

Man has a double consciousness—that of Higher Manas, the exalted mind of his superlative Self, which far exceeds the capacities of its lower aspect that functions through the physical brain. Few indeed are they who have a clear remembrance of aught that was not garnered into the intellect through the media of the five senses. Of other faculties of the man proper they know nothing, consequently they cannot at will bring before the mind the records of a past life. Memory of events is not, as some suppose, stored in the cells of the brain. An injury to the brain may hinder or prevent the mind from functioning through it, but it does not impair the mind. It has been proved that the brain may, under hypnotic influence, be made to respond to the volition of the mind of another person—a practical demonstration that the brain is not the mind but its organ. Memory is, therefore, the record which the mind selects from its own atmosphere and translates through the brain to our normal consciousness. This being so, we may readily suppose that the records of the events of this life would be more accessible to, and have a greater affinity for, the mind than those of a personality which no longer exists. We know how much easier we can recall events which most intimately concern and affect our present affairs than those for which we have lost all interest, and thus we can understand why the records of this life should impinge upon our consciousness and those of a previous incarnation be so remote as to be seldom recalled and still more rarely recognized. There is, however, a known method whereby a complete retrospect of the history of the soul may be attained; but, were it generally understood, the process of spiritual unfoldment is so tedious and exacting in its rigorous discipline as applied to habits of thought and conduct, that one must be prompted by more than curiosity to persevere to that end.

While most people seem to possess an intuitive aptitude for, and sometimes also a knowledge of, mental and physical accomplishments acquired in a past life (and the biography of many a genius affords a striking example of such precocious talents); and while children often display unmistakable tendencies to certain pursuits and traits of character, the child must learn again to walk, and talk, and read, and otherwise deport itself in conformity to its fresh environment. But as frequent repetition of an act ensures facility or dexterity in its performance, so anything once learned and thoroughly mastered, endows the individuality with a peculiar aptitude in a subsequent existence. Plato calls this power of recollection the reminiscence of the soul. Character is a concrete expression of what we are, what we can do and what we would like to do. As the character is carried forward from life to life, like the debit and credit totals of an unbalanced account in a ledger, we must of necessity be advanced or retarded by the success or failure of a previous existence.

In having to accustom oneself to a change of environment, which would probably include a strange language, education and religion, the repetition of experiences under different conditions would seem to be a waste of time and energy; but in reality we thus gain an opportunity for dealing with other phases of the same things, and so enlarge our compre-