

Intimations of Immortality

from Juvenile Reminiscences

by

Murshid Samuel L. Lewis

(Sufi Ahmed Murad Chisti)

Intimations of Immortality From Juvenile Reminiscences

I do not believe there ever was a time in which I did not believe in former life, but this by no means indicates that I necessarily believed in reincarnation (multifold appearance on this plane) or that I was uncreate, lasting from eternity. The child-mind does not philosophize, but it may remember well. Although it is generally claimed that we do not remember the earliest incidents in life, there have been remarkable cases of people who recalled their weaning period.

The child memory seems to be closely connected with the picture memory, or shall we say imagination? In certain forms of hypnotic trances Dr. Charles Richet has demonstrated preexistence and even, apparently, reincarnation. While the theosophists have enthusiastically endorsed his experiments as valid, they overlook two points:

- a. the interval between incarnations is very, very short, and entirely out of harmony with the length of time H. P. B. gave, even as the minimum period.
- b. there is no place in his system for Karma.

Now the acceptance of reincarnation without Karma is like the building of a house without foundation; at the same time we may build several forms of house on a given foundation. The objection to the above might be met by the Sufi explanation of such souls, now in the body, repeating the life story of some soul they met in a higher world.

Now as to actual memories. Until I was fifteen I distinctly remember having been in a kind of wood. It was gloomy there, being like a perpetual four o'clock in the afternoon, lacking the bright light of the sun, but not being in darkness. This I feel is the condition of the soul, and the afternoon of the soul continues until about the age of seven when the sun of the soul sets and we are enshrouded in darkness (until the "New Birth").

As a positive proof of this—when my great-grandmother who first told me of God, would mention Him to me, I always saw a great sky of white or light (so sun in it), and no figure or being or anything anthropomorphic or in form. The man-like God, or the veiled God or mist, or God in symbol came later, particularly after Sunday school studies.

Returning to the wood. There were three of us closely associated. We had been exiled—my chum and his sweetheart and I. We had been leaders of a great group of reformers of some kind, destined to free humanity, but passing through the realm of the Usurper, we had been deprived of our power and I had lost all my wealth and my wife (or sweetheart) besides.

These two souls with me, I feel, were Maurice and Minnie. In my last visions of this wood, which continued as mentioned before, until I was about fifteen, I remember a few souls having gathered around us, and a sign that we would again be leaders in a great movement and recover our position, power, wealth, and I my soul-mate sometime, somehow. (Just about this time I met

Maurice in the flesh.)

On one side of this wood there was an open space, but it was also gloomy there and entirely bare and flat, almost like a dry mud flat. Both the flat and the wood extended a long distance back to a land of greater light, memory of which gradually disappeared, but which I must have remembered until I was about twelve. However, it was from this land souls came and they were not permitted to return that way. All the traffic was in one direction, and I should call it downward in the same sense as if all traffic had to go to the South Pole, which is at the bottom of the earth.

It is interesting to note that this South Pole is actually the South Pole of the mystics, or Nadir, or Sifar and the opposite movement has been called the Northern movement.

Before we had been exiled into the world of gloom, we had been given some choices and some of these choices were actually repeated to me during youth. One of them was the choice between truth and suffering on one hand, and pleasure and plenty on the other. When the Usurper offered this choice it seems that at first our entire band deserted us, won by stealth or trickery, and only Maurice, Minnie and I (it would appear) held out, although later a few discovered the treachery of the Usurper. (This group continued growing until "birth"). I believe that from the ages of three to fifteen I went through a great deal of suffering over this memory which I am now mentioning for the first time. The fact that I was to be separated from my wife to be, whoever she is, is further explained by some of the details below.

The land where the Usurper overthrew our power was, I would say, a sort of 2 or 3 in the afternoon of the soul, where it was warm and bright and there were meadows. There was much playing and feasting and dancing. I had evidently been a great dreamer and idealist for I would not join in the games, and it was in this way that my band left me, drawn by pleasure. (Compare picture of Isaiah and group in School.)

This is rather interesting, for when I was in my late teens I was in the Socialist movement and had a fair amount of influence among the young folks and lost my power through the machinations of a young man who introduced dancing and dancers, and used this means to overthrow me. This same youth also caused Maurice a great deal of trouble then and afterwards, playing a part in this world as the Usurper in the former world, and later H. Spencer Lewis and also one other person played similarly in the lives of Maurice and myself.

It seems that in the former world, I had therefore taken an aversion to dancing, and this played a part in this life. At the same time I have always loved to watch good dancing, and sometimes I feel that I shall marry a dancer. I do not know God's will in this matter at all, but it is not necessary now.

Before entering the world of the Usurper, we had been in a much brighter world, memory of which only remained in early childhood, as with Wordsworth, but I am sure many more children have this experience than is commonly believed.

This Land of Light was where souls receive their instructions before birth. I was at the top of this class (later, I was invariably at the top of my classes in school), but the idea of “school” is somewhat a misnomer. We learned **directly out of the light with our breath, and this breath came in not only through the nostrils but through every pore of the body and this learning was the same as food: we lived on it and learning living, eating and breathing were all one and the same process.**

In that land also there was no idea of parentage, but of brother and sister, and perhaps sweetheart and even husband and wife. We traveled in bands, but I do not remember much and that not very clearly. However, I shall relate a few memories, all of which can be explained by doctrines given in *The Phenomenon of the Soul*, and *The Soul, Whence and Whither*.

Sister: In that land, I had a brother and sister. For many years after coming to this plane I continued to dream of a sister younger than myself but older than my brother. This continued until I was about twelve. I had already met the girl who was adopted the following year, fulfilling the conditions; and also most of the dreams, if not all, materialized in the following years.

In the Land of Play, as I call it, the girl was about one and one-half years and my brother about three years younger than I, but there were no parents. In this world the periods were considerably shortened.

English Language: I was evidently born with a knowledge of the English language, for as soon as my mother repeated the alphabet I repeated it and was reading before I was three. I read history at four and completed the O. T. at six. Now as regards reincarnation, there is this peculiarity—I have always felt if I lived on earth before, that I was a Jew and yet every memory I might have brought has been with England or the English language. For instance:

When I was thirteen I had to write a story in the English class, and wrote in detail the first half of *The Lady of the Lake*, which I had never read. The teacher thought I had copied but I never had heard of it nor knew nothing of Scott. This could be explained that I met him on a higher plane, where I also most likely met at least one Sufi poet on the downward course to earth.

Messiah: I always believed in the coming of the Messiah and for a long time felt I would meet him and that the great work for which I had been a leader (on the earlier planes) was connected with him. I often rehearsed conversations with the Messiah, and later, after I was eighteen, with a Master. When I awoke, however, to the realization, it was almost impossible to reconcile the dreams and musings with the objective reality. In fact this has been the wonder of my life.

Morals: Closely associated with the last (no doubt)—why I did not indulge in dancing, sex, smoking, etc. I had evidently been given very complete instructions on these points before incarnation. I have never ever received any guidance (on such matters) from my parents.

There were also some other intimations which came during childhood.

Choice: I was several times given a choice as to whether I should have my worst sufferings early in life or later. I chose to have them earlier. Now while this choice was given to me in this life, part of it—that my wife was to remain unknown to me and not revealed until after certain events, belongs to the group of memories rather than intimations.

Philosophy: When I was fifteen, it came very definitely, suddenly at first, but often repeated, that I would be a philosopher, although I had but the vaguest idea as to what this word meant, and a few years later actually scorned studying the subject. This was an initial form of spiritual experience, in some way connected with the jinn period of development through which youth goes. I already knew at that time I was to pass through adolescence without meeting my sweetheart—very painful—and that my career would be tragic for some time. This made that year particularly hard and it was not until I was eighteen that I recovered from that mood, only to fall, in time, from the material point of view at least, into as worse condition.

This was the last intimation, I believe, when I began my spiritual studies at eighteen.

Note: At eighteen, for entirely different material reasons, but certainly connected spiritual, I began with Theosophy and *Morals and Dogma of Masonry* and Comparative Theology. Already at thirteen I knew about spiritism and psychic research, and evidently earlier about magic and alchemy.