

FROM MAX HEINDEL'S WRITINGS



A Glimpse of the Past

A NUMBER OF YEARS ago the writer visited Minneapolis to deliver a course of lectures, and there became acquainted with Miss Margaret S—, a commercial photographer, who made our lantern slides for “Parsifal,” “The Niebelungs’ Ring,” etc. We became well acquainted, and in the course of conversations about certain charts, also being made into slides, the subject of “rebirth” came under discussion. Miss S. had only a vague idea of the teaching; it seemed rather a new idea that life is a Great School, and that we come back to it life after life to learn new lessons, as a child goes back to an earthly school day after day for the same purpose.

But it seemed to throw light upon a problem that had puzzled her for years. She had a little sister “Anne,” who was such an odd child, and who “imagined” such queer things that it was almost distressing to the other members of the family. She insisted that she had lived before, and last time she was in Canada, where, she said, “I took the gates.” She was only a baby, she could not have heard it from anyone in the family, for none understood, or believed in rebirth. There is thus only one reasonable hypothesis, namely, that she carried the consciousness over from the past.

Miss S. did not at that time know what the expression “I took the gates” meant, but an article in the July *American Magazine* has the story of little Anne’s “imaginings,” which won first prize. We reprint the article as there published:

“Anne, my little half-sister, younger by fifteen years, was a queer little mite from the beginning.

She did not even look like any member of the family we ever heard of, for she was dark almost to swarthiness, while the rest of us all were fair, showing our Scotch-Irish ancestry unmistakably.

“As soon as she could talk in connected sentences, she would tell herself fairy stories, and just for the fun of the thing I would take down her murmurings with my pencil in my old diary. She was my especial charge—my mother being a very busy woman—and I was very proud of her. These weavings of fancy were never of the usual type that children’s fairy tales take; for, in addition to the childish imagination, there were bits of knowledge in them that a baby could not possibly have absorbed in any sort of way.

“Another remarkable thing about her was that everything she did she seemed to do through habit, and, in fact, such was her insistence, although she was never able to explain what she meant by it. If you could have seen the roistering air with which she would lift her mug of milk when she was only three and gulp it down at one quaffing, you would have shaken with laughter. This particularly embarrassed my mother and she reproved Anne repeatedly. The baby was a good little soul, and would seem to try to obey, and then in an absent-minded moment would bring on another occasion for mortification. ‘I can’t help it, Mother,’ she would say over and over again, tears in her baby voice, ‘I’ve always done it that way!’

“So many were the small incidents of her habits of speech and thought and her tricks of manner and memory that finally we ceased to think anything about them, and she herself was quite unconscious

that she was in any way different from other children.

“One day when she was four years old she became very indignant with Father about some matter and, as she sat curled up on the floor in front of us, announced her intention of going away forever.

“‘Back to heaven where you came from?’ inquired Father with mock seriousness. She shook her head.

“‘I didn’t come from heaven to you,’ she asserted with that calm conviction to which we were quite accustomed now. ‘I went to the moon first, but....You know about the moon, don’t you? It used to have people on it, but it got so hard that we had to go.’

“‘This promised to be a fairy tale, so I got my pencil and diary.

“‘So,’ my father led her on, ‘you came from the moon to us, did you?’

“‘Oh, no,’ she told him in casual fashion. ‘I have been here lots of times—sometimes I was a man and sometimes I was a woman!’

“‘She was so serene in her announcement that my father laughed heartily, which enraged the child, for she particularly disliked being ridiculed in any way.

“‘I was! I was!’ she maintained indignantly. ‘Once I went to Canada when I was a man! I ‘member my name, even.’

“‘Oh, pooh-pooh,’ he scoffed, ‘little United States girls can’t be men in Canada! What was your name that you ‘member so well?’

“‘She considered a minute. ‘It was Lishus Faber,’ she ventured, then repeated it with greater assurance, ‘that was it, Lishus Faber.’ She ran the sounds together so that this was all I could make out of it, and the name so stands in my diary today, ‘Lishus Faber.’

“‘And what did you do for a living, Lishus Faber, in those early days?’ My father then treated her with the mock solemnity befitting her assurance and quieting her nervous little body.

“‘I was a soldier’—she granted the information triumphantly—‘and I took the gates!’

“‘That was all that is recorded there. Over and over again, I remember, we tried to get her to explain what she meant by the odd phrase, but she only repeated her words and grew indignant with

Triune Treasure

Guard the treasure of the heart,
Lest in sorrow it depart.
How can love on coldness thrive?
Love unfed cannot survive.

Guard the treasure of the mind.
Watch the gates before, behind.
Past or future, sad or pleasant—
Shall they trespass on the present?

Guard the treasure of the hand
Wisely, lest it turn to sand.
All is Heaven’s overflow—
Yours, a jewel to bestow.

Guard your triune treasure well.
Not to buy and not to sell,
Wealth of heart and hand and mind,
Given you for all mankind.

—Irene Stanley

us for not understanding. Her imagination stopped at explanations. We were living in a cultured community, but although I repeated the story to inquire about the phrase—as one does tell stories of beloved children, you know—no one could do more than conjecture its meaning.

“Someone encouraged my really going further with the matter, and for a year I studied all the histories of Canada I could lay my hands on for a battle in which somebody ‘took the gates.’ All to no purpose. Finally I was directed by a librarian to a ‘documentary’ history, I suppose it is—a funny old volume with the *s*’s all like *f*’s, you know. This was over a year afterwards, when I had quite lost hope of running my phrase to earth. It was a quaint old book, interestingly picturesque in many of its tales, but I found one bit that put all the others out of my mind for a time. It was a brief account of the taking of a little walled city by a small company of soldiers, a distinguished feat of some sort, yet of no general importance. A young lieutenant with his small band—the phrase leaped to my eyes— ‘took the gates’...and the name of the young lieutenant was *Aloysius le Febre*.” □