaper experiences

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of birth, success, possessions, they had learned long ago; it was the more difficult, but higher values they had come back to master, and among the humbler ranks of life they found the necessary conditions. Christ, I reflected, was the son of a carpenter. The Young Souls, on the other hand, were invariably hot-foot after the things of this world—Show, Riches, and Power stuck like red labels on their foreheads. The Napoleons of the earth were among the youngest of all; the intellectuals, those who relied on reason alone, often the prosperous, usually the well-born, were of the same category. Rarely was 'understanding' in them; a brilliant cleverness could never rank with that wisdom which knows that *tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner*. To me the Young Souls were the commonplace and uninteresting ones. They were shallow, sketchy, soon exhausted, the *Dutzend-menschen*: whereas the others were intuitive, mature in outlook, aware of deeper values and eager for the things of the spirit.

ALGERNON BLACKWOOD  
(*Episodes before Thirty*).

I LAID me down upon the shore  
And dreamed a little space;  
I heard the great waves break and roar;  
The sun was on my face.

My idle hands and fingers brown  
Played with the pebbles grey;  
The waves came up, the waves went down,  
Most thundering and gay.

The pebbles, they were smooth and round  
And warm upon my hands,  
Like little people I had found  
Sitting among the sands.

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The grains of sand so shining-small  
Soft through my fingers ran ;  
The sun shone down upon it all,  
And so my dream began.

How all of this had been before :  
How ages far away  
I lay on some forgotten shore  
As here I lie to-day.

The waves came shining up the sands,  
As here to-day they shine ;  
And in my pre-Pelagian hands  
The sand was warm and fine.

I have forgotten whence I came,  
Or what my home might be,  
Or by what strange and savage name  
I called that thundering sea.

I only know the sun shone down  
As still it shines to-day,  
And in my fingers long and brown  
The little pebbles lay.

FRANCES CORNFORD  
(*Pre-existence*).

CERTAINLY the human personality which covers the period from birth to death of the body is destined to perish and to have an end as it had a beginning ; but the real 'individuality,' that which is the essential being, keeps and assimilates to itself, deeply graves in its memory, all states of consciousness of the transitory personality. When, conformably to the palingenesis of which Schopenhauer speaks, it builds up another living personality, it brings to the latter all its permanent gains, and is further enriched by those of the new objectification. It is thus that the will, originally unconscious, becomes a conscious will.



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Against this inference of rebirth, no objections of a scientific kind can be raised. We may seek in vain for a single one in the whole stock of knowledge.

. . . . .

It will evidently be wise to take account only of facts and reasoned deductions from facts in constructing a philosophy of individual evolution. It is on them only that the sovereign beauty and the shining truth of evolution by palingenesis should be based. It needs no other revelation.

. . . . .

Collective evolution, like individual evolution, may be summed up in the formula—transition from the unconscious to the conscious.

The visible person, subject to birth and death, limited in powers, ephemeral in duration, is not the real being, he is only its attenuated, fragmentary, and illusory representation.

The real being, learning little by little to know itself and the universe, is the divine spark on the way to realise its divinity, of unlimited potentialities, creative and eternal.

. . . . .

Ignorance of the past is as great a blessing as ignorance of the future. Only the ideally evolved being will find no drawback in knowing all the vast accumulation of experience—sensations and emotions, efforts and struggles, joys and pains, loves and hates, high and low impulses, self-sacrificing or selfish acts—all, in fact, which has gone to build him up through the multiple personalities which have each specialised in some particular way.

If the commonplace man had but a flash of this knowledge, he would be dumbfounded by it. His present errors and anxieties are as much as he can bear. . . . Remembrance of the past could but impede present effort. . . .

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For animals, and men of very low grade, the phase of existence which follows on death is short and dark. . . . The call of matter asserts itself with irresistible power, and the mystery of rebirth is soon brought about.

But for the more highly evolved man, death bursts the narrow circle within which material life has imprisoned a consciousness which strained against the bounds imposed by profession, family, and country. He finds himself carried far beyond the old habits of thought and memory, the old loves and hatreds, passions and mental habits.

To the degree that his evolutionary level permits, he remembers his past and foresees his future. He knows the road by which he has travelled ; he can judge of his conduct and his efforts. Many things which, in life, appeared to him very important, now, seen from a higher point of view, seem small and petty.

Great joys and great sorrows, mental storms out of all proportion to their causes, the passions which devastate a life, and the ambitions which consume it—all these are reduced to their true values, and hold but a very small place in the chain of remembrance.

Some of the links with the past are easily broken ; they pass away like the mists of dawn. Some are strong ; they are part of the unbreakable chain of destiny, and can be unwound only little by little.

There are good days and bad days, good lives and bad lives ; days and lives which are profitable ; days and lives that are lost. A single day and a single life cannot be appraised apart from preceding days and lives : they form a chain of consequences. . . . Lives as well as days are separated from one another by a period of seeming repose which is, nevertheless, one of useful assimilation and preparation ; and as on waking we find many problems solved as if by magic, so it is at the dawn of another life. . . .

Thus, from one existence to another, the Self comes

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slowly, and by the vast accumulation of stored and assimilated experiences, to the higher phases of life that are reserved to the complete development of its consciousness—to the complete consciousness that realises all.

GUSTAVE GELEY

(*From the Unconscious to the Conscious*).

(Translated by STANLEY DE BRATH.)

HOW can I leave the garden that I made,  
The flowers I planted,  
And the paths I laid;  
The cedar through whose boughs the sunbeams slanted  
On summer mornings, while the blackbird played  
A golden flute, whose melodies enchanted  
Drew dancing angels down from heaven's glade,  
Till all the grass by starry feet was haunted,  
And dew-bright wings fled, gleaming, thro' the  
shade?

How shall I bear it when my blossoms fade,  
When lost are all the treasures that I vaunted,  
And Death's dark Hand the Balance down has weighed?

Nay, rather ask, how shall I bear to leave  
Those other Gardens of Immortal Wonder,  
Where human heart is never left to grieve,  
But long may dream and ponder  
'Neath God's o'ershadowing Heart, and can achieve  
No deeper joy than listening to the thunder  
Of that great Pulse, whose rhythmic beatings weave  
Chains of star-jewels that go circling under  
His Throne, and from His Eyes their light receive?

How from that resting-place shall I retrieve  
My spirit, when the moment comes to sunder  
From heaven's delights, and there is no relieve?

EVA MARTIN

(*Death and Rebirth*).

(*From The White Road*.)



# The Ring of Return

## PART I. *The Garden of Eden*

**THE Serpent:** "The serpent never dies. Some day you shall see me come out of this beautiful skin; a new snake with a new and lovelier skin. That is birth. . . . I made the word dead to describe my old skin that I cast when I am renewed. I call that renewal being born."

**Eve:** "Born is a beautiful word."

**The Serpent:** "Why not be born again and again as I am, new and beautiful every time?"

## PART II. *The Twentieth Century*

**Savvy:** "I believe the old people are the new people, reincarnated, Frank. I suspect I am Eve. I am very fond of apples; and they always disagree with me."

**Conrad:** "You *are* Eve in a sense. The Eternal Life persists; only It wears out Its bodies and minds and gets new ones, like new clothes. You are only a new hat and frock on Eve."

**Franklyn:** "Yes. Bodies and minds ever better fitted to carry out Its eternal pursuit."

**Lubin** (with quiet scepticism): "What pursuit, may one ask, Mr. Barnabas?"

**Franklyn:** "The pursuit of omnipotence and omniscience. Greater power and greater knowledge: these are what we are all pursuing even at the risk of our lives and the sacrifice of our pleasures. Evolution is that pursuit and nothing else. It is the path to Godhead. A man differs from a microbe only in being further on the path."

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW  
(*Back to Methuselah*).

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JOAN: And now tell me: shall I rise from the dead, and come back to you a living woman?

What! Must I burn again? Are none of you ready to receive me?

O God that madest this beautiful earth, when will it be ready to receive Thy saints? How long, O Lord, how long?

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW  
(*Saint Joan*).

THERE are three things that I love,  
Yea, four there be that make my heart to leap  
within me;

The breaking of a wave upon the beach,  
The moorland that stretches immeasurably northward  
from the Grampians,

And the coming of dawn upon the mountains.

The coming of the dawn I love,

When the peewits for a moment are still,

And the moor-cock

For the moment forgets to cry to his mortal  
enemy

In the next-door corrie;

And the moorland I love;

And the sea I love;

But of all things upon this earth

I love most the smile of the beloved.

O my beloved, world-wise, world-old,  
How can you be so young, and smile so oldly?

There is all the sea in your smile;

The dawn upon the mountains is there,

And the purple, brown, interminable moorland.

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You have the whispering of pines,  
And the glamour of the mirage of the Arabian  
deserts,  
The hidden treasures of Ind,  
The wondrous carved work of Cathay,  
Lacquer of azure upon gold  
Giving richly clothed figures  
In willow-hung gardens ornamented with pagodas.

How can you have all these things, beloved,  
In that strange, rich smile of yours?  
How can you have gathered into that smile  
So many treasures of so many lands?  
Sometimes I hear the tinkling of guitars  
Beneath Moorish balconies  
In Moorish Cordova ;  
Sometimes the grinding of Arctic floes,  
When the Samoyede peoples  
Hurriedly pack their smoke-stained tents,  
And fly for the southern pastures.  
And yet,  
Why should you not have all of the sea within  
you,  
And the magic of the dawn,  
And the crying of peewits upon the interminable  
moorlands?  
Within  
The little circle of those lips  
Why may there not be gathered  
All the magic and the remembrance of the world,  
Best beloved?

We have lived with each other,  
And loved each other,  
And fled from each other,  
And followed each other,  
So many, many times ;



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Back and forth, back and forth,  
For richer or poorer,  
In sickness or health,  
Until death did us part ;  
And back we came,  
Back and back to play the old, old game through,  
Loving and leaving and leaving and loving,  
Until—why, my beloved,  
There must be scarce one acre of this weary, bad old  
earth  
We have not trod together  
Some time !

And now—  
Though you have forgotten,  
Yet every now and then,  
Like the lightning that flickers on summer nights  
Low down on the horizon,  
There comes that smile,  
Comes and goes.

Some day, perhaps, you will remember ;  
And then you will know  
Why it is that of all things on this earth  
I love best the smile of my Margaret, my beloved.

J. CALDWELL-JOHNSTON  
(*La Bien Aimée de Tout le Monde*).  
(From *The Book of the Beloved*.)

WHEN the question is asked, 'Where were we before we were born?' we have a definite answer in the system of slow development by incarnation, with long intervals of spirit rest between, while otherwise we have no answer, though we must admit that it is inconceivable that we have been born in time for eternity. Existence afterwards seems to postulate existence before. As to the natural question, 'Why,

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then, do we not remember such existences? ' we may point out that such remembrance would enormously complicate our present life, and that such existences may well form a cycle which is all clear to us when we come to the end of it, when perhaps we may see a whole rosary of lives threaded upon one personality. The convergence of so many lines of theosophic and Eastern thought upon this one conclusion, and the explanation which it affords in the supplementary doctrine of Karma of the apparent injustice of any single life, are arguments in its favour, and so perhaps are those vague recognitions and memories which are occasionally too definite to be easily explained as atavistic impressions.

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE  
(*A History of Spiritualism*).

" I HAVE had a dream, a whole lifetime, two thousand years ago! . . . A lifetime—childhood, boyhood, manhood. . . . I have lived through a whole life in that old world. . . .

" As it happened, death came early enough for me to die with a living love still in my heart." . . .

" To live again," said Sunray very softly.

" And love again," said Sarnac, patting her knee.

. . . . .  
" That tale," said the guest-master stoutly, " was no dream. It was a memory floating up out of the deep darkness of forgotten things into a living brain—a kindred brain."

Sarnac thought. " What is a personality but a memory? If the memory of Harry Mortimer Smith is in my brain, then I am Smith. I feel as sure that I was Smith two thousand years ago as that I was Sarnac this morning. Sometimes before this in my dreams I have had a feeling that I lived again forgotten lives. Have none of you felt like that? " . . .

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"When children have dreams of terror, of being in the wild with howling beasts, of long pursuit and hair-breadth escapes, perhaps it is the memory of some dead creature that lives again in them?" asked Starlight. . . .

"Maybe life from its very beginning has been spinning threads and webs of memories. Not a thing in the past, it may be, that has not left its memories about us. Some day we may learn to gather in that forgotten gossamer, we may learn to weave its strands together again, until the whole past is restored to us, and life becomes one. . . . And however that may be, and however these things may be explained, I can well believe without any miracles that Sarnac has touched down to the real memory of a human life that lived and suffered two thousand years ago." . . .

"And I too believe that," said Sunray. . . . "I do not question for a moment that Sarnac lived that life."

. . . . .

"It was a life," said Sarnac, "and it was a dream, a dream within this life; and this life too is a dream. Dreams within dreams, dreams containing dreams, until we come at last, maybe, to the Dreamer of all dreams, the Being who is all beings. Nothing is too wonderful for life and nothing is too beautiful."

H. G. WELLS  
*(The Dream).*

YOU sing to me, and I have heard that call  
    Played upon flutes two thousand years ago,  
    Delicate flutes whose music's rise and fall  
Drew all the dancers' feet within a snare  
Where mine more wildly stepped to it than all.



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Through empty groves the summer winds now blow,  
And all that youth will no more heed your call,  
But I who perished too can hear it yet.  
Who love it now as then the best of all.

EDWARD STORER  
(*Narkissos*).

**R**EINCARNATION resolves every human problem. It accounts for the astonishing and often heart-breaking contrasts between individuals . . . by the declaration that these varying individuals are at higher or lower stages in the evolution of the race, some having been through a greater number of lives than others, or made better use of their opportunities. And without reincarnation there is no accounting at all for differences between individuals, nor can the fact of contrast between noble and base be denied by any impartial observer. Unless many individuals are to be born again, perhaps many times, they must be written down as God's hopeless failures, glaringly imperfect miscreations. . . . Our life stretches back into the dim and distant past, when we were ape, tiger, bat, insect, bird, plant, creeping slime, or mineral in the depths of the earth. Our life stretches forward into the veiled but glorious future, through life after life of growth, development, lessons learned through joy and pain, lives on the earth and lives in the glorious angel-worlds, until at length, after millions of years, we pass into the perfect rest of spiritual perfection. . . . Not only once, in the earth-life which we know at present, have we laboured, and suffered, and perhaps fallen, and risen again ; not only once have we cherished our dear ones, toiling for their sakes, seeking their happiness. . . . We are age-long friends, companions since the birth of time, companions since the Divine Being begot our psychic individualities in spiritual worlds long ago. The memory of our past has dropped from us for a time, in order that we may endure the discipline of temporary

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separation from our spiritual origins and thus learn our mutual interdependence, and our absolute dependence upon the spiritual world and upon God, and also in order that each new life which we live here on earth may indeed be a new life, a fresh beginning; without the actual recollection of the past—for that would render useless the gates of birth and death—with the fruits of experience carried over in our character and its spiritual powers. . . . Reincarnation is the only solution to life's riddles, for without it life has no rational purpose.

G. BASEDEN BUTT  
(*Modern Psychism*).

TRIVIALITIES. Disproportions. Emptiness. She was impatient of it all.

(She did not know that we create our own surroundings; it is so long a process that no one life can bear witness that we do.)

She fled away, and wrenched open the Gates. But she wasn't ready for what her eyes fell on—

The fullness of Light, the illimitable Distance; the great, luminous Calm.

It was like to have slain her; and she lay as for dead.

*'All Thy waves have passed over me.'*

Yet it was good that she had tired of these former things.

The little boat will wait.

She will look again through the Gates some day, and her eyes, and her heart, and her whole being, will be satisfied.

PAMELA GREY  
(*The Gates*).  
(From *The Vein in the Marble*.)

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**B**RIEF were my days among you, and briefer still the words I have spoken.

But should my voice fade in your ears, and my love vanish in your memory, then I will come again,

And with a richer heart and lips more yielding to the spirit will I speak.

Yea, I shall return with the tide,

And though death may hide me, and the greater silence enfold me, yet again will I seek your understanding. . . .

Know, therefore, that from the greater silence I shall return. . . .

What was given us here we shall keep,

And if it suffices not, then again must we come together and together stretch our hands unto the giver.

Forget not that I shall come back to you.

A little while, and my longing shall gather dust and foam for another body.

A little while, a moment of rest upon the wind, and another woman shall bear me. . . .

If in the twilight of memory we should meet once more, we shall speak again together and you shall sing to me a deeper song.

And if our hands should meet in another dream we shall build another tower in the sky.

KAHLIL GIBRAN  
*(The Prophet).*

**T**HE man sprang to his feet beholding that his life and the tree's were of one stuff. Yea, from such had sprung his body and his soul—out of the dust and dew and heat of a million years, out of unnumbered births and deaths, out of the ancient work of things which lived in sunken continents and seas that are no more. In the white-oak he beheld the Dryad, the tree-soul, which, as the Greek divined, has in it something of humanity. . . .

He thought of thought, finer action of the all-potential



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sap, forcing its way to finer fibres, the *will* of successive races and æons moulding delicate organs for itself, giving the tree-soul memory at last, and voice and vision ; housing it at last in the marvellous, unrooted body of man.

Through veil of soul and moon and tree, he saw the unseen Universal Will, the One which binds, includes, and is all things.

SUSAN GLASPELL

*(The Road to the Temple).*

STRANGE that your brow should wear,  
Long borne unconscious there,  
Signs of a quest that ended when I came.  
Strange that my uttered word  
Fell not on ears that heard  
Until I learned to call you by your name.

Worn as a garment new,  
Hiding yourself from view,  
Feature and form I saw but did not know.  
Yet at the words you spoke  
Deep-sleeping thoughts awoke ;  
Thus did our hearts unite, our minds conflow.

Haply some ancient page,  
Scribed in an earlier age,  
Tells of our trystings when a world was young.  
So, in far years to be,  
Again you'll come to me,  
Singing our old songs in a later tongue.

OLIVER DOUGLAS.

*(Recognition).*

WHEN that caressing light forgets the hills  
That change their hue in its evolving grace  
When, harmony of swaying reeds and rills,  
The breeze forgets its music, and the face

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Of Nature smiles no longer in the pond,  
Divinity revealed! When morning peeps  
Above earth's rim, and no bird-notes respond;  
When half a world in mellow moonlight sleeps,  
And no peace glistens on the cooling air;  
When dew brings no wet wonder of delight  
On jewelled spider-web and scented lair  
Of drone and hue and honey; when the night  
No longer shadows the retreating day,  
Nor purple dawn pursues the greying dark;  
And no child laughs, and no wind bears away  
The bursting glory of the meadow-lark;  
Then—then it may be—never until then  
May death be dreadful, or assurance wane  
That we shall die awhile, to waken when  
New morning summons us to earth again.

‘ We live as long as we are useful, and as long as it is good for us to live. Thereafter we die, which is another form of living, even as ice and water and rain and dew are the same thing in different aspects. When the appointed time comes, we return, as the rain returns to the earth it has left for a season. . . . There is a balance in the universe, and an Intelligence that governs it. No man can escape the consequences of his own act, though it take him a million lives to redress the balance. Justice is inevitable. Evil produces evil, and is due to ignorance. But justice being infinite in all its ways, there is a middle way by which we may escape from ignorance. I, who saw the world increasing its downward impetus while it believes itself to be progressing upward through the invention of new means for exploiting selfishness; I, who saw the ruins of Egypt, and of Babylon; of Rome and Greece; of Jerusalem; of Ceylon; of India; I, who have lived for fifty years within a stone's throw of a city ten times older than Babylon; I *knew* that day follows night, and I waited for the dawn, not knowing the hour. I waited.

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'I knew there are those who have won merit in their former lives, whose time comes to be born again. I knew that the key to evolution is in character—not in numbers or material increase—in the character of the soul, my Son! I knew that at the right time those would begin to be born whose character would influence the world, as mine could not. And I waited.'

TALBOT MUNDY  
(*Om*).

**E**VEN the observant Masonic student is made aware by the formula used at Lodge-closing, that by some great Warden of life and death each soul is called into this objective world to labour upon itself, and is in due course summoned from it to rest from its labours and enter into subjective celestial refreshment, until once again it is recalled to labour. For each the 'day,' the opportunity for work at self-perfecting, is duly given; for each the 'night' cometh when no man can work at that task; which morning and evening constitute but one creative day in the soul's life, each portion of that day being a necessary complement to the other. Perfect man has to unify these opposites in himself; so that for him, as for his Maker, the darkness and the light become both alike.

The world-old secret teaching upon this subject, common to the whole of the East, to Egypt, the Pythagoreans and Platonists, and every College of the Mysteries, is to be found summed up as clearly and tersely as one could wish in the *Phædo* of Plato, to which the Masonic seeker is referred as one of the most instructive of treatises upon the deeper side of the science. It testifies to the great rhythm of life and death above spoken of, and demonstrates how that the soul in the course of its career weaves and wears out many bodies, and is continually migrating between objective and subjective conditions, passing from labour to refreshment and back again many times in its



## The Ring of Return

great task of self-fulfilment. And if Plato was, as was once truly said of him, but Moses speaking Attic Greek, we shall not be surprised at finding the same initiate teaching disclosed in the words of Moses himself. Does not the familiar Psalm of Moses declare that man is continually 'brought to destruction,' that subsequently a voice goes forth saying 'Come again, ye children of men!' and that the subjective spiritual world is his refuge from one objective manifestation to another? What else than a paraphrase of this great word of comfort is the Masonic pronouncement that, in the course of its task of self-perfecting, the soul is periodically summoned to alternating periods of labour and refreshment? It must labour, and it must rest from its labours; its works will follow it, and in the subjective world every Brother's soul will receive its due for its work in the objective one, until such time as its work is completed and it is 'made a pillar in the House of God and no more goes out' as a journeyman-builder into this sublunary workshop.

W. L. WILMSHURST  
(*The Masonic Initiation*).

SNOWFLAKES of pureness unalloyed,  
That in dark space  
Are built, and spilt from out the teeming void  
With prodigal grace,  
Air-quarried temples, though you fall scarce felt  
And all your delicate architecture melt  
To tears upon my face,—

I too am such encrystalled breath  
In the void planned  
And bodied forth to surge of life and death;  
And as I stand  
Beneath this sacramental spilth of snow,  
Crumbling, you whisper: 'Fear thou not to go  
Back to the viewless hand;

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'Thence to be moulded forth again  
Through time and space,  
Till thy imperishable self attain  
Such strength and grace,  
Through endless infinite refinement passed  
By the eternal Alchemist, that at last  
Thou see Him face to face.'

W. L. WILMSHURST  
(*Nox Nivosa*).

ONLY two explanations of human inequalities can be forthcoming. Either individuals come into existence already variously endowed—some possessing wonderful gifts—and join the great stream of evolution at different points of its course, or a long past must lie behind each one during which the present capacities have been gradually acquired. The first implies the special creation of a spirit for every fresh body, but, just as special creation is rejected as an explanation of variety in form and structure, so must it ultimately be rejected as an explanation of human differences. The second involves the idea of reincarnation, which implies that man is the result of his own past, being what he has made himself. Viewed from this standpoint, the differences which characterise people are no longer a problem. They are the summed-up results of the experiences of previous incarnations. The birth of a genius, a saint, a sage, those remarkable differentiations from the average stock that so puzzle the observer of life, can thus easily be accounted for; for they are seen as the product of accumulated endeavour and work carried over a period of many lives; they but reveal the finer possibilities and powers that lie dormant in others. In them is witnessed a flowering of the Spiritual Ego.

OLIVE STEVENSON HOWELL  
(*Heredity and Reincarnation*).

## The Ring of Return

I STILL have my own ideas of a future state. It is this—that if we are hunted and pursued in this life by malicious enemies, so, in the life to come, it is we that will be the hunters and our enemies the hunted. This idea comes from no vindictive spirit. . . . It comes from the knowledge that I have never wilfully done harm to anyone on earth. My capacity for taking punishment has been tremendous, but the spirit to inflict it on another was not given to me at birth. But in this new life to come, it will be the decree of the reigning powers that I shall ride on the backs of my enemies, and they will live in fear of me from hour to hour. This will go on until we die again and enter into another new state of life. For there is probably more states of life than one or two ; and even in our next life to this we will not be much wiser than we are now, to know what extraordinary life will be the end of all.

W. H. DAVIES  
(*Later Days*).

JUST as the evolution of form shows our own physical form to be the outcome of a long process of physical evolution, so in the evolution of life, the life within us is seen as the outcome of an age-long evolution from the very simplest manifestations to ever higher and higher stages, until in the great Rhythm of Creation the separate life has regained the unity of the Divine from which it came. The dynamic view of the universe applied to the human soul, to our own life, to the consciousness within us, produces as its result the doctrine of Reincarnation, of the many lives on earth through which we have reached our present stage of evolution, the doctrine of Karma by which our different lives are causally connected, and the doctrine of the Perfection or Deification of man, in which that life reaches its perfection.

J. J. VAN DER LEEUW  
(*The Fire of Creation*).



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ONE vision of the Eternal does not satisfy ; one vision opens up another, and so it goes on through life after life. Evolution does not suddenly begin at a certain moment, nor stop at a given moment, nor after one life ; it is an endless road.

J. KRISHNAMURTI  
(*The Kingdom of Happiness*).

THE principle . . . is indestructible. It continues to act objectively, from reincarnation to reincarnation, on both sides of the grave, in some unknown sense. The bearers of this principle change, and they do not guess, or, if so, only faintly, that their essence is eternal. The rare man, who succeeds in anchoring his consciousness in true Being, knows himself to be immortal, and death no longer signifies an end to him. . . .

He who seeks progress first will never attain to perfection. It is wonderful how plastically the myth of the transmigration of souls expresses the truth of this relation : the man who has faithfully fulfilled his dharma in a lowly position in life will be reborn in a higher one ; he who has entered upon the path of saintliness will gain, through incarnation upon incarnation, more advantageous circumstances.

Benares is overflowing with the diseased and the infirm. . . . And yet I have never felt less compassion. These sufferers suffer so little ; they have, above all, no fear whatever of death. . . . As to their infirmity—well, that must be endured ; it will not take very long anyhow. And some old sin is no doubt scored off in the process. The faith of the Indians is said to be pessimistic. I know of none which is less so. It believes in a scheme of the world in which every being rises upward inevitably, in which, at most, one man in millions of millions succeeds in falling lower. The whole processes

## The Ring of Return

of the world bear him along in so far as he progresses, and he must overcome all resistance before he can deteriorate. The aim of this ascent is, of course, not one which may seem desirable to the Westerner. His soul is still too young to strive after liberation. But it is certain that to the Hindu liberation means the same state of bliss as Heaven does to the Christian.

COUNT HERMANN KEYSERLING  
*(The Travel Diary of a Philosopher).*  
(Translated by F. HOLROYD REECE.)

IF the deep wood is haunted, it is I  
Who am the ghost; not the tall trees,  
Nor the white moonlight slanting down like rain,  
Filling the hollows with bright pools of silver.

A long train whistle serpentines around the hill,  
Now shrill, now far away.

Tell me, from what dark, smoky terminal  
What train sets out for yesterday?

Or, since our spirits take off and resume  
Their flesh as travellers their cloaks, O tell me where,  
In what age and what country you will come,  
That I may meet you there.

ROBERT HILLYER  
*(Nocturne).*

FORGET not Memphis and the evening lights  
Along the shore, the wind in the papyrus,  
The sound of water through the glass-green nights,  
The incense curling upward to Osiris.  
Forget not Athens and the starry walks  
Beside Ilissus under the cool trees,  
The Master's garden, and the quiet talks  
Of gods and life to come. Forget not these.

And in the after years, forget not this:  
How in a withered world allied to death,

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When love was mocked and beauty deemed amiss,  
We met and pledged again the ancient faith.  
For this, of all our loves the loveliest,  
So thwarted and so strong, will seem the best.

ROBERT HILLYER

(*Sonnet*).

(From *The Halt in the Garden*.)

THE psychology of to-day tries to build up the mind of the individual from the racial mind of the past. It has to deal in masses, for it has not the Buddhist secret of rebirth. The psychology of to-morrow will investigate the past of the individual—the last little bit of that past; and it will find itself up against the Buddhist doctrine of rebirth. The next step will be to inquire into the psychology of our future—into what *we* rise up as, when *we* discard this body, the whence of that new body and the nature of it. It is no idle quest, but of tremendous practical importance. Few of us will urgently need to wireless to the Antipodes, much less to Mars. But we all die, and very soon. Are we always going to be so childish as to be content, not only with creeds, but with sciences that leave us in ignorance of death, and so in the fear of death?

MRS. C. A. F. RHYS DAVIDS

(*Buddhist Psychology*).

THE doctrine of Reincarnation, in its simplest possible outline, is this: That the Immortal Ego in man, that part which is divine, seeks experience in a succession of mortal physical bodies, with intervals of varying length spent on other planes of being between its incarnations. This is sometimes expressed by saying that the Individuality lives through many personalities. . . . The acceptance of the theory does not involve the assertion that all Egos came into evolution simultaneously; some may be much older than others, e.g. the



## The Ring of Return

philosopher may be conjectured to be probably an older soul than the society butterfly or the primitive savage. It does imply that at the start of their evolution all souls had equal potentialities, and that their present positions represent exactly the result of the use they have made of the time and opportunities they have had so far.

HUGH ROSCOE  
(*Occultism and Christianity*).

JOY awaits the successful candidate in the mystic meditation, who, by the action of the Paraclete, conquers the life centres, and enters the realm of spiritual realities and becomes a Master of the Gnostic Science. Little wonder that the work has to be pursued with patience through many years and lives until the consummation, but even in its early stages the memory of the eternal life remains unbroken, and knowledge becomes a certainty.

D. N. DUNLOP  
(*The Path of Attainment*).

I CAN only remember my life on earth, and that not very well, but I have a feeling that I existed before that. Sometimes the feeling is quite strong. It connects me with Eastern lands. When on earth I felt drawn to Eastern art and life. I still feel as if there were a link. I can't tell for certain, and it does not matter—besides, it is only a bit of me. Could *parts* of us have been in existence elsewhere?

I also feel that this life is a growth towards a finer state of being.

I am content to lie in the tides of life and time and be carried whither they will.

A Message from H. D. LOWRY, author of *The Hundred Windows, Wreckers and Methodists*, etc.; given by MRS. C. A. DAWSON SCOTT in  
*From Four who are Dead.*

## The Twentieth Century

I PERCEIVE the imprisoned lightnings in all things.  
I perceive the Light which is dull—the savage ;  
the Light which is bright—the man evolved ; the  
Light which is glory—the superman, the master.

. . . . .

I perceive an Apotheosis of Death. There is no death, only change, and always change with purpose, change to a greater end. Death is re-creation, renewal, the dropping of fetters, the casting aside of a vehicle which has ceased to suffice. Death is in very truth a birth into a fuller and larger life, or a dipping down into matter under the law of readjustment. Progress always, and progress towards Unity. We come ever nearer to each other and to the Real through death. If only we could realise this !

GEORGE S. ARUNDALE  
(*Nirvana*).

SPIRIT may be thought of as the nucleus of the reincarnating ego.

. . . . .

Blavatsky taught reincarnation, and the theory was immediately seized upon by great numbers of intelligent persons who saw in it the only logical explanation of certain problems of existence, which formerly had defied solution, and which made of life not an ordered, coherent, and absolutely just scheme of evolution, but a wild chaos of hideous cruelty and injustice. . . .

In countless cases, during those early years, I have seen the acceptance of reincarnation turn the atheist and agnostic into a reverent worshipper of the Absolute.

. . . . .

What of the countless undeveloped millions who live and die with no conception of there being any other object in life save keeping soul and body together ?

## The Ring of Return

Are they to be judged by a record of three score years and ten? 'Their chance will come in the next world,' was the old-fashioned reply. Those of the clergy who do not openly preach reincarnation would rather leave the subject in darkness than proffer a reply which ordinary intelligence has long since rejected as utterly childish reasoning. It is a case of quiet agnosticism, or an eager grasping of the logical suggestion of a multiplicity of lives through which evolving man may gradually unveil the God within, and rise in time to a destined perfection.

.....

The coming of the Dictator in so many parts of the world is a most interesting phenomenon. Reincarnation is throwing up men from the humblest families who are revolutionising their several countries as kings seem powerless to do.

.....

There are now frequent cases of what students term 'third or fourth race savages in fifth race bodies.' The savage tribes of the earth are being so rapidly exterminated that it is hard for the primitive reincarnating ego to find suitable savage conditions. They therefore take birth in the lowest available bodies, and in the slums of their conquerors.

.....

Without Reincarnation there is nothing but chaos to be made of human existence. The further back one plunges into history, the more hopeless does elucidation become, unless we use as the key to unlock the mysteries a multiplicity of lives during which the evolution of humanity proceeds on its God-appointed way.

VIOLET TWEEDALE  
(*Mellow Sheaves*).



## The Twentieth Century

THEN the proud grey joss in the corner stirred ;  
On his wrist appeared a grey small bird,  
And this was the song of the grey small bird :  
“ Where is the princess, loved forever,  
Who made Chang first of the kings of men ? ”

And the joss in the corner stirred again ;  
And the carved dog, curled in his arms, awoke,  
Barked forth a smoke-cloud that whirled and broke.  
It piled in a maze round the ironing-place,  
And there on the snowy table wide  
Stood a Chinese lady of high degree,  
With a scornful, witching, tea-rose face . . .  
Yet she put away all form and pride,  
And laid her glimmering veil aside  
With a child-like smile for Chang and for me.

The walls fell back, night was aflower,  
The table gleamed in a moonlit bower,  
While Chang, with a countenance carved of stone,  
Ironed and ironed, all alone.  
And thus she sang to the busy man Chang :  
“ Have you forgotten . . .  
Deep in the ages, long, long ago,  
I was your sweetheart there on the sand—  
Storm-worn beach of the Chinese land ?  
We sold our grain in the peacock town  
Built on the edge of the sea-sands brown—  
Built on the edge of the sea-sands brown . . .  
When all the world was drinking blood  
From the skulls of men and bulls,  
And all the world had swords and clubs of stone,  
We drank our tea in China beneath the sacred spice-trees,  
And heard the curled waves of the harbour moan.  
And this grey bird, in Love's first spring,  
With a bright-bronze breast and a bronze-brown wing,  
Captured the world with his carolling.

## The Ring of Return

Do you remember, ages after,  
At last the world we were born to own?  
You were the heir of the yellow throne—  
The world was the field of the Chinese man,  
And we were the pride of the sons of Han.  
We copied deep books and we carved in jade,  
And wove blue silks in the mulberry shade . . . ”

“ I remember, I remember  
That Spring came on forever,  
That Spring came on forever,”  
Said the Chinese nightingale.

VACHEL LINDSAY  
(*The Chinese Nightingale*).

WITH a heavy heart I asked him, “ And whither  
does my way take me, Iza Bekchi ? ”

“ Towards rebirth,” he answered, and over his  
unspeakably beautiful face there again passed rays of  
light.

“ And death ? ”

“ That which is immortal returns to God.” The voice  
sounded triumphantly.

“ The immortal part of every man ? ” I asked, stretch-  
ing out my hands to him.

“ Of every man.”

“ So everyone shall be born again, O Evli ! ” Sweet  
hope descended on me.

“ Rebirth may be twofold,” he said, and his voice was  
deep as the sound of bells. “ Unconscious and con-  
scious.”

. . . . .  
I was outside my body. My corpse lay on the guillo-  
tine. . . .

I was a spirit, among many other spirits that floated  
in space. But I had consciousness. I was aware of my  
ego, and I had a purpose and a desire.

## The Twentieth Century

I sought to find a new dwelling for myself, a new dwelling equipped with the instruments of sense so that I might receive from without and give back what comes from within: thoughts in the garb of words. I was seeking for a human body. . . . The will for reincarnation was the one impulse that dominated me. . . .

A crystalline, cold, clear air poured into my lungs. Many-coloured, confused rays struck my eyes, mingled sounds caught my ear. All those things happened to me which accompany the entry of a young being into this world. There I was. I had returned, an Evli.

My name was Sennon Vorauf.

. . . . .

I had a father, a mother, and other people who were fond of me. I learned to talk and to walk. I was a child as other children. Everything was new to me, everything a revelation—until I acquired the faculty of recalling my former existence. . . .

By slow degrees I became capable of classifying and putting together these recurrent and changing dreams. By and by I realised that they were the fragments of the life of Melchior Dronte, my previous self.

PAUL BUSSON

(*The Man who was Born Again*).

(Translated by PRINCE MIRSKI  
and THOMAS MOULT.)

I HEAR my husbands marching  
The æons all adown:  
The shepherd boys and princes—  
From cavern unto crown.

I hear in soft recession  
The praise they give to me;  
I hear them chant my titles  
From all antiquity.



## The Ring of Return

But never do I answer,  
I might be overheard ;  
Lose Love's revised illusions  
By one unhappy word.

I sit, a silent siren,  
And count my cavaliers ;  
The men I wed in wisdom,  
The boys who taught me tears.

To some I gave devotion,  
To some I kinked the knee ;  
But there was one old wizard  
Who laid his spells on me.

He showed me like a master  
That one rose makes a gown ;  
That looking up to Heaven  
Is merely looking down.

He marked me for the circle,  
Made magic in my eyes ;  
He won me by revealing  
The truth in all his lies.

So, when I see that wizard  
Among the marchers dim,  
I make the full court curtsy  
In fealty to him.

NATALIA CRANE  
(*My Husbands*).



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# Chyzer - (Austrian) (Chyzer)

still 100% at  
 (some to 100, etc.)  
 (one - but not in)  
 but then see the  
 and will more  
 due to the  
 be cut in  
 out

## Perhaps define this:

0 - animal or emblematic

1 - historical (part of the paper) (part: me: 1/2)

2 - historical (together) (contains negative sum)

3 - comic or animal

4 - th. of gen. of beings. (unity of all subjects, historical)

5 (2) 5 examples [contains negative & negative sum]

6 (3) real 3 (1st def) (1st = Dark)

7 (4)

5 - 5 pt  
 6 - 3 points (S, H, A)  
 7 -

8 (5)

9 (6)

10 (7)

- 0-1, Malheur (feet=2)
- 2, Lesos (=9)
- 3, Had (=8)
- 4, not a (=7)
- 5, Tifinot (=6)
- 6, Shurch (=5)
- 7, Gashed (=4)
- 8, Barch (=3)
- 9, Chypher (=2)
- 10, Kethoc (=1)



