

Éliphas Lévi

Death is the birth-pang of life



There is no such a thing as death.

Nothing in nature perishes; whatsoever has lived goes on living always under new forms; but even the anterior forms are not destroyed, since they persist in our memory. Do we not still see in imagination the child we once knew, though now he is an old man? The very traces which we believe to be effaced from our memory are not in reality blotted out, for a fortuitous circumstance may evoke and recall them. But after what manner do we see them? As we have already said, it is in the astral light, which transmits them to our brain by the mechanism of the nervous system.¹

The terrors of death are daughters of ignorance.

But death will come no more, impiteous and terrible, to mow like dry grass the ripe blades of the new age; it will give place to the angel of progress, who will gently liberate souls from mortal chains, so that they may ascend to God. When men know how to live they will no longer die; they will transform like the chrysalis, which becomes a splendid butterfly. The terrors of death are daughters of ignorance, and death herself is only hideous by reason of the rubbish which covers her, and the sombre hues with which her images are surrounded. Death, truly, is the birth-pang of life. There is a force in nature which dieth not, and this force perpetually transforms beings to preserve them. This force is the reason or word of nature. In man also there is a force analogous to that of nature, and it is the reason or word of man. The word of man is the expression of his will directed by reason, and it is omnipotent when reasonable, for then it is analogous to the word of God himself. By the word of his reason man becomes the conqueror of life, and can triumph over death. The entire life of man is either the parturition or miscarriage of his word. Human beings who die without having understood or formulated the word of reason, die devoid of eternal hope. To withstand successfully the phantom of death, we must be identified with the realities of life. Does it signify to God if an abortion wither, seeing that life is eternal? Does it signify to Nature if unreason perish, since reason which never perishes still holds the keys of life?²



¹ *Transcendental Magic*, (THE TRIANGLE OF PANTACLES) pp. 207-8

² *ibid.*, (INTRODUCTION TO THE RITUAL) p. 176