



Life in the Next World

By: Lawrence Durdin-Robertson

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LIFE IN THE NEXT WORLD

by

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BABYLONIAN

On the spirits, ghosts, or manes of the departed Maspero (*Dawn Civiln p. 689*) writes "The dead man, or rather that part of which (*Gds Chald. 72*) survived - his ekimmu (footnote: equivalent to the Ka' of the Egyptians and represents probably the same conception, although it is never seen represented like the 'Ka' on the monuments of later various ages) dwelt in the tomb and it was for his comfort that there was provided at the time of sepulchre or cremation, the provisions and clothing, the ornaments and weapons, of which he was considered to stand in need. With the faculty of roaming at will through space, and of going forth from and returning to his abode, he was transferred, or rather he transferred himself, into the Dark Land - the Araliu - situated very far away - according to some beneath the surface of the Earth; according to others in the Eastern or Northern extremities of the Universe. A river which opens into this region & separates it from the sunlit Earth, finds its sources in the primordial waters into whose bosom this world of ours is plunged. These are the 'Waters of Death' mentioned at the end of the poem of Gilgamesh. The dead man possesses recollection of what he had done upon Earth.

The Other World has many names in Babylonian. Generally it is spoken of as the Underworld, the Kur or Kiur, the Nether World, sometimes as the Pit, the Abyss, the Dark Land, the Deep, the Ditch of hell, the Desert, the River of Ocean, the House under the Mountain of the World.

Its maternal symbolism is shown in such descriptions as "the womb of Tiamat", and 'high in the belly of Tiamat' (the Primordial Goddess).

As its symbolism is matriarchal, so as may be expected the rulership of Kur is feminine. Ereshkigal is one of the earliest queens: "There stands a house under the mountain of the world. A road runs down and here also lie the Rainbow Gardens of the Lady". Ereshkigal, being the elder sister of Inanna, had later the Underworld for her portion. 'Queen of Hell and the Dead'. Closely connected is the later Babylonian goddess Allat. 'The lady of the Great Land, the Queen of Hell'. The land of Aralu has among its rulers the God Nergal and the Goddess Beltis Allat. The latter, usually referred to as Allat, is considered the actual sovereign of the country. According to descriptions as interpreted by Maspero. Allat passes through her empire, not seated, but standing on the back of a horse, which seems oppressed by her weight. Sometimes she goes on an expedition upon the river which communicates with the lighter countries, in order to meet the newly arrived souls ceaselessly being sent to her. A requirement is that those entering must show themselves subject to her authority.

Many kinds of beings have their home in these regions, including the zoomorphic beings. Enormous birds flutter around. Ethical requirements: are suggested. As Enlil walks about the Kiur, the Great Gods, the fifty of them, seize Enlil in the Kiur (saying) 'Enlil, immoral one, get you out of the city'.

The Kur has a borderland (*Gdds. Chald. 67*):

"In the account by Maspero, of the journey of Gilgamesh to the underworld, "and by nightfall of the next day he reaches a ravine in the mountains. (*Maspero. Dawn of Civil. p. 583*). 'I reached at nightfall a ravine in the mountain. I beheld lions and trembled'. "A vision from on high revealed to him the road he was to take; he reached the entrance of a dark passage leading into the mountain of Mash, whose gate is guarded day and night by supernatural beings. Gilgamesh learns that the guardians are not evilly disposed towards him. Gilgamesh proceeds through the depths of the darkness for long hours, and afterwards comes out in the neighborhood of a marvelous forest upon the shore of the ocean which encircles the world. Paradises are often mentioned in Chaldean literature:

(*Kramer. Myth of Ancient worlds p. 101*) Dolman is a land that is 'pure' 'clean' and 'bright', 'a land of the living', which knows neither sickness nor death. The great Sumerian water god Enzi orders Ute, the sun-god, to fill it up with fresh water brought up from the earth. Dolman is thus turned into a divine garden, green with fruit - laden fields and meadows. Although it deals with a divine rather than human paradise it has numerous parallels with the biblical paradise story.

(*Gds. Chald. p. 71*). "In it Gilgamesh, having passed over the water of death rest for awhile The Happy Island appeared before them and Shamashnapistim stood upon the shore of the mysterious paradise. Gilgamesh was not however allowed to land. He then sleeps for six days and seven nights. He could now after these preparations land upon the shore of the Happy Island, where he was cured of his disease".

CHRISTIAN

(Prayer Book, Lesson from The Burial of the Dead, 1 Cor. XV 20) "For some man will say, how are the dead raised up and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die. And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain; but God giveth it a body, as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. Howbeit, that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural. As is the earthy; such are they that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. Now this I say brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery, we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption; then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, 'Death is swallowed up in victory'. The sting of death is sin and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks to be God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be yet steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

(id., Collect) "O merciful God, who is the resurrection of the Life., who hath taught us, not to be sorry as men without hope, for them thost sleep in him. We meekly beseech thee to raise us from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness; that, when we depart this life, as our hope is this our brother doth, that at the general resurrection on the last day, we may be found acceptable in thy sight."

(Layman's Daily Missal Ritual) Collect. Mass for the Dead

"Lord God of mercies, give to the soul of your servant, a place of happiness, a blest tranquillity and the glory of your light".

(id. offertory chant) Lord Jesus Christ, our glorious king, free the souls of all the faithful departed from the throes of hell, from the fathomless pit, lest they sink down into darkness. May the holy standard-bearer Michael usher them into your holy light, thy gift in days gone by to Abraham and his descendants".

(Layman Daily Missal) Collect, Mass for the Dead.

"Lord God of Mercies, give to the soul of our servant a place of happiness, and blest tranquillity and the glory of your light" *(id., offertory chant)*

Irish Hymnal, 442

Shall we gather at the river
When bright angel feet love trod
With its crystal tide forever
Flowing by the throne of God?

Yes, we'll gather at the river
The beautiful, the beautiful river
Gather with the saints at the river
That flows by the throne of God,

On the margin of the river
Dashing up its silver spray
We will walk and worship ever
All the happy golden day.

Ere we reach the shining river
Lay we every burden down
Grace our spirits will deliver
And provide a robe and crown

At the smiling of the river
Mirror of the saviours race
Saints, whom death will never sever
Raise their songs of saving grace

Soon we'll reach the silver river
Soon our pilgrimage will cease
There our happy hearts shall ever
Sing the joyful song of peace.

id., 437

Jerusalem the golden
With milk and honey blest
Beneath thy contemplation
Sink heart and voice opprest.

I know not, O I know not
What joys await us there
What radiance of glory
What bliss beyond compare.

O sweet and blessed country
The home of God's elect!
O sweet and blessed country
That eager hearts expect!

Jesus in mercy bring us
To that dear land of rest;
Who art with God the Father
And Spirit ever blest.

IRISH HYMNS 443

There is a happy land-far, far away
Where saints in glory stand
Bright bright as day
O how they sweetly sing
Worthy is our Saviour King
Praise, praise for aye.
Come to this happy land,
Come. Come away
Why will ye doubting stand,? Why still delay?
Lord, we shall live with thee Blest, Blest for aye.
Bright in that happy land beams every eye
Kept by a Father's hand life cannot die,
On then to glory run, Be a crown and kingdom won,
And bright above the sun, Reign, reign for aye.

IRISH HYMNS 445

There is a land of pure delight
Where saints immortal reign
Where endless day excludes the night
And pleasures banish pain.

There everlasting spring abides
And never withering flowers
Death, like a narrow sea divides
That heavenly land from ours.

Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood
Stand dressed in living green
So to the Jews old Canaan stood
While Jordan rolled between

But timorous mortal start and shrink
To cross this narrow sea
And linger shivering on the brink
And feat to launch away.

O could we make our doubts remove
those gloomy doubts that rise
And see the Canaan that we love
with unbeckoned eyes.

CHINESE

(*Gdss. India, China, p. 359*) 'In China an important place is allotted to the household deities and the ancestral spirits; these include the former members of the household and previous inhabitants of the house. They are often considered as holding a semi-divine or sometimes divine rank. The attitude to these domestic deities is something more than veneration; they are seen as actually participating, in their own mysterious way, in the life of the family and the clan'.

(*Gdss. India, China, From Waley, Monkey p. 303*) 'The messengers took the souls of Liu and his wife to the frontiers of the world of death'.

"The gale of dark wind blew through the gates of death when they were opened, and carried Liu and his wife, and the demon that escorted them, all the way to the city of Ch'ang-an. Liu's soul was blown straight to the Imperial stores, but his wife's (Blue Lotus) was carried to the inner gardens".

(*Gdss India, China, p. 304, from Waley, Monkey*) "Now Hsiang Liang was a water carrier, and his wife made a living selling pottery. They only spent on themselves what was necessary to keep them alive; all the rest they gave to priests, or spent on paper cash which they dedicated and burned. Consequently, though in this world they ranked as pious people, but very poor, in the world below they gradually accumulated a very considerable fortune. When Wei-ch'ih came to their door, laden with silver and gold, their astonishment knew no bounds, accompanied as he was by a numerous following of horsemen and coaches..

Wei-ch'ih declared, 'I have merely come to repay the money that you were good enough to lend to his Majesty the Emperor'.

'We have never lent money to anyone' they stammered 'and cannot possibly accept what does not belong to us'.

'I am aware' said he 'that you are poor people, but owing to your constant alms and dedication of paper cash to the spirits of the world below, you have great sums to your credit in that world. Recently when the Emperor spent three days in the realms of death, he had occasion to borrow heavily from your account there, and now I have come to repay the debt'.

'It is true' they said, 'that we have something in our account in that world. But what proof have we that his Majesty borrowed from us there? We could not dream of accepting'.

'The loan', said Wei-ch'ih, 'was authorised by St'ui Chio one of the assessors there and he could bear testimony'.

'That's as may be', they said 'but nothing will induce us to accept'.

Finding that they were obdurate, Wei-ch'ih sent a report to the Emperor, who remarked on reading it, 'such virtue is indeed rare among the rich! And he issued a rescript, that with the money a temple was to be built, and a shrine at the side of it, dedicated to the Hsiangs.

(*Soymie, Larousse p. 280*)

"Hsi-Wang-Mu, Royal Mother of the Western Paradise. Hsi-Wang-Mu's palace of Khun-lun, the Mountain and the other world is in the far West. In this paradise known also the Land of setting Sun, she dispenses the herb of immortality".

(*Gdss. China, p. 337 from Birch, Chinese Myths and Practices*)

(*Birch p. 44 ff*)

It was still before dawn when Wei Ku arrived, and the moon was shining.

While he was waiting, he noticed an old man sitting reading a book by the light of the moon. On looking closer Wei Ku saw that the book was written in curious characters, neither Chinese nor Indian. The old man looked at the youth and said to him laughing, 'This is no book from the world of men; it is the writing of the Underworld'.

"If that is so" said the youth, "then you yourself must belong to the Underworld. What are you doing here?"

'I might ask the same question of you', said the old man. 'We of the underworld have to arrange the affairs of mortal and how can we do so without visiting your world now and again? We are careful to come at times when no one is about. Either I have stayed too late this time or you are too early; anyway, we have met, and there is an end of it'.

Wei Ku, having considered the old man's remark about the affairs of men being arranged in the Underworld, then asked him if he could give any information concerning his marriage.

The old man looked through the book until he found the place he wanted. "Your future wife is three years old at the moment", he said. "You will marry her when she is seventeen".

Just then Wei Ku noticed a bag lying on the steps; it was open at the top and seemed to contain reel upon reel of red thread. He asked the old man what it was for. The latter for a time gave no answer, appearing to be completely absorbed in the book; then he explained that the red thread was used to tie together a man and his destined wife. "Once tied", he told him, "it does not matter whether they are a thousand miles apart, whether one is rich and one is poor, or whether their families are at enmity. At the appointed time, marry they must".

Dawn had now come, but the old man told the youth that before he left he would show him his future bride. He thereupon took the bag and Wei Ku followed him to the market-place. After a short time there came a peasant woman, dressed in rags, pushing a barrow filled with vegetables which she was offering for sale. On her back, wrapped in a bundle of tattered and dirty clothes was a little girl of about three years old. "There is your bride", said the old man, and with these words he disappeared.

Wei Ku, his mind in a turmoil, determined to escape from what he considered to be a very unsuitable match. Finally he took a sharp knife, and called a servant; telling him that the little girl in the market-place was an evil spirit, he ordered him to kill her.

The servant as instructed went to the marketplace, and was about to strike when the little girl turned around and looked at him with wide open eyes. He then aimed deliberately to miss her, catching her a glancing blow above her eyebrow. He then returned to Wei Ku saying that he had acted on his orders. Wei Ku, however, while trying to put the remembrance of his crime from his mind, was long plagued with remorse.

Many years later Wei Ku was serving as assistant to the Governor of Hsian-chou. Being greatly impressed by Wei Ku's industry, the governor suggested the desirability of his being a suitor of his niece a beautiful girl of seventeen. And so Wei Ku and the girl were duly married.

Not long after his marriage Wei Ku's attention was drawn to something unusual about his bride's hair ornaments. According to the style then in fashion, she wore her hair elaborately arranged and kept it in place by means of hairpins skillfully worked and decorated with precious stones and kingfisher feathers. One of these pins was placed at her temple and the head of it covered her forehead just above her eyebrow. This ornament she never removed even when she went to bed at night.

After some time Wei Ku, unable to restrain his curiosity, asked her why she did this. The bride answered: "The ornament covers a scar on my forehead. When I was very small I was taken to market one day; and a man tried to stab me".

Wei Ku then confessed his crime, and was forgiven, the matter being never again mentioned during the happy life they lived together.

EGYPTIAN

(*Budge, Book of Dead, lxvii*) "Sekhet- hetepet, Fields of Aaru or the Elysian Fields, wherein the beatified were believed to lead a life of celestial happiness. At an early period in their history the Egyptians believed in a place wherein the blessed dead led a life of happiness, the characteristics of which much resemble those of the life

which he had led upon earth; these characteristics are so similar that it is hard to believe that in the early times the one life was not held to be a mere continuation of the other. At all events, the delights and pleasures of this world were believed to be forthcoming in the next, and a life there in a state of happiness which depended absolutely upon material things was contemplated.

Such ideas date from the time when the Egyptians were in a semi-savage state and the preservation of them is probably due to their extreme conservatism in all matters connected with religion.. In a passage in the text of Unas, it is said of this King. 'Unas hath come to his pools which are on both sides of the stream of the Goddess Meh-urt, and to the place of the verdant offerings, and to the fields which are on the horizon. He eateth with his mouth, he voideth water, he enjoyeth the pleasures of love'.

(Budge, id. lxxix on the text of CXth chap.)

A large homestead or farm, intersected with canals is at once his paradise and home of the blessed dead. In the vignettes, we see the deceased sailing in a boat laden with offerings which he is bearing to the hawk-God. In the next division he is ploughing the land of Sekhet-Anru or Sekhet-Aaru, by the side of a stream of vast length and unknown breadth, which contains neither worm (serpent) nor fish. In one section of this division the deceased places the God of his city so that even in respect of his religious observances, his life might be as perfect as it was upon earth. His wishes in the matter of the future life are represented by the following prayer:- Let me be rewarded w thy fields..May I become a spirit therein, may I plough therein, may I reap therein, may I make love therein, may I never be in a state of servitude therein, but may I have authority therein'. In his new life even amusements are provided (but they are the amusements of earth).

In the Papyrus of the priestess Anhai (*pp* 325) we actually see the deceased lady in converse with two figures one of whom is probably her father and the other certainly her mother. 'Let me live upon bread made from white barley and let my ale be from red grain'. Thus the deceased hoped to have food in the next world and to meet again his own god and his father and mother; as we see him frequently accompanied by his wife in several vignettes, we may assume that he would meet her again along with the children whom she bore him.

(Budge, Papyrus of Ani Chapter LIX p. 204) Vignette, "Ani kneeling beside a pool of water, wherein grows a sycamore tree; in the tree appears a goddess, Nut, pouring out for him a vessel with the left hand and giving him cakes with the right".

(Goddess Chald. p. 351) One of the divisions of Sekhet - Hetepet (Elysian Fields). Is Sekhet - Aaru or Sekhet Aanru, the fields of lilies, reeds or water plants. 'Here the Khus are seven cubits and the wheat three cubits high'; these measurements vary in different accounts.

(Budge Funeral text of Takhurt - p Uru - Abt, pp. 698) "thy soul hovereth over thy dead body".

(Gds. Chad pp. 344) "Among other activities of the inhabitants of this realm is the playing of draughts. There is a representation of the deceased and his wife playing what Maspero describes as 'draughts, in their pavilion'.

(Budge Id Chap Cx p. 322) Vignette: 'Anhai seated in a boat with her husband, who is rowing it towards two gods who probably represent her father and mother. To the left is the Lady Anhai with her hair falling over her face, before two divine beings; and one of these is her mother Neferitu, the other is probably her father. Hence we may assume the Egyptians expected to meet and to know their relatives in the world beyond the grave. Behind Anhai is a male figure digging in a mound of earth; he is probably her husband. Anhai's husband is reaping the wheat, and Anhai herself follows behind with what is apparently a rush basket or bag. In the text above, the deceased says 'May I come therein and may my soul follow after me (and obtain) divine food. Even I the singer of Amen, Anhai triumphant'. (*id. pp. 332*) 'O Unen - em hetepet (existence in peace) I have entered into thee. I would live without injury (being done) unto me. O grant to me, O do thou grant unto me joy of heart'.

The dead who attained to everlasting life became in every respect like the divine inhabitants of heaven and they ate the same meat and drank the same drink and wore the same apparel, and lived as they liked. According to some texts the abode of the dead was beyond Egypt to the north, but according to others it might be either above or below the earth. A later belief placed the abode of the departed away to the west or north-west of Egypt. It is impossible to reconcile all the conflicting statements concerning the abode of the dead, and the Egyptians themselves held different views about it at different periods.

“(repentance)” - Chapter XIV contains a prayer that the god who dwells among mysteries may remove from him sin, wickedness and transgressions, so that he may be at peace with him and feel no shame of him in his heart. On the food eaten by the departed, details are given by Maspero, (*Dawn of Civiln p; 184*) “Out of the foliage a goddess - Nuit, Hathor or Nit, half emerged and offered him a dish of fruit, leaves of trees and a jar of water. By accepting these he became the guest of the goddess and could never more retrace his steps without special permission”, and (*Budge, Chap. clxxii pp. 585*) ‘Thou eatest of the baked bread and of the hot meals of the storehouse’. and of drink (*Budge id. p. 574*) ‘Thou art made clean with the milk of the Hap cow and with the ale of the goddess Tenemit and with natron.’

The deceased also has a sense of smell (*id. pp. 585*) ‘Thou smellst the flowers’ and (*id. pp. 573*) ‘There are cakes for thy body and water for thy throat and sweet breezes for thy nostrils’.

In general: (*id. on Nesi - Khonsu p. 661*): “And moreover she shall receive in abundance the choicest things of all that is good for her, even as do every man and every god who hath been deified and do journey unto every place as they please”.

(*Budge. Gods of Egypt. I p. 156*) The texts of all the periods are silent as to the exact position of heaven, but it is certain that the Egyptians assigned it to a place above the sky, and that they called it Pet. We must distinguish between the meanings of Pet and Nut; for the former means ‘heaven’ and the latter ‘sky’, and we may assume that the primitive Egyptians believed that each end of heaven rested on a support (*i.e. two mountains*); out of one came the sun every morning and into the other it entered every night. Chief among the dwellers in heaven was the god Ra. Round about Ra, whether walking or sitting, were the gods who were ‘in his train’, and these formed the nucleus of the inhabitants.

Next to these came certain companies of the gods, and as the whole universe was divided into three portions, namely heaven, earth, and the Tuat or underworld, and each portion had its own gods, we may assume that a place was reserved for them in the heaven of the Egyptians. The ‘Followers of Horus’ (Shemsu - Heru) who followed Horus, occupied a position of great importance among the celestial hosts, almost equal to the gods. The Henmemet or Hamemet, appear to have been a class of beings who are either to become or had already been, human beings. We therefore pass on to refer to the spirits and souls etc. of the righteous men and women who once lived upon the earth.

On the Borderland: (*Budge, Gods. Egy. 1 p. 179*) from book of pylons: “On the journey of the boat of Ra, through the Tuat. In the first division *i.e.* the First Hour, we have the mountain of the west divided into two portions, and along its lowest part which forms the entrance from this world to the Tuat.’ (*id. p. 205*) The first hour of the night the place through which the god passes; is described an arrit *i.e.* a sort of ante-chamber of the Tuat. This god entereth from the earth into the arrit of the horizon of the west. The fact that this region is called a country, shows that it was regarded as part of this world. (*id. p. 216*) ‘The Fourth Hour of the Night: the boat of Ra passes through a region the descriptive text says The hidden Circle of Amentet’ (*id. p. 220*) The Fifth Hour. ‘This great god is drawn along the actual roads of the Tuat (*id. p. 232*) ‘The boat of Ra has arrived at a shallow place in the celestial stream’. (*id. p. 242*) The Ninth Hour. ‘The boat of Ra travels on as before’. The Eleventh Hour. ‘The darkness fades away.’ This Circle of the Tuat through which the god travels appears in the mountain of sunrise. When the shadows depart the winds which arise in the Tuat are diverted by the hands of the four goddesses. In this statement we seem to have an allusion to the keen, fresh winds of dawn. (*id. p. 263*) “If we examine the doctrine concerning the future life according to the priesthoods of Ra, we find still less room for a purgatory in their theological system. According to this the souls of the dead assembled in the Amentet. *i.e.* the ‘hidden’ region, the Egyptian Hades, and made their journey with him (Ra) through the Tuat”.

(*Budge, Gods of Egypt Vol. 1 p. 189 resume of the Book of Pylons*) “We must note the position of the sixth Division of the Tuat. Assuming that the Tuat was regarded as a nearly circular valley which curved round from the West, where the sun set, to the North and curved round from the North to the East, where the sun rose, it follows if all the twelve divisions of the Tuat be equal in length, that the Sixth Division would be very near the most northerly part of the Tuat.

FINNISH

(*Kirby, Glossary*) “Tuonela, Manala, Hades” Tuoni or Mana, the God of Hades (*id. notes 326*)

"These infernal damsels play various parts in the Kalevala as boat-women, death bringers, etc. and here we find them in the character of Furies".

Death In The Finnish Conception of the World:
(By Prof. Juha Pentikainen)

Christianity's rise to power produced a revolution in the Finnish belief system, but it did not erase all pre-Christian elements. Despite the efforts of the authorities and the church these elements did not disappear, but intermixed with the Christian teaching of death and afterlife. The fact that Finland was situated in the border of Catholic and Orthodox influence created a distinct character to this collision of the two views, for example the realm of the dead has various locations in Finnish folklore. Probably the oldest layer of these beliefs is represented by the idea that the soul of a deceased person dwells close to the dead body in the cemetery, where it eventually disappears with the body. Thus the cemetery is the dwelling of forefathers. A belief common to all arctic peoples is the Lapplandish underworld 'Jabmeaivo', situated under water or earth, the quite common descriptions of the river of underworld, linked Finland to the central Asian and Byzantine culture district. The Christian conception of hell is a rather late layer in the Finnish folk tradition.

(Kalevala II, Runo XVI 368H)

"Quickly then his shape transforming
And another shape assuming
To the gloomy lake he hastened,
Like an otter in the reed-beds
Like an iron snake he wriggled
Like a little adder hastened
Straight across the stream of Tuoni
Safely through the nets of Tuoni
And he said the words which follow,
And in words like these expressed him:
Never, Jumala the Mighty
Never let another mortal
Make his way to Mana's country
Penetrate to Tuoni's kingdom!
Many there indeed have ventured
And indeed have wandered homeward
From the dread abode of Tuoni
From the eternal home of Mana
Afterwards these words he added,
And expressed himself in this wise,
To the rising generation,
And to the courageous people,
Sons of men, O never venture
In the course of all your lifetime
Wrong to work against the guiltless
Guilt to work against the sinless
Lest your just reward is paid you
In the dismal realms of Tuoni!
There's the dwelling of the guilty
And the resting place of sinners
Under stones to redness heated
Under slabs of stone all glowing".

GREEK

(Eric. Brit. Heaven) The Pagans considered Heaven as the residence only of the celestial gods, into which no mortals were admitted after death, unless they were deified. As for the souls of good men, they were assigned to the Elysian fields.

(*id. Elysium*) A place in the inferi or lower world, furnished with fields, meads, agreeable woods, groves, shades, rivers, etc.. 'Some authors take the fable of Elysium to have been borrowed from the Phoenicians: as imagining the name Elysium formed from the Phoenician *alaz*, *alatz* or *alaz* to rejoice or to be in joy'; the letter *a* being changed into *e*. On which footing, Elysium fields should signify the same thing as a place of pleasure. Others derive the word from the Greek *lua*: *solvo* 'deliver'. Let loose or disengage, because here men's souls are freed from the bondage of the body. Heroaldus and Hormius (*Hist. Phil. Lib. iii, Chap. 2*) takes the place to have derived its name from *Elize*, one of the first persons who came into Greece after the deluge.

The Elysian fields were, according to some, in the Fortunate Islands off the coast of Africa, in the Atlantic. Others place them in the Islands of Leuce, and, according to the authority of Virgil, they were situated in Italy. According to Lucian, they were near the moon; or in the centre of the earth, it we believe Plutarch; Olaus Wormius contends that it was in Sweden the Elysian fields were placed.

(*Brewer, Dict of Phrase and fable*) 'Hades The place of Departed. It may be either Paradise or Tartarus'.

(*id. Dict.*) Paradise "The rabbins say there is an earthly or lower paradise under the equator, divided into seven dwellings, a twelve times ten thousand miles square."

(*Syffert Dict.*) Elysium in Homer: "Elysium is a beautiful meadow at Western extremity of the earth, on the banks of the river Oceanus. Thither the favoured of Zeus, such as Rhadamanthys his son, of his son-in-law Menelaus, are carried without having seen death. They live a life of perfect happiness. There is no snow, nor storm, nor rain, but the cool west wind breathes there forever where the earth produces her fruits three times in the year."

(*Pindar Dirges p. 509*) The progress of the soul through the future ages:

After death all receive their due reward, and the spirits of the just are purified, until they are free from all taint of evil. Elysium: For them the sun shineth in its strength in the world below, while here it is night. And in the meadows red with roses, the space before their city is shaded by the incense - tree, and is laded with golden fruits. Some of them delight themselves with horses and with wrestling; others with draughts, and with lyres, while beside them bloometh the fair flower of perfect bliss. And o'er that lovely land fragrance is ever shed, while mingle all manner of incense with the far shining fire on the altars of the gods. The survival of the soul: having, by happy fortune, culled the fruit of the rite that released from toil, and while the body of all men is subject to over-mastering death, the image of life remains alive, for if alone cometh from the deities.

The spirit of the just made perfect: But, as for those from whom Persephone shall exact the penalty of their pristine woe, in the ninth year she once more restored their souls to the upper sun-light..

Sir J.E. Sandys (on Pindar p. 592) Pindar's belief appears to be as follows. After the death of the body, the soul is judged in Hades, and if accounted spotless in its life on earth, passes to the Elysium in Hades. It must, however, return twice again to earth and suffer two more deaths of its body. Finally Persephone releases it and it returns to earth to inhabit the body of a king, a hero, or a sage. It is now free from the necessity of further wanderings, and passes at once to the Islands of the Blest.

A few remain for ever there, regaining in time there original, but most of the souls must drink of the water of oblivion and then return to new bodies. (*cf. 713-7 15*)

Larousse, World Mythology.

The 'elect' souls were sent to the Elysian Fields, a miraculous place of sojourn, where they continued to live a slower mode of existence, still full of pleasures, in meadows bedecked with asphodel.

(*Homer, Odyssey bk xi 659*)

'Then striding large the spirit thence the hoary mead pacing', (note) Asphodel was planted on the graves and round the tombs of the deceased, and hence the supposition that the Stygian plain was clothed with asphodel.

"Amid the gloom be warned ; learn ye to be just and not to slight the gods(*id. 672 ff*) "and to the Sibyl the hero thus made brief reply: 'We dwell in shady groves, and live on cushioned river banks, and in meadows fresh with streams'."

(*id. 786 ff*) Thus through the whole region, they freely range, in the broad, misty plains.

Roman

(Virgil. Culex 258 A) Across Elysium waters am I hurried: across Elysiums water I must swim, and thither I am borne.

(Homer, Odyssey xi)

(Plato, Republic X615)

"The story of a brave man, Er, son of Armenius, a native of Pamphylia, killed in battle.. he was taken home and was to be buried on the twelfth day, and was already lying on the funeral pyre, when he came to life, he told the story of what he had seen in the other world. He said that when his soul left his body it travelled in company with many others till they came to a wonderfully strange place, where they were, close to each other, two gaping chasms in the earth, and opposite and above them two other chasms in the sky. Between the chasms sat judges, who, having delivered judgment on them ordered the just to take the right-hand road that led upwards through the sky and fastened their badge of judgment in front of them. While they ordered the unjust, who carried the badges and all that they had done behind them, to take the left-hand road that led downwards. When Er came before them, they said that he was to be a messenger to men about the other world, and ordered him to listen and watch all that went on in that place. He then saw the souls, when judgment had been passed on them, departing some by one of the heavenly and some by one of the earthly chasms, while by the other two chasms some rose out of the earth, stained with the dust of travel and others descended from heaven, pure and clean. And the throng of souls arriving seemed to have come from a long journey, and turned aside gladly into the meadow and encamped there as for a festival; acquaintances exchanged greetings, and those from earth and those from heaven inquired each other's experiences. And those from earth told theirs with sorrow and tears as they recalled all that they had suffered and seen on their journey, which lasted a thousand years, while the others, of the delights of heaven and of the wonderful beauty of what they had seen. It would take a long time to tell you the whole story, Glaucon, but the sum of it is this: for every wrong he had committed, he must pay the penalty in turn, ten times for each, that is to say, once every hundred years, this being reckoned as the span of a man's life. He pays therefore, tenfold retribution for each crime, and for instance those who have been responsible for many deaths... must pay tenfold in suffering for each offence. And those who have done good and been just and god-fearing are rewarded in the same proportion. He told me too about infants who died as soon as they were born and who lived only a short time, but what he said is not worth recalling.. These then, are the punishments and penalties and the corresponding rewards in the other world.

The whole of man's present life is to be a preparation for his choice in life to come.. and so; adds Socrates, this Vision of Judgment vanished not, but was preserved for our instruction. By taking to heart its lessons, we may secure true happiness here or hereafter. The plain of oblivion is appropriately described as a barren wilderness, having nothing to remind us of this world. The wise seek to retain, if possible, some recollection of a former state of existence. This is the only allusion which occurs in the Republic of this doctrine of anamnesis, which, moreover, is rarely spoken of elsewhere - (chiefly in the earlier writings of Plato).

(Aristophanes, Ranae Act 1, old paraphrase) chorus of the initiated:

"Let us to flowery meads repair, with deathless roses blooming
Whose balmy sweets impregn the air, both hills and dales perfuming.
Since fate benign our choir joined we'll trip in mystic measure,
In sweetest harmony combined we'll quaff full draught of pleasure,
For us alone the power of day, a milder light dispenses
And sheds benign a mellow'd ray to cheer our ravished senses."

From remarks by Plato and others, the privileged initiates were also enabled to witness souls returning through Devachan after their allotted time and preparing to go back to earth in a new physical body. Those who participated in the Mysteries in Greece and elsewhere lived in an age which it was assumed that life - in animals, humans, even the whole cosmos - existed not only on the physical, but also on the psychic, mental and spiritual planes. To intelligent initiates, therefore, Hades, as the abode of the Dead, represented but a phase in the human life.

After seven days spent in the meadows the souls set out again. On their arrival the souls had to go straight before Lachesis. And an interpreter first marshalled them in order and took from the lap of Lachesis a number and types of life and, mounting a high rostrum proclaimed: This is the word of Lachesis, Daughter of Ananke (Necessity).

Souls of a day, here you must begin another round of mortal life. No Guardian Angel will be allotted to you; you shall choose your own. And he on whom the lot falls shall be the first to choose the life which then shall of necessity be his. Goodness knows no master; a man shall have more or less of her according to the value he sets on her. The fault lies not with God, but with the soul that makes the choice. And when each had taken up his lot he knew what number had been drawn. Then the interpreter set before them on the ground the different types of life, at more in number than the souls who were to choose them. They were of every conceivable kind, animal and human...but wealth and poverty, health and disease were all mixed in varying degrees in the lives to be chosen...one can choose between the worse life and the better, calling the one that leads us to become more unjust the worse, and the one that leads us to become more just the better. Everything else we can let go, for we have seen that this is the last choice both for the living and the dead.. Yet it is true also that anyone who, during his earthly life, faithfully seeks wisdom may hope not only for happiness in this world but the next and back again, that will not lie over the stony ground of the underworld but along the smooth road of heaven. And it so happened that it fell to the soul of Odysseus to choose.. the memory of his former sufferings had cured him of all ambition and he looked for a long time to find the uneventful life of ordinary men; at last he found it lying neglected by the others, and when he saw it he choose it with joy and said that had his lot fallen first he would have made the same choice. And there were many other changes from beast to man and beast to beast, the unjust becoming wild animals and the just tame in every kind of interchange.

And when all the souls had made their choice they went before Lachesis in the order of their lots, and she allotted to each his chosen Guardian Angel, to guide it through life and fulfil his choice. And the Guardian Angel led it to Clotho, thus ratifying beneath her hand and whirring spindle the lot it had chosen.

(Jowett and Campbell, on this passage) Plato is accepting the old forms and trying to breathe a moral and intellectual life into them. His myth, consequentially, instead of being a mere fiction is supported by the strength of traditional belief.. Plato also has a limbus infantum, at which he hints.

“Earth is imagined as an inner sphere, concentric with this outer sphere is heaven, and connected with it by the column of light by which are fastened the chains of Heaven. In the centre of the column and attached to the ends of these chains is the spindle which the Fates are turning upon the knees of Necessity (Ananke). This together as the whorl which ‘governs’ it gives law to the movements of the heavenly bodies.. The thought of Plato seems to be that the whole circle of the Universe was held fast by the column, which, like the rope that fastened a trireme from stem to stern, passed through the midst of it.

(id) ‘Virtue is free to all’ or ‘is not the exclusive property of any’. In such abysmal terms does Plato assert the freedom of the human within a previous existence, as determining the condition of this.. in which the Deity is described as a consideration of their nature, placing living beings, in whom the connection of such a body is morally speaking not dissoluble, in a state of probation, and making their future character and dwelling-place depending on virtue or vice, and which one or other is to be chosen in an instant.

HEBREW

(Gds of Chaldea, Syria and Egypt p. 159) According to Hebrew scripture the word Shoel (a fem noun) refers to the underworld, the Abyss, the depth, the realm of departed spirits. The word may mean ‘the place of enquiry’ possibly hollow place. It is often the word used as a personification of the underworld, according to Hebrew thought. Sheol is situated beneath and within the earth and receives all departed spirits. Like the Chaldean Underworld there are entrance gates; “I shall go to the gates of Sheol”. A characteristic of this land is darkness and shadows “Where the light is as darkness”. There are regions in this Underworld of different depths and a reference is made of “the lowest hell”. Fire is mentioned in connexion with Sheol, burning down to the lowest depths.

A few details are given as to the kind of life led by the inhabitants of Sheol. ‘There the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary be at rest. There the prisoners. .hear not the voice of the oppressor. The small and the great are there and the servant is free from his master’. There is also some continuation of former activities, and some men are described as going down into Sheol with their weapons of war.

The method of entry into this realm of Sheol is not only through physical death. Korah and his associates are described as going down alive: “They and all that appertained to them went down alive into the pit”.

Thus the guests of the 'clamorous woman' are already in "the depth of Sheol"; the steps of the strange woman lead to Sheol and her house is on the way. At the end of The Proverbs the words of Agur are recorded, in which he places together Sheol, the womb, earth and fire. These four all have a voracious appetite. From this passage Graves suggests that Sheol and the womb are sisters, both daughters of Alukah.

The close connexion between the Underworld and the womb is seen in the Second Book of Esdras. The angel Uriel tells Ezra: "The storehouses of souls in the world below are like the womb". Another possible reference to this connexion is found in Ecclesiasticus, as follows: "work is the lot of every man., from the day when they come forth from their mother's womb until the day of their return to the mother of all".

Writing on the connexion between the lower worlds, the womb and the vagina, Neumann states: The underworld.. is always 'symbolically feminine' as the vessel that sucks in. "The opening of the vessel., is the womb, the gate, the gullet, which actively swallows..its sucking power is mythologically symbolised by its lure and attraction. .The yawning, avid character of the gullet and cleft represents in mythological apperception the unity of the Feminine, which as avid womb attracts. and draws in all living things.

"For this woman (i.e. the Dark Mother) who generates life and all living things on earth is the same who takes them back into herself."

The association of heat with the Underworld is seen in the Revelation of John in the passage referring to the bottomless pit. It is described how 'there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. It appears that, connected with the Underworld, there is also 'the lake of fire and brimstone'. In later Hebrew and Kabalistic cosmology, hell is described as being divided into seven regions, which are listed by Brewer as follows: "Hell, or Arka of the Jewish Cabalists, divided into seven lodges one under another: Gehennom, The Gates of Death, The Shadow of Death, The Pit, The Mire of Clay. Abaddon, Sheol". Each one of these has its own particular intensity of heat.

INDIAN

(Veronica Ions. Indian Mythology p 37)

Elaborate theories about the after-life developed in the face of notions generally accepted by the more sophisticated philosophers in the Brahmanic period.

(Veronica Ions. Indian Mythology p. 32) Yama.. was the first to explore the hidden regions and discover the road which became known as the 'path of the fathers'; this was the route which led the dead to heaven. At first, like Yama, the dead had to walk along this route, but later the path of the fathers (Manes or Pitris) was presided over by Agni, for when the dead were cremated this fire distinguished between the good and evil in them. The ashes that remained on earth represented all that was evil and imperfect while the fire carried aloft, the skin and the limbs of the deceased. There, brilliant like the Gods, and borne on wings or in a chariot, the purified soul rejoined its glorious body and was greeted by the forefathers who lived a life of festivity in Kingdom of Yama. The after-life was thus passed in a delectable abode and was perfect in every way. At first, however, the emphasis was on the pleasures of Yama's heaven, a realm of light where life had no sorrows, nature was sweet and the air full of laughter and celestial music. There Yama as Pitripati (King of the fathers) was waited upon by servants who measured out the life span of mortals and was surrounded and worshipped by rishis and pitris, clad in white and decked with golden ornaments. . .Yama's heaven was not, however, without rivals, and in particular it was challenged by the splendour and delights of the heavens of Varuna and Indra. The heaven, which was constituted within the sea had walls and arches of pure white, surrounded by celestial jewels which always bore blossom and fruit, birds sang elsewhere.

Indra's heaven was called Swarga and was situated on Mount Meru, but could be moved anywhere like a chariot. Like the other heavens it was adorned with celestial trees and filled with bird song and the scent of flowers. Indra sat enthroned, attended by the major gods and by sages and saints, whose pure souls without sin were resplendent as fire. This concept of Indra's heaven is the one still held today. In it there is no sorrow, suffering or fear for it is inhabited by the spirits of prosperity, religion, joy, faith and intelligence. Also in Indra's heaven are found the spirits of the natural world; wind, thunder. fire, water, clouds, plants, stars and planets. Recreation is provided by the singing and dancing of the Apsares and the Gandharvas, celestial spirits.

Yama's role changed with the growth of these other heavens and the idea that heaven was the reward for virtue, rather than a place where most of the dead were received. At first the idea of going to the abode of the fathers

was simply less desirable than that of being received with special honours by the gods; later this developed into the notion that Yama's Kingdom was not heaven but hell. These elaborate theories about the after-life developed in the fall of the notions generally accepted by the sophisticated philosophers in the Brahmanic period.

Vishnu's heaven is called Vaikuntha and is sometimes said to be on Mount Meru, this is more often given on the location of Indra's heaven. With a circumference of 80,000 miles Vaikuntha is made entirely of gold and precious jewels.

IRISH

(Joyce. Social History of Ancient Ireland, Vol 1 p. 293)

There was a belief in a land of everlasting youth and peace, beautiful beyond conception. Always inhabited by fairies, and called by various names; Tir na n-Og (Teornanogue), the 'Land of the (ever) youthful people.' I-Breasail or I-Brazil the 'Land of Bresal':

Tir na mBeo (Tir-nam-Yo) The 'Land of the (ever) living.'

Mag-Mell (Moy-Mell) the 'Plain of Pleasures' (for which Ten-mhagh Tir Trogaighi pron. Ten-mhagh Trogaighi. (pron. Tenvah-trogee) was another name.) Mag-Mon 'Plain of sports'.

Tir-Tairngi the 'Land and Promise' and Tir na Sorcha the 'Land of Light'.

Sometimes is deep down under the sea or a lake or well.

Sometimes it is described as situated far out in the Western Ocean.

Sometimes in deep down under the sea or a lake or well. Sometimes it was in a hollow shee or fairy hill. Perhaps it would be more correct to say that there were many such happy lands situated in these various places. The inhabitants were the sidhe (shee) or fairies who were immortal, and who lived in perfect peace in a perpetual round of sensuous, but harmless and sinless pleasures.

In nearly all the old accounts of this happy land, the absence of wickedness is expressly mentioned. The man from Tir-Tairngi tells Cormac that it was a land where there is nought save truth, and there is neither age, nor decay, nor gloom, nor sadness, nor envy, nor jealousy, nor hatred, nor haughtiness. The absence of sin, and of such like characteristics, are of course additions by Christian scribes.

In ancient Irish romantic tales we find many descriptions of this pagan heaven, bearing a general resemblance to each other. One which pictures Mag Mon ('Plain of Sports') situated far out in the Western Ocean-the Land that called elsewhere. May Mell, or I Brazil may be read translated by Prof. Kuno Meyer, in Mr. Alfred Nott's work, 'The Voyage of Bran' 1.4. This composition which is in poetry, is ascribed by scholars to the seventh Century. The following poetical description of the Fairy King Midir's heavenly country, under the shee of Bri Leigh will give the reader an excellent idea of these happy abodes. It has been translated by O'Curry from the Book of the Dun Cow:

O Befind it thou come with me.
To a wonderful land that is mine,
Where the hair is like the blossom of the golden sobarche.
Where the tender body is as fair as snow.

There shall be neither grief nor care;
White are the teeth, black the eyebrows,
Pleasant to the eyes the number of our host,
On every cheek is the hue of the foxglove,

Crimson of the plain is each brake,
Delightful to the eye the blackbirds eggs,
Though pleasant to behold are the plains of Inishfail (Ireland)
Rarely would't thou think of them after frequenting the Great Plain.

Though intoxicating thou deemest the ales of Inishfail
More intoxicating are the ales and the great land-
The wonderful land-the land I speak of,
Where youth never grows to old age.

Warm sweet streams traverse the land
The choicest of mead and of wine
Handsome people without blemish
Conception without sin, without stain.

We see everyone on every side
And no one seeth us;
The cloud of Adam
Has caused this concealment of us from them.

O Lady, if thou comest to my valiant people,
A diadem of gold shall be on thy head,
Flesh of swine, all fresh, banquets of new milk and ale,
Shall thou have with me there, O Befind.

(from an Ancient Irish Hymn) on the world of Spirits.

Delightful is the land beyond all dreams,
Fairer than aught thine eyes have ever seen,
There all the year the fruit is on tree,
And all the year the bloom is on the flower.

There with wild honey drip the forest trees,
The stores of mead and wine shall never fail.
Nor pain nor sickness knows the dweller there.
Death and decay come near him never more.

The feast shall cloy riot, nor the dance shall tire,
Nor music cease forever through the hall.
The gold and jewels of the Land of Youth
Outshine all splendours ever dreamed of man.

The name Tir Tairngiri is often found not only in the Tales but in Legends of the Saints; where St. Brendan has been praying for some secure, delightful land, remote from the haunts of men. And an angel said to him:

'Arise. O Brendan, for God hath given to thee what thou hast sought - Tir - Tairngire. After this the angel directs him how to find it; and it was in search of this promised happy land that Brendan went to his celebrated voyage out on to the Western Ocean. The name Tir-Tairngiri is a translation of the Scriptural name of the 'Land of Promise' it is of great antiquity, for it is found in the eighth and ninth century glosses of Zeuss: but the idea and the land itself is derived from the pagan legend of the happy fairyland.

This pagan heaven legend did not escape the notice of Giraldus Cambrensis. He tells the story of the Phantom Island as he calls it, off the western coast, and how, on one occasion when it appeared, some men rowed out towards it, and shot a fiery arrow against it, which fixed it. (*Top. Hib. 11 xii*)

To this day the legend remains as vivid as ever.

The happy land then was the abode of the spiritual and immortal fairy tale, but it was not for human beings, except a few individuals who were brought there by the fairies.

Immortality of the soul:- We know from Caesar, Diodorus Siculus, and other classical writers, that the ancient tales the Celts taught, as one of their tenets that the soul was immortal: and that after death it passed from one human body to another. And this it appears, applies to all human beings, but in Irish literature I cannot see anything to warrant the conclusion the pagan Irish believed that the souls of all men were immortal.

(A.E. The Candle of Vision. p. 35)

"One other vision I will tell because it bears on things the ancients taught us. Where I saw this I will not say. There was a hall vaster than any cathedral, with pillars that seemed built out of living and trembling opal, or from some starry substances which shone with every colour, the colours of eve and dawn. A golden air glowed in this place and right between the pillars were thrones which faded, glow by glow, to the end of the vast hall. On them sat the Divine kings. They were fire-crested. I saw the crest of the dragon on one, and there was another plumed with

brilliant fires that jetted forth like feathers and flame. They sat shining and star like, mute as statues, more colourful than Egyptian images of their Gods, and at the end of the hail was a higher throne on which sat one greater than the rest. A light like the sun glowed behind him. Below on the floor of the hall lay a dark figure as it were in trance, and two of the Divine Kings made motions with their hands about it over head and body. I saw where their hands waved how sparkles of fire like the flashing of jewels broke out. There rose out of that dark body a figure as tall, as glorious, as shining as those seated on the thrones. As he awoke to the hall he became aware of his divine king and how lifted he up his hands in greetings. He had returned from his pilgrimage through darkness. But now an initiate, a master in the heavenly guild. While he gazed on them the tall golden figures from their thrones leaped up, they too with hands uplifted in greeting and they passed from me and faded swiftly in the great glory behind the throne."

(Joyce, Soc. Hist. of Ireland p. 296)

The Gauls taught that the spirits of those who died were rewarded or punished in the otherworld for their conduct in this. A few individuals became immortal in Fairyland, and some few lived on after death, appearing as other men, or in the shapes of animals. In this connection it is necessary to notice one Christian record, a remarkable expression in Trechan's Life of St. Patrick, written in the seventh century. The pagan King Laegaire rejecting the teaching of St Patrick, and expressing a determination to be buried, standing up, armed in his grave, is made to say to the saint.

'For the pagans are accustomed to be buried armed, with their weapons ready, face to face to the day Erdathe among the magi (druids). i.e. day of judgment.

(Petrie, Tara. 170) This would seem to imply that the druids had a judgment which again would indirectly imply that they held the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. But this is an isolated statement.

A few individuals are brought by fairies to the happy other world.

Thus, in Adamnan's Vision though the Celtic otherworld has become 'the land of Saints', its primal character is clearly discernible: to reach it a sea voyage is necessary, and it is a land in which there is no pride, falsehood, envy, disease or death, 'where in is delight of every goodness. In it there are singing birds'.

The Celtic Doctrine of Re-Birth: Among ourselves the doctrine may seem a strange one, though among the great nations of antiquity, among the Egyptians, the Indians, Greeks, and Celts - it was taught in the Mysteries and Priestly Schools.

The time passed there as obscurely and pleasantly that a whole century appeared only the length of a year or so. Once a person got to Fairy Land he could never return, except, indeed, on a short visit, always in a boat or horseback, merely to take a look at his native land; but if once he touched his mother earth, the spell of youth and immortality was broken, and he immediately felt the consequences. Ossian, son of Finn, after his 300 years sojourn in Tir-na-nogue which he thought only three years.. .in trying to lift a great stone, overbalanced himself, and had to sleep on the ground, where he instantly became a withered, bony, feeble old man, while his fairy steed galloped off and never returned. In some tales, however, mortals who are detained in the shee are represented as thoroughly miserable; Dian, who had been a young noble on earth among the Fena, comes to see Cailte out of the Fairy mound at Mullaghsher . . . beside Ballyshannon. Cailte asked how it fares with him, on which Dian replies that though of food and raiment there was in abundance, yet he would rather be the lowest or most despised drudge among the servants of the Fena, than be the prince that he was in Fairyland. The foregoing observations regarding the pagan Irish notion of immortality after death apply in great measure to their ideas of metempsychosis. In our romantic life route there are legends of the rebirth of human beings. Thus Cuchulain was a reincarnation of the Dedanann hero - god. Lug of the long arms. Fintan, the nephew of Parthalon, survives the deluge, and lived in the shapes of various animals successively for many ages. Numerous stories of this kind are found in Irish romance.

(Fiona MacLeod, Winged Destiny p. 27) And when the world that we call the other world is become as open to the eyes as this world-in the veils that we call our own, one must either see too much, or one must be content to shroud his eyes and see only as others see:

"Peace be with you, good warriors", he said.

"Michael put his gaze at her. It was no woman now he saw nor ever a Bandia (goddess), but a power or dominion, he thought. She had her feet far down among the roots of the sky on a night of frost.

'Are you death?' Michael sobbed, his knees shaking with the awe that was on him.

"I am older than Death," she said. Her voice was beyond and above and below; but it put him in mind of a low wind in the dark.

"And the words that he heard were somewhat as these words, but remembered dimly they were, as in a dream:

"I am she who loveth loneliness
And Solitude is my breath.
I have the resurrection of the dead as my food.
And the dead rise as a vapour
And I breathe it as mist
As mist that is licked up of the wind.
I am she who stands at the pools:
I stand at the meeting of roads.
The little roads of the world
And the dark roads of life and death.
My lover is Immortality
For I am Queen
Queen of all things on earth and in the sea
And in the white palaces of the stars
Built on the dark walls of time
Above the Abyss".

(Fiona MacLeod, Winged Destiny, p. 115)

That was many months ago. There is no one on the Island now; no sheep even, for the pastures are changed. When the wild geese flew north this year, the soul of Murlo Maclan went with them. Or if he did not go with them he went where Monann promises him he should go. For who can doubt it was Manca, in the body or vision, he the living prince of the waters, the son of the most ancient God, who, created as with snow-white canna with a blueness in it, a 4 foot circuit with cold curling flame. "Sometimes she is seen as the Washer of the Ford, chanting the seisbhais, the Death-Dirge, as she washes the shroud of him who sees her; and sometimes she may suddenly grow great and terrible and inhabit darkness and the end is come. Sometimes she is seen as the Nigheag Cheag a Chroim, the little washer of sorrow, perhaps singing low while she steps the stones of a ford, or moves along the dim banks where the dew is white on sorrel and meadowsweet, a leanaig cheag bhaisna lamh, her little shroud of death is her hand, the keen of sorrow in her mouth for him or her whose death is near.

"I heard once of a meeting with the Woman of Tears told

"When high upon Donnusk Water he stopped; to see the stones of the weir, he said; though he knew the stones, and that the water was shallow, and was at low below them at that.

"He thought it was myself at first, 'Is it you, John'? He said in the whisper that he thought would be the strong voice.

He saw then it wasn't me; no, nor any man; but a woman, or a girl stooping over the water.

'Calasaidh'; he called, his voice falling like a splashing Stone.

'Wilt that be you Cairstruic?' he called again, but lower, and he looked behind him when he had spoken.

"Then he saw the woman or the girl look round. He has not heard her singing before, but heard it now. By that sorrowful lamentation, low and sweet foreby, and by the tears that glistened white on the grey face, he knew it was the Nigheach Cheag a Chroim."

(Evans Wents Fairy-Faith in Celtic Countries, 332)

'In Ireland this world and world we go to after death are not far apart'

W.B. Yeats.

As it was necessarily a subjective world, poets could only describe in terms more or less vague; and its exact geographical location, accordingly, differed widely in the minds of scribes from century to century.

But this Western other world, if it is what we believed to be a paradise picture of the great subjective world - cannot be the realm of any one race of invisible beings to the exclusion of another. In it all abide gods. Tuatha De Danann, fairies, demons, Shades, and every sort of disembodied spirit find their appropriate abode. And that it is not an exclusive realm is certain from our old Irish manuscripts record concerning the Fomorian races.

To enter the other world before the appointed hour marked by death, a passport was often necessary, and this was usually a silver branch of the Land of the Ever Living and Ever Young gives to those mortals whom she wishes for as companions; though sometimes it was a single apple without its branch. The queen's gifts serve not only as passports, but also as food and drink for mortals who go with her. Often the apple branch produces music so soothing that mortals who hear it forget all troubles and even cease to grieve for those whom the fairy woman take. For there are no episodes more important than those in the ancient epics concerning these apple tree talismans, because in them we find a certain key which unlocks the secret of that world from which such talismans are brought, it proves it to be the same sort of place as the otherworld of the Greeks and Romans. Let us then use the key to make a few comparisons between the Silver Branch of the Celts and the Golden Bough of the Ancients excepting the two symbols naturally differ in their function, though not fundamentally.

It is evident at the outset that the Golden Bough was as much the property of the queen of that underworld called Hades as the Silver Bough was as much the property of the queen of that fairy realm and like the other world of the Ancients, which is called Hades, is with the Celtic other world located in the Northern Ocean, and is also like the Elysian Fields to the west, reserved by the Greeks and Romans for their gods and heroes; in the Happy other world and of Scandinavian, Iranian, and Indian mythologies. As a rule the Hades world or underground and underwave world, is unlike Manannan's peaceful ocean world, being often described as a place of much strife.

All the numerous variations of other worlds tales now extant in Celtic literature share a common pre-Christian origin. The combination of Christian and pagan ideas is well shown in the Voyage of Hui Corra. 'Thereafter a wondrous island was shown to them. A psalm-singing venerable old man with fair hair builded churches and beautiful bright altars; beautiful green grass therein. A dew of honey on its grass. Little ever, lovely grass and fair, purple headed birds chanting music therein, so that (merely) to listen to them was enough to delight. But in another passage the Christian scribes describes other world birds as souls, some of them in hell, "of the land of Erin am I" quoth the bird " and I am the soul of a woman, unto thee" she saith to the elder. "Come ye to another place" saith the bird, "to hearken to yon birds. The birds that you see are the souls that come on Sunday out of hell". But not only was the Celtic world gradually changed into a Christian Heaven, or Hell, from the 7th century onward, but its divine inhabitants soon came to suffer the rationalisation commonly applied to their myths, and the transcribers began to set them down as actual personages of Irish history. The Tuatha De Danann were shorn of their immortality. This perhaps was a natural anthropomorphic process such as is met in all mythologies.

A few of the pagan legends, however, met very unfair treatment at the hands of poetical and patriotic Christian transcribers.

The Heaven - World of the ancient Celts, unlike that of the Christians, was not situated in some distant, unknown region of planetary space.

("The Path to the Centre," Prudence Jones p 8)

"An Irish tale tells of Conn, King of Tara, who visiting this other world came upon the spectre on high seated on a throne, accompanied by a maiden, the Sovereignty of Ireland, crowned with gold and seated on a crystal throne. A golden cup was at her feet, a silver cup with four gold corners, tilled with red beer before her, and a gold cup at her lips. On seeing Conn, she greeted him and gave him food and drink, hearing from on high that the red beer should be granted to Conn and his descendants. The vision then disappears, leaving Conn with the two lower vessels and the two Ogham staves on which his druid had written down the names of all his descendants."

ISLAMIC

Koran. Part 111

"A likeness of the garden which the righteous are promised; there flow beneath it rivers, its fruits are perpetual and its plentiness. Surely thou who guard (against evil) shall be in the midst of gardens and fountains. Toil shall

not afflict them in it, nor shall they be ever ejected from it." (1342, 1276) "The gardens of perpetual abode, which they will enter along with those who do good from among their parents and their spouses and their offspring; women entitled to blessings along with the men" (1276, 2109A) "A bowl shall be made to go round them from water running out of springs, white, delicious to those who drink, There shall be no trouble in it, nor shall they be exhausted therewith. Therein are rivers of water that does not alter, and rivers of milk the taste whereof does not change, and rivers of wine, delicious to those who drink, and rivers of honey clarified." (2296) "The garden of the next life is the fruit of good deeds done here." (2356) "There are gardens, trees, rivers, milk, honey, fruits and numerous other blessings spoken of as being met with in paradise." The Holy Qur-an speaks of: 'No soul knows what is hidden for it. Hence even the white-eyed, large-eyed, or the pure beautiful ones (the houris) are as much a blessing meant, for the righteous women as for the righteous men.' (Koran XX VII. LII) "Eat and drink pleasantly for what you did. Reclining on thrones set in lines and we will unite them to pure beautiful ones."

(2521) According to the Holy Qur-an, paradise is not only a place to enjoy the blessings and reap the rewards of one's previous good deeds, but it is also the starting point of a never-ceasing spiritual advancement. Spiritual progress in that life will be endless.

(*Enc. Brit. Paradise*) "The paradise of the Mohammedans is said by them to be situated above the seven heavens, or in the seventh, and next under the throne of the god; to express the amenity of the place, they tell us that the earth of it is of the finest wheat flour, or of the purest musk, or of saffron; that its stones are pearls or jacinths, the walls of its building enriched with gold and silver, and the trunks of all its trees and gold; among which the most remarkable is the tree called tuba, or tree of happiness. They pretend that this tree stands in the palace of Mohammed, though a branch of it will reach to the house of every one, loaded with pomegranates, dates, grapes and other fruits of surprising bigness, and delicious tastes, unknown to mortals. If a man desires to eat of any particular kind of fruit, it will immediately be presented to him. They add, that this tree will supply the blessed, not only with fruit, but with silk garments also. Plenty of water being one of the greatest additions. The alcoran speaks of the rivers of paradise, as the principal ornament. Some of these rivers are said to flow with water, some with milk, some wine, and others with honey, and all of these have their source in the root of this tree of happiness. But all these glories with eclipsed by the resplendent and exquisite its beauty of the girls of paradise. These (they say) are not formed of clay, as mortal women, but of pure musk; being also of modesty. They keep themselves secluded in pavilions of hollow pearls. With these the inhabitants of paradise may taste pleasures in their height, and for this purpose will be endowed with extraordinary abilities, and enjoy a perpetual youth".

(*Maulvi Muhammad Ali on Koran*)

The life after death: Belief in a future life, in one form or another, is also common to all religions of the world and is the third fundamental article of the Muslim's faith. The mystery of the life after death was so obscure as late as the appearance of the Jewish religion, that not only is there very little found in the Old Testament, but an important Jewish sect actually denied any such state of existence. This fact, however, due to the lack of light thrown on the underdeveloped mind of man mistaking spiritual realities for physical facts. In Islam the idea reached its perfection, as did other fundamental principles of religion. This is an exaggeration to those who have been taught to look for nothing but sensuality in Islam; but the several points established by the Holy Qur-an with regard to a future life, while nothing is said about them, in the books of other religions bear ample testimony to the truth. Belief in a future life implies the accountability of man in another life for actions done in this life. The belief, if properly understood, is no doubt a most valuable teaching for the moral progress of the world. The holy Qur-an lays particular stress upon the following points: The life after death is only a continuation of the life below: The gulf that is generally interposed between this life and the life after death is the great obstacle in the solution of the mystery of the hereafter. Islam makes the gulf disappear altogether; it makes the next life only a continuation of the present one. On this point the Holy Qur-an is explicit. It says "and we will make every man's actions cling to his neck and we will bring forth to him on the resurrection day a book, a book which he will find wide open" (17:13). And again it says: "whoever is blind in this, he shall also be blind in the hereafter." (17:12) "O soul that art at rest! return to your lord well pleased with him, well pleasing Him, so enter among my servants and enter my garden" (89:27-30). The first of these verses makes clear that the great fact which shall be brought to light on the day of the resurrection will not be anything new, but only a continuance of the life, bringing its hidden realities to light. The other two quotations show a hellish and a heavenly life both begin in this world.

The blindness of the next life is surely hell, but according to the verse quoted, only those who are blind here, shall be blind hereafter, thus making it clear that the spiritual blindness of this life is the real hell and from here it is taken to the next life. Similarly, it is the soul that has found perfect peace and rest that is made to enter into paradise, thus showing that the paradise of the next life is only a continuation of the peace and rest which a man enjoys spiritually in this life. Thus it is clear according to the Holy Qur-an the next life is a continuation of this life below.

JAPANESE

(*Gdss. China and Japan. p. 463*) Yomi, the Japanese Hades or Sheol, a subterranean land of the dead. Yomi is consistently written with the isteographs 'yellow spring', a Chinese expression for the land beyond the grave. Motoori has the following interpretation of Yomi: it is the land in the nether regions; it appears to be a place of darkness, it is the land where men go to live when they die. The noble, the common, the good and the bad when they die all go this land of Yomi. (*Philipp The Kojiki p 642*) 'It is a land in the nether regions. The body becomes a lifeless corpse, and plainly remains in the visible world, but the soul goes to the land of Yomi.' (*Hepburn, Jap Dict*) Kosen, yellow fountain; Hades, the place of the dead, supposed to be situated in the centre of the earth, 'The cuckoo, a bird that is supposed to cross the Shide mountain and come from the spirit land.

(*Hepburn, Jap. Dict*) "Shide-no-yama, a mountain in Hades over which passes the road that the souls of the dead must travel to reach Emmacho the place of judgment". (*Philippi, Kojiki p. 642*) The mental picture of Yomi was birth simple and unstable. There was no idea of a final judgment or of retribution or reward after death. There were houses in Yomi, inhabitants were conscious, moved about and ate food, but in some respects the mode of existence of the dead differed from that of the living. Matsumura concludes that, in comparison with other ancient peoples the Japanese were almost completely indifferent to the details of the afterlife. The mental image of the land of Yomi is simple to the point of being astonishing. The optimistic this worldliness of the Japanese living in their mild and sunny islands made them indifferent to anything as uncertain and morbid as the life after death. Furthermore, since the main object of the Kojiki mythology was to explain the political and historical backgrounds for the much of the Yamato court, the afterlife is not described in great detail because it was irrelevant. The Japanese myth makers were interested in having their characters moving along quickly in chronological order, and they had little interest in philosophical concepts or descriptions of things or places unless these were absolutely necessary for the progress of the narrative.

(*The Kojiki. ch. 9*) "At this time Izanagi-no-Mikoto wishing to meet again his spouse, Izanami-no-Mikoto went after her to the land of Yomi, When she came forth out of the door of the halt to greet him, Izanagi said: 'O My beloved spouse, the lands which you and I were making have not yet been completed, you must come back'.

Then Izanami-no-Mikoto replied saying:

'How I regret you didn't come sooner. I have eaten at the hearth of Yomi. O my beloved husband, how awesome is it that you have entered here. Therefore I will go and discuss for a while with the Gods of Yomi my desire to return. Pray do not look upon me'.

Thus saying, she went into the hail, but her absence was so long that Izanagi-no-Mikoto could no longer wait.

Thereupon he broke off one of the large end teeth of the comb he was wearing in his left hair bunch, lit one fire, and entered in to see.

At this time his spouse, said:

"He hath shamed me".

Thereupon she dispatched the hags of Yomi to pursue him.

The Izanagi-no-Mikoto undid the black vine securing his hair, flung it down, immediately it bore grapes, while (the hags were picking and eating the grapes) he fled.

When again they pursued him, he next pulled out the comb he was wearing in his right hair bunch and flung it down, immediately bamboo shoots sprouted forth. While the hags were pulling up and eating the bamboo shoots, he fled.

The pursuit continued, and when (Izanagi-no-Mikoto had arrived) at the foot of the pass Yomi-to-pira-saka, he took three peaches which were there and waiting for his pursuers attacked them with the peaches. They all turned and fled.

Finally, his spouse Izanami-no-Mikoto herself came in pursuit of him. Then he pulled a tremendous boulder and closed the pass, Yoma-ta-pira-saka, with it. They stood facing each other, one on each side of the boulder, and broke their troth. The idea is that one may not return home, if he has eaten the food of any other world or society such as the world of the spirits, fames, or gods was also wide spread. In primitive thought eating or drinking together brings about a magical relationship."

(Gdss Japan & China) "Sanzukama no obaasan"

This goddess is described in the following account by Hepburn: "Yomiji; the road to Hades by which the souls of the dead, crossing the Shide mountain and the Sanzu river, travel to Emma cho, the place of judgment; from this place two roads branch off, one to gokuraku (paradise), the other to jigoku (hell). Before crossing the river they are stripped of their clothes by an old woman, called Sanzukama no obaasan".

Yomi, according to the same author, is the place of the departed spirits, the Hades of the Shinto: Yomiji denotes the Buddhist Hades. The Shide-no yama is a mountain in Hades over which passes the road that the souls of the dead must travel to reach Emmacho. Emma or Emma-o, King of Hades, takes a part in judging the dead.

According to Saunders and Frank, death is often announced "by the apparition of infernal agents;" these take charge of the spirit or shade and guard him on his way to the Other World. In the "Journey of Intermediate Existence" he travels across a vast plain. At the entrance to hell is the Shide Mountain, veiled in darkness; and having groped his way over this he reaches the Mituse-kawa (River of Three Passages) also known as Sanzu no-kawa (River of Three Ways). On the far side is the woman Sanzu-no-baba, awaiting his arrival. His clothes are stripped from him and hung from branches of a tree. 'Some traditions state that it she was given a coin she did not strip her victim bare and presumably that is why a few small coins were always placed in coffins".

Gokuraku and Jogoku refers to the Buddhist Paradise and hells. Of the latter there are eight; these are each divided into sixteen, making in all one hundred and twenty-eight.

Hepburn also refers to the Johari-no-kagami, "A mirror in Hades, which reflects the good or evil deeds which those that look into it have done while in this world".

MEDIEVAL

(Baring-Gould Curious Myths of the Middle Ages, p. 255 The Terrestrial Paradise.)

A manuscript in the British Museum tells us that "Paradise is neither in heaven nor on earth.. is forty fathoms higher than Noah's flood was, and it hangeth between heaven and earth wonderfully and the ruler of all things made it. And it is perfectly level both in length and breadth. There is neither hollow or hill; nor is there frost or snow, hail or rain; but there is tons vitae, that is, the well of life. When the Calends of January commence, then floweth the well so beautifully and so gently, and no deeper than man may wet his finger on the front, over all that land. And there is the copse of wood which is called Radion Saitus, where each tree is as straight as an arrow, and so high that no earthly man ever saw so high, or can say of what kind they are. And there never falleth leaf off, for they are evergreen, beautiful, and pleasant, full of happiness. There is neither heat nor hunger, nor is there ever night, but always day. Therein dwell innumerable angels of God with the holy souls till doomsday." (*Ms. Cotton Vespas. D. xiv., fol 163.*) But perhaps the most remarkable account ever furnished, is that of Saga Vidforla, an Icelandic narrative of the fourteenth century, giving the adventures of a certain Norwegian, named Eirek, who had vowed, whilst a heathen, that would explore the fabulous Deathless land of pagan Scandinavian mythology. The romance is probably a Christian recension of an ancient heathen myth and Paradise has taken the place in it of Gloesivellir.

The land was most beautiful and the grass as gorgeous as purple, it was studded with flowers and traversed by honey rills.. the calm of the air was great and there was but a feeble murmur of wind and that which there was, breathed redolent with the odour of blossoms. After a short walk, Eirek observed what certainly must have been a remarkable object, namely, a tower or steeple self-suspended in the air without any support whatever, though access might be had by means of a slender ladder. By this Eirek ascended into the loft of the tower and found there an excellent cold collation prepared for him. After having partaken of this he went to sleep, and in a vision

beheld and conversed with his guardian angel who promised to conduct him back and fetch him away from it for ever at the expiration of the tenth year after his return to Drontheim.

After a tedious journey of seven years, Eirek returned to his native land, the bridge over which Eirek had to pass, and the marvellous house suspended in the air which is an item peculiar to the Paradise of Druidical Mythology.

(*J. Baring-Gould Curious Myths of the Middle Ages p. 256*) *The terrestrial Paradise.*

And there never falleth leaf off, for they are evergreens, beautiful and pleasant, full of happiness. Paradise is upright on the Eastern part of this world. There is neither heat nor hunger, nor is there ever night but always day. The sun shineth seven times brighter than on this earth. Therein dwell innumerable angels of God with holy souls till doomsday. Paradise is figured as an island opposite the mouth of the Ganges. The Anglo-Saxon poem (*translation of the work of the Pseudo-Lactantius*) asserts:

"I have heard tell
That there is far hence
In Eastern parts
A land most noble
Amongst men renowned.
The tract of earth is not over mid-earth
Fellow to many peopled lands
But it is withdrawn through the Creator's might
From wicked doers. Beauteous is all the plain
With delights blessed with the sweetest of earth's odours."

Jourdain de Severac, monk and traveller in the beginning of the fourteenth century, places the terrestrial paradise in the 'Third India'; that is to say in trans-Gangic India. (*id. p. 262*)

The land was most beautiful and the grass as gorgeous as purple, it was studded with flowers, and was transversed by honey rills.

Hugo de S. Victor, in his book *De Situ Terrarum* expresses himself thus:

Paradise is a spot in the Orient productive of pomiferous trees. It contains the Tree of Life, loaded with leaves, which scarcely moved to the light breeze, were scattered on the green sward and rising ground; all was calm and bright; the pure sun of autumn shone from his blue sky on the fields; he hastened not to the west for repose, nor was seen to rise in the east, but hurry as a golden lamp ever illuminating the Fortunate Isle.

There in radiant dells dwelt the spirits of the departed, ever blooming and beautiful, ever laughing and gay. It is curious to notice how retentive of ancient mythology doctrines relative to death are the memories of the people. The keltic fable of the 'Land beyond the Sea' to which the souls are borne after death, has engrafted itself on popular religion in England. The following hymn is from the collection of the Sunday School Union and is founded on this venerable Druidic poem:

Shall we meet beyond the river
Where the surges cease to roll
Wherein all the bright For-ever
Sorrow neer shall press the Soul?
Shall we meet in that blest harbour
When our stormy voyage is o'er
Shall we meet and cast the anchor
Shall we meet with many loved ones
Who were torn from our embrace?
Shall we listen to their voices
And behold them face to face.

So is the hymn from the Countess of Huntingdon's Collection:

I launch into the deep
And leave my native land
Where sin lulls all asleep

For thee I fain would all resign
And sail for heaven with thee and thine
Come heavenly wind and blow
A prosperous gale of grace
To waft from all below
To heaven my destined place
Therein full sail my port I'll find
And leave the world of sin behind.

(*id. Curious Myths of the Middle Ages p. 530*) *The Fortunate Isles*

'I have read' said Agelastes.. 'the volumes of the learned Procopius, that beyond Gaul, and nearly opposite to it, but separated by an arm of the sea, lies a ghostly region, on which clouds and tempests for ever rest and which is known to its continental neighbours as the abode to which departed are sent after this life. On one side of the strait dwell a few fishermen enjoying certain privileges in consideration. .who, performing the office of the heathen Charon, carry the spirits to the island which is their residence after death'. 'On the great island of Brittia' continues Procopious, 'the men of older time built a great wall cutting off a great portion of the land. This belief, which acted as a second wall to the realm of the dead, preserved strict privacy for the spirits. There too is a palace all of glass and within its transparent walls the souls of the blessed.'

In popular opinion, this distant isle was far more beautiful than paradise and rumours of its splendour so excited the minds of the mediaevals that the western land was nicknamed Cokayne or Schlaraffanland.

An English poem apparently written in the latter part of the thirteenth century, says Mr. Wright (*S. Patrick's Purgatory*) runs thus -

"Though Paradise be merry and bright Cokaigne is of fairer sight".

What is there in Paradise - Both grass and flowers and green ris (boughs). Though there be joy and great dute (pleasure). There is no meat, but fruit. There is not hall, bower, nor bench

But water man's thirst to quench.

Cockaigne is full of happy men and women. There is no land like it under heaven; it is there always day and never night; there quarrelling and strife are unknown; there no people die; there falls neither hail, rain, or snow.

Neither is thunder heard there, nor blustering winds.. However much as the burlesque poets of the Middle Ages might laugh at this mysterious western region of blissful souls, it held its own in the belief of the people. The Mysterious Western Land, in Irish, is called *Theirna na Oge*, or the Country of Youth. But to confine ourselves to two points - the phantom Western Land, and the passage to it... Occasionally it would be visible from their shores, stretching away in the clear bright west, to all appearances substantial like themselves, and still more beautiful. Expeditions would launch farther from the Canaries to explore this land of promise. For a time its sun-gilt and long shadowy promontories would remain distinctly visible, but as preparation for the voyages approached, peak and promontory would gradually disappear. To the ancient Celtiberians; the properties of the old belief remain and the barge to conduct the spirit to the shore, the gorgeous scenery and the splendid castle.

That the belief in this region was very strong in Ireland, about the eleventh century, is certain from its adoption, in the popular mythology of the name they gave to the Isle of the Blessed in the western sea, was as the Great Ireland - its being a colony of the souls of the Kelts *Hvitramann Land* - or because there the inhabitants were robed in white. In the mediaeval vision of Owayne the Knight which is simply a fragment of mythology in a Christian garb, the paradise is enclosed by a fair wall 'whyte and bryght as glass'.

(*id. p. 552*)

The following passages in the Icelandic chronicles refer to this land of mystery and romance.

'In his crystal ark
Whither sail'd Merlin with his band of bards
old Merlin master of the mystic lore
Belike his crystal ark, instinct with life
Obedient to the mighty Master, reach'd

The Land of the Departed, there, belike
They in the clime of immortality
Themselves immortals, drink the gales of bliss
Which oe'r Flathinnis breathe eternal spring
Blending whatever odours make the gale
Of evening sweet, whatever melody
Charms the wood traveller.

(*Southey: Madoc, xi*)

This Flath Innis, the Noble Island, is the Gaelic name for the western paradise. Macpherson, in his introduction to the History of Great Britain relates a legend which agrees with those prevalent among other Celtic peoples. In former days there lived in Skerra, a druid of renown. He sat with his face to the west on the shore, his eye following the declining sun.. One day, as he sat musing on a rock, he heard a voice call 'Arise, and see the Green Isle of those who have passed away!' Then he entered the vessel... Immediately the wind shifted the cloud enveloped him and in the bosom of the vapour he sailed away... the darkness thickened around him, when suddenly he heard a cry, 'The Isle! The Isle!'..the wind died away and the vessel rushed into dazzling light. Before his eyes lay the Isle of the Departed basking in golden light. Its hills sloped green and tufted with beauteous trees to the shore, the mountain tops were enveloped in bright and transparent clouds, from which gushed limpid streams, which wandering down this steep hillside with pleasant murmur, emptied themselves into the twinkling blue bays. . the valleys.

It would be a study of no ordinary interest to trace modern popular Protestantism back to the mythologic systems of which it is the resultant. The early Fathers erred in regarding the ancient heresies as bastard forms of Christianity; they were distinct religions, feebly tinged by contact with the religion of the Cross. In like manner, I am satisfied that we make a mistake in considering the dissent of England, especially as manifested in greatest intensity in the works of Cornwall, Wales and the Eastern Moors of Yorkshire, where the Keltic element is strong as a form of Christianity. It is radically different; its framework and nerve is of ancient British origin, passing itself off as a spiritual Christianity. I have instanced the belief in angels' music calling away the soul as a heathen item in popular Protestant mythology.

'Hark! this whisper, Angels say,
Sister spirit, come away!'

Another is the tenet that the souls of the departed become angels.

The article *stantis vel cadentis fidei* of the Apostles, was the resurrection of the body.

But the doctrine of the soul being transported to heaven and of its happiness was completed at death, finds no place in the Bible or the liturgies of any branch - Greek, Roman, or Anglican - of the Church Catholic. Yet this was the belief of our Keltic forefathers and it has maintained itself in English Protestantism, so as to divert the doctrine of the resurrection of the body and its hold of the popular mind. Among the Kelts, again, reception into the sacred inner circle of the illuminated was precisely analagous to the received dissenting doctrine of conversion.

They went everywhere preaching - 1. The rising of Christ; 2. The consequent restoration of the bodies of Christians. This was the key-note of the Apostles reflected in the writing of the Fathers. It occupies its legitimate position in the Creeds.

It is a singular fact, that only the other day I heard of a man in Cleveland being buried two years ago with a candle, a penny and a bottle of wine in his coffin; the candle to light him along the road, the penny to pay the ferry, and the wine to nourish him as he went to the New Jerusalem. This looks to me as though the slipping into the other land was not regarded merely as a figure of speech, but as a reality.

MEXICAN

Laurette Sejournee, (Burning Water), p. 65

It was supposed that the dead man had to overcome seven difficult trials before reaching the desired end of his journey; the place where the dead ended and were no more.. The seven trials - the last of which consisted in confronting the Terrible God of the dead - lasted four years... Among others there is the vast river on the road leading to liberation. Quetzalcoatl builds a bridge so that his 'pages or disciples' can follow him. Salhagon tells

how there is another place where they said the souls of the dead went, 'the earthly paradise named Tlalocan, in which it was said there was much rejoicing and comfort, and no sorrow whatever...' From these beliefs it has been deduced that the Nahuas thought behaviour in life to have no consequence for the soul. This view completely contradicts what we know of the moral laws ruling Tenochtedan. According to such a view, the over-riding need for penitence and purification dominating Aztec life would seem to have been only an incident, without roots in Nahuatl though; yet actually it constitutes its very essence. In fact, human existence was thought of as a preparation for death.. The Aztec wise men said they would not die but waked from a dream they lived and became once more spirits or gods... the dead went to this land of delight where therefore were merely buried. The most important Order in ancient Mexico was that of the Knights Eagle and Tiger, must originally have existed for the purpose of initiation into the sacred Mysteries.

AMERICAN - INDIAN

(C. Burt and, *North American Indian Mythology* p. 65) The North West Coast. The spirits of the dead were thought of as going into an underworld where they could occasionally be reached by their descendants. But one could never expect to return if food was accepted in this other land.

(*id.*, p. 68) The Iroquois believed there was a land of the dead somewhere far away. There was an underworld Mother of Animals, and, of course a great number of ancestral spirits. Not only did the ancestors watch over men in their daily activities, they could also be visited in dreams, where they could be found living in beautiful villages underneath the earth, in a condition which seems to have been rather better than that of life on the surface. There was neither war nor sickness and they never lacked skins and food.

AFRICAN

(G. Parrinder *African Mythology* p. 64)

The myth of the Kintu spoke of the heavenly country. Many other myths tell of a journey to the world beyond death, either below ground or up in heaven. The queen once affirmed that once a person died he could not return.

OCEANIAN

(Roslyn Poignant, *Oceanic Mythology* p. 73) *Micronesia*

The souls of the dead journey either northwards or westwards to the leaping place which leads either to an island of the dead, or skywards, or underground - options vary from island to island. Some Marshall Islanders say that the dead must swim a channel to reach the island of Nako where the spirit food is everlasting, but some are weighted down by their sins and sink. Melanesia; The route taken by the souls of the dead to the afterworld and is usually well defined. The Fijians believed that the Spirit Path was hazardous and had many stopping places.. Not all areas have elaborate itineraries, but most believe in a guardian at the entrance who challenges the credentials of the newcomers.

(*id.*, *Why men die* p. 135) Aboriginal men believe that after dead at least some of a man's spiritual essence is reunited with the Eternal Dreaming.

(*id.*, *Myths and Legends of the South Seas* p. 11)

As a name for the underworld, Mavrii was sometimes coupled with the name most commonly given to this region.

NORSE

(H. Davidson, *Gods and Myths of N. Europe*)

A picture is given many times of a long and perilous journey from one world to another over mountain of desolate of cold and darkness, or a tedious and fearsome road down to the realm of the dead. In Norse mythology also, as in that of many other people further East, we find the image of a bridge that unites the worlds. This may be fragile and steeply poised above the abyss, as thin as a needle or a sword-edge. We hear also of the bridge Bifrost, a rainbow of these colours, or sometimes called a bridge of pleasure which linked earth and heaven. We hear also of a great gate, called by various names of Helgrind etc. which cuts off the realm of living from that of the dead. When the dead return to earth this gate is said to stand open for their passage. There is also mention of rushing waters to be crossed, the idea of that World and an eternal centre persists as images of tremendous power. This image indeed appears to have dominated the religion through much of Europe and Asia.

Many of the myths are concerned with the conception of a joining to the Other World, although the cold and darkness acted as a barrier to the chasms, dark holes and caves leading to the underworld, all this emphasises the belief in a passage between the world both for men and other things. The underworld is ether below the earth... the abode of darkness... yet at the same time it is the place from which new life comes, to which the gods may look for their brides.

(i.d. p. 232) Hel, Daughter of Loki, given the rule of the kingdom of death, a name also used for the Kingdom itself. (*Prose Edda* p. 64) It is my belief that many a one coming to Hel would drink a drink of water dearly paid for. I can tell you a very different story about that place. A goat called Heidrum stands up in Valhalla biting the leaves from the branches of that very famous tree which is called Yggdrasil. Valhalla must be an enormous house and its doors must be many. I think there is in Valhalla more than six hundred and forty doors.

(*Larousse. World Myth, p. 364*)

Below the world of men there was a land of the dead, which was also the land of ice and darkness and was called the Niflheim. Only giants and dwarfs could live there together with the dead. This furthest region was the Kingdom of the Goddess Hel, and was guarded by the fearful dog Garm. The Valkyries choose the best and later send them to Valhalla, where they lead the life of Gods during the day, they train for battle, and when evening falls they gather to feast and drink in the great hall of the castle. Valhalla is not, therefore a place of bliss, the Valkyries are his hostesses at Valhalla. In Valhalla these men of various skills keep up their favourite occupation. Hel was a goddess also who guarded the Kingdom of the dead and lived underground. She allocated a place to each newcomer and the dead led a communal life, which seemed very peaceful. West believes that the souls of the dead cross in the west.

(*Snorri Sturluson, Prose Edda p. 46*)

"There are many magnificent places there. There is one called Alfheim, and there lives the people called the light elves. Then there is Breidablik; there is no place there more beautiful. There is also one called Glitnir (radiant place) and its walls and posts and pillars are red gold, but its roof is of silver. Further there is that place called Himinbjorg, it is at Heaven's end by the bridge-head where Bifrost joins heaven. There is moreover, a great dwelling called Valaskjalf owned by Odin. In the southern end of heaven is the most beautiful hall of all, brighter than the sun, is below Gimle, it shall stand when both heaven and earth have passed away, and good and righteous men will inhabit that place for all time. As it says in the Sibyl's Vision.

I know where stands a hall, Brighter than sunlight, better than gold in lee-of flame, Gimle, hosts of the righteous shall inherit it and live in delight everlastingly.

It is said there is another heaven to the south of and above this one and it is called Andlang; and there is yet a third heaven above those ones called Vidlain and we think that this place (Gimle) is there. At present, however, we think it is inhabited only by white elves.

(Thor) rules over Thruovangar, and this hall is called Bilkirnir; in that building are six hundred and forty floors - it is the largest house known to man.

Another son of Odin is called Baldr. He is so fair of face and bright that a splendour radiates from him. He lives in the place in heaven called Breidablik; nothing impure can be there, as it says here.

There where Baldr has built his dwelling
They call it Breidablik in that land
Where I know there are fewest evil things."

ROMAN

Virgil, (Aeneid, v 735ff) (p. 495)

"Yet first draw nigh the nether halls of Dis, and through the depths of Avernus seek, my son, a meeting with me. For impious Tartarus, with its gloomy shades, holds me not, but I dwell in Elysium amid the sweet assemblies of the blest... the pure Sibyl will lead thee"

(*Virgil, Aeneid vi 703ff*) "Meanwhile, in a retired vale, Aeneas sees a sequestered grove and rustling forest thickets, and the river of Lethe drifting past those peaceful homes. About it hovered peoples and tribes unnumbered; even as when, in the meadows, in cloudless summer-time, bees light on many-hued blossoms and streams round

lustrous lilies and all the fields murmur with the humming. Aeneas is thrilled by the sudden sight and, knowing not, asks the cause - what is that river yonder, and who are the people thronging the banks in such a host. Then father Anchises: 'Spirits they are, to whom second bodies are owed by Fate, and at the water of Lethe's stream they drink the soothing draughts, and long forgetfulness'... 'But, father, must we think that any souls pass aloft from here to yon sky (*footnote, To dwellers below, this region of light, our world, would be a sort of caelum, a sky, some editors connect coeli with Olympum*) and return a second time to sluggish bodies.' (*id p. 637 p. 551*) They came to a land of joy, the green pleasaunces and happy seats of the Blissful Groves. Here an ampler ether clothes the meads with roseate light and they know their own sun and stars of their own. Lo! others he sees, to right and left, feasting on the sward and chanting in chorus a joyous paean within a fragrant laurel grove, and return a second time to sluggish bodies... then through wide Elysium are we sent and a few of us to abide in the joyous fields (*footnote*). A few remain for ever there regaining in time their original forms, but most of the souls must drink of the water of oblivion and then return to new bodies ."

(*cf 713-715*) "And Phlegyas. . . gives warning to all and with a loud voice bears witness amid the gloom 'Be warned: learn ye to be just and not to slight the gods!"

(*672ff*) "And to the Sibyl the hero thus made brief reply: 'We dwell in shady groves, and live on cushioned river-banks, and in meadows fresh with streams."

(*id 786ff*) Thus through the whole region, they freely range, in the broad misty plains.

SPIRITUALISM

(*Thro' the Mists, Robert V. Lees P.23.*)

"It is a popular idea that our entrance to the spirit-world will be greeted by friends and relatives who have preceded us, and in many cases this is so; but strange to say, even after I had learned the nature of the change which had come over me, the thought of such a meeting never occurred to me, until I felt, rather than heard someone call my name. I turned, and saw a young woman, clad in the daintiest of pink robes, coming down the hill towards me. I was not sure, but thought her face bore a resemblance to one I had known in the long ago, except that the old furrows of care and want had been transformed into lines and curves of beauty. I had long since forgotten her, but she remembered me, and with her eyes brilliant with welcome and hands extended to clasp my own, she was the first of all I knew to greet me.

At that moment I found that heaven is quite as much a condition of the soul as a locality and true friendship is a great factor in completing that condition. So far as there being a regular trial of sentence by a personal judge, it is a fiction; the verdict of the bar of God is more just and equitable than could be, and asks no evidence other than the defendant offers. The text which hung above my bed in the hospital is the law upon which that judgment is given, and from who no remission is asked or granted - "Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap". Justice cannot miscarry, since no man is called to give evidence against his fellow. As the soul comes into contact with those mists, it separates from the flesh, and is stripped of any false and seeming character, which may have been assumed, no matter under what circumstances or for what purpose. The function of the mists is to dissolve everything but the spiritual. There all the seeds of life are sown; everything which has been hidden is revealed, the books are opened wide, everything, whether to acquit or to condemn. As the mortal drops away there is evolved from the spirit a natural covering in accordance with its life and character, the colour being determined by the acts and motives of the past - not by the creeds it has held or the professions it has made and that colour is the righteous sentence which the soul has passed upon itself by virtue of the invariable law of God. Because that judgment is not final, it only determines what position the soul must assume on entering this life, it still has the power to elevate itself as well as the assistance of others who are always working to raise those beneath them, thus the sentence is not for eternity and vindictive, it is probationary and remedial. We have hells of torment far worse than your imagination can picture but they are only purifying conditions and have been provided in the fullness our Father's love as you will presently be made to understand.

Full provision has been made for those who wish to learn. It is an active life upon which you enter; every person capable of work has some appointed mission so that we are all 'workers together with God'.

If the verdict is given upon works alone, who are they who receive the assurance entrance promised so literally to believers?

In that judgment every act, motive and attendant circumstance is appraised at its starting value and the balance struck accordingly. This makes all men equal in their advantages and adds commensurate responsibility where wealth or power has been entrusted.

Every person retains the use of his free will, the exercise of which invariably produces its own reward or punishment. Pulsations of the visible vitality throbbed and trembled in stone and tree and flower; each of which poured forth its rhythmic quota to the harmonic proclamation which sounded from every side that death is swallowed up in victory; over the threshold of the figure - reaching to the horizon of either pole - the legend "Life, life, eternal life."

Words never yet were able to convey an adequate idea of many scenes on earth. How can they be used to tell the greater glories and the language the soul has not the power to paint."

(R.H. Benson, A. Borgia, Life in the World Unseen, pg. 11) The actual process of dissolution is not necessarily a painful one, I had during my earth life witnessed many souls passing over the border into spirit.

The physical body many times appeared to be suffering acutely, either through actual pain or restricted breathing. My end was not violent, but it was laboured, as were so many that I have witnessed. There was a heaviness of my mind, something akin to drowsiness, as I lay in my bed. I suddenly felt a great urge to rise up. I had no physical feeling whatever, very much in the same way that physical feeling is absent during a dream, but I was mentally alert. Immediately I had this prompting to rise. I found that I was actually doing so. I then discovered that those around my bed did not seem to perceive what I was doing, nor did they try in any way to hinder me. Turning, I then beheld what had taken place, I saw my physical body lying lifeless upon its bed, but here was I, the real I, alive and well. For a minute or two remained gazing, I could still see the room quite clearly around me, but there was a certain mistiness about it as though it were filled with smoke very unevenly distributed. I looked down at myself wondering what I was wearing in the way of clothes, for I had obviously risen from a bed of sickness and was, therefore, in no condition to move very far from my surroundings. I was extremely surprised to find that I had on my usual attire, such as I wore when moving freely and in good health about my own house. My surprise was only momentary since, I thought to myself, what other clothes should I expect to be wearing? Surely, not some sort of diaphanous robe. Such costume is usually associated with the conventional idea of an angel, and I had no need to assure myself that I was not that!

Such knowledge of the spirit world as I had been able to glean from my own experience instantly came to my aid. I knew, in other words, that I 'had died'. I knew too, that I was alive, that I had shaken off my last illness sufficiently to stand upright and look about me. At no time was I in any mental distress, but I was full of wonder at what was to happen next; for here I was, in full possession of all my faculties, and, indeed, feeling physically, as I had never felt before.

Although this has taken some time in telling, in order that I might give you as much detail as possible, the whole process must have taken but a few minutes of earth time.

As soon as I had this brief space in which to look about me, I found myself joined by a former colleague - a priest - who had passed to this life some years before. We greeted each other warmly and I noticed that he was attired like myself. Again this in no way seemed strange to me, because had he been dressed in any other way, I should have felt that something was wrong somewhere, as I had known him in clerical attire. He expressed his great pleasure at seeing me again, and for my part I foresaw the gathering up of many threads that had been broken by his 'death'. I could not resist the impulse to turn and take a last look at the room of my transition. It still presented its misty appearance. Those who were formerly standing round the bed had now withdrawn, and I was able to approach the bed and gaze at 'myself'. I was not the least impressed by what I saw, but the last moments of my physical self seemed to be placid enough. My friend suggested that we should now go and we accordingly moved away. As we departed, the room gradually became more misty until it faded farther from view and finally disappeared. So far, I had had the use of my legs as in ordinary walking, but in view of my last illness and the fact that, consequent upon it, I should need some period of rest before I exerted myself too much, my friend saw it would be better if we did not use the customary means of locomotion - our legs. He then told me take hold of his arm firmly, and to have no fear whatever, I could I wished close my eyes, it would, he said, perhaps be better if I did so. I took his arm and left the rest to him as he told me to do. I at once experienced a sensation of floating such as one has in physical dreams, though this very real and quite unattended by any doubts of personal security. The motion seemed to become more rapid as time went on, and I still kept my eyes firmly closed. It is

strange with what determination one can do such things here. On the earth-plane, if similar circumstances were possible, how many of us would have closed our eyes in complete confidence? Here there was no shadow of doubt that all was well, that there was nothing to fear, that nothing untoward could possibly take place and that my friend has complete control of the situation.

After a short while our progress seemed to slacken somewhat and I could feel there was something very solid under my feet. I was told to open my eyes. I did so. What I saw was my old home I had lived in on the earth-plane, my old home - but with a difference. It even improved in a way I had not been able to do to its earthly counterpart. The house itself was rejuvenated, as it seemed to me from a first glance, rather than restored, but it was the gardens around it that attracted my attention more fully.

They appeared quite extensive and they were in a state of the most perfect order and arrangement. There were no wild growths or masses of tangled foliage and weeds, but the most glorious profusion of beautiful flowers so arranged, as to show themselves to absolute perfection. Of the flowers themselves, when I was able to examine them more closely, I must say that I never saw either their like, upon the earth, of many that were in full bloom. Numbers were to be found, of course, of the old familiar blossoms, but by far the greater number seemed to something entirely new to my rather small knowledge of flowers. It was not merely the flowers themselves and their unbelievable range of superb colourings that caught my attention, but the vital atmosphere that they threw out, as it were, in every direction. And as one approaches any particular group of flowers, or even a single bloom, there seemed to pour out great streams of energising power which uplifted the soul spiritually and gave it strength, while the heavenly perfumes they exhaled were such as no soul clothed in its mantle of flesh has ever experienced. All these flowers were living and breathing, and they were, so my friend informed me, incorruptible.

There was another astonishing feature I noticed when I drew near to them and that was the sound of music that enveloped them, making such soft harmonies as corresponded exactly and perfectly with the gorgeous colours of the flowers themselves.

There were many splendid trees to be seen, none of which was malformed, such as one is accustomed to see on earth, yet there was no suggestion of strict uniformity of pattern. It was simply that each tree was growing under perfect conditions, free from the storms of wind that bend and twist the young branches, and free from the inroads of insect life and many of the causes of the misshapeness of earthly trees. As with the flowers, so with the trees. They live for ever incorruptible, clothed always in their full array of leaves of every shade of green, and for ever pouring out life to those who approach near them.

I noticed, too, that a comfortable warmth pervaded every inch of space, a warmth perfectly even and as perfectly sustained. The air had a stillness, yet there were gentle perfume - laden breezes - the truest zephyrs - that in no way altered the delightful balminess of the temperature.

(R.H. Benson, A. Borgia More about Life in the Unseen World p.12) We were seated, then, upon a particular occasion in our house, which is itself a replica of my old home on earth, when word reached us that our presence was desired at the central office. We at once proceeded thither, and were greeted by one whom we had come to know very well during the passage of years, as he had come to know us.

There may appear to be a great similarity between one normal transition and another when viewed by earthly eyes, but from our point of view the variations are enormous. They are as great, intact, as the variations in human personalities. What to the earthly beholder is the end of life, to us and the person chiefly concerned, the beginning of a new one. It is with the personality that we have to deal and according to the personality, to the knowledge or ignorance of spiritual matters of the passing soul, so is our especial task governed and our course of action regulated. In short, every 'death' is treated and served with strict regard to its essential requirements, so that we are allotted our various tasks with one eye, as it were, upon our capabilities, experience, temperament and so forth. Edwin, Ruth and I are decidedly of similar temperament, while our capabilities and experience have been augmented and broadened by long practice.

After a few friendly exchanges and kindly enquiries, our friend turned to business in hand. A perfectly straightforward case, he informed us, and one that should present no unusual features. 'It is the passing' he said, 'of a lad aged eighteen. A sprightly youth, mentally alert and receptive. I have kept this case for you both, as I think it will be useful to you later on when he has become accustomed to things. Would you care to take him to your home?'

'It would be a good plan'. We readily acquiesced.

We then plied our friend with a few questions so that we could be as fully charged with information as possible. It appears that the lad's earthly end was approaching rapidly, that he had no prejudices concerning the subject of 'life after death', his religious instruction had followed the usual lines but had not left any great impression. There was a happy toleration between him and his parents, but no such strong affection as would introduce any complications of an emotional nature. The parents would regard the early 'death' of their son as part of God's will, and they would therefore submit in accordance thereto. We were agreed that this certainly did seem to be a straightforward case enough, and we were not sorry, inasmuch as we had a number of very trying transitions of late, and welcomed this fresh one upon easier lines.

Ruth and I found ourselves in a bedroom of a house of modest dimensions. A nurse was in attendance and relatives were close at hand. It was evident that they believed that the end was not far distant and the doctor appeared to have done all that he could to make things easier for the patient.

The great moment in the boy's life had now arrived. I moved to a position at about the middle of the bed upon the side opposite Ruth. The boy had lapsed into a gentle sleep. As he did so, his spirit body rose slowly above his inert physical body to which it was attached by a bright silver cord - the life - line as it is termed. I placed my arms beneath the floating form; there was the slightest momentary twitch, the cord detached itself, retracted and disappeared.

To the relatives in the bed-chamber, the boy was 'dead' and 'gone'. To Ruth and me he was alive and present.

I held him in my arms, as one would a child, while Ruth again placed her hands upon his head. A gentle movement of her hands for a minute or two to ensure that the boy would be peacefully comfortable, and we were ready to start upon our rapid journey to our home.

Throughout the transit Ruth held one of the boy's hands, thus giving him energy and strength while I supported him in my arms. The journey, as with all such journeys, was soon over; we had left the dismal bedroom, and we were in our own beautiful land and home. Quietly and gently we laid the boy upon a very comfortable couch, Ruth seating herself close beside him, as I took a chair at the foot facing our new arrival. 'Well, my dear', Ruth remarked with evident satisfaction, 'I really think he'll do!'

All there was for us to do now, was to await the awakening, which, in the nature of the case, would not be long delayed.

Our simple, but usually effective, arrangements had already been made. The couch, on which the lad had been laid, was placed close beneath a wide open window in such a position that, without even the slightest movement of the head, a most enchanting view was to be seen of the gardens without, while through a gap in a line of trees, a distant view of our most beautiful city was to be had, clear and colourful. Upon the wall immediately facing the lad there hung a large mirror, so that the reflection of the rest of the room, with all it suggested of comfort and ease, could be observed with the merest turn of the eye. Children's voices could be heard in the distance, and the birds were singing with their customary vigour.

This was the pleasant situation awaiting our friend when he emerged from his short but refreshing sleep, and this is often the moment when our real work begins! Ruth was the first to speak when our friend opened his eyes.

"Well Roger", she said "how do you feel" (Our friend at the office had given us the boy's name). Roger opened his eyes wider as he listened to Ruth. "Why", said he, "I saw you - when was it. A little while ago. Who are you?" "Just a friend to help you. Call me Ruth".

"And you sir, I seem to remember you were sitting at the foot of my bed". "That's right" I said. "The memory will become clearer in a moment or two!" Roger started to sit upright. But Ruth gently pressed back upon the cushions. "Now Roger" said she, "the order of the day is that you stay quietly there, and do not do too much talking". The boy stared out of the window.

"Lovely view isn't it?" I said, pointing through the window. "Feeling comfortable? That's right. Well now you are wondering what all this is about. Have you any idea what has happened? Only a hazy notion. But the great thing is now you are feeling alright! All the aches and pains gone. Isn't that it".

Roger nodded and smiled as the realisation seemed to come upon him. "Yes, rather, thank you".

The boy was obviously not of the nervous sort and there appeared to be no purpose in withholding the truth any longer. I caught Ruth's eye, and she nodded in agreement. "Roger, my dear boy" I began, "I have some pleasant news for you. You were perfectly correct, you did see Ruth and me a little while ago. We were in your bedroom at home, and you were very ill, so ill that the doctor could not pull you through. So Ruth and I came to bring you through, through into another world, a lovely world. Do you follow?"

"That's it, old fellow. You're not frightened?"

"No. I don't think so". He paused. "I never expected anything like this", he added.

"No, I don't suppose you did. Who does, except the very comparatively few who know what's to come. Honestly, now, what did you expect?"

"Now I expect you are wondering what is happening next! The answer to that is simple: Nothing! - at least for a little while until you feel refreshed and then we might all go off together and explore things a bit. How does that appeal to you?"

Roger glanced down at his clothes to discover he was wearing a pair of flannel trousers and a brown jacket, while on his feet were a pair of substantial shoes. He caught hold of the material as though to reassure himself that it was real. He even clutched his arm to make totally sure he was solid! Then he placed one foot on the floor and stamped lightly with it.

"All pretty solid, Roger?"

From a side-table Ruth fetched a huge bowl of fruit and offered it to the boy. "You'll find they are very real, too!" said she with a smile. "Help yourself to what you fancy. They are lovely and will do you a world of good! We keep them here specially". We all took some fruit, and Ruth and I wanted to see the boy tackle his. First, he looked at it closely, turning it over and over in his hand, It was a plum he was examining - and seemed undecided what to do with it. There is, of course, only one thing to do with a fine, juicy plum, especially if it is one grown in the spirit world, and that is to eat it. Ruth and I did so, while Roger watched closely to see what would happen. He expected, no doubt, to see a torrent of juice run out and down our clothes. His eyes opened in astonishment when he saw the juice run out, certainly and with equal certainty, disappear, leaving our clothes unstained. Thus encouraged, he followed our example, and was wild with delight at this seeming wizardry.

"Nothing is wasted here, Roger" explained Ruth, "everything that is unwanted returns to its source. Nothing is destroyed. You could not destroy anything however hard you tried. If you find you no longer need or desire a thing it will simply fade away to all appearances, just evaporate before your eyes. But it is not lost; it will return to its source from which it came."

Roger thanked Ruth for her explanation. He seemed a little diffident in the matter of speaking, though, of course Ruth has recommended him not to talk too much yet. However, he turned to me after pondering Ruth's words, with something of an air of puzzlement.

"Were you a bishop, or something", he asked.

"O dear, no," I laughed, "nothing so exalted. You were going by the colour of this garment I am wearing. No, I was only Monsignor when I was on earth. Some of my friends there still call me by the old title. It pleases them, and does no harm, though really we have no such titles and distinguishing marks here. Still, if you would like to use the same name, do so by all means. It serves a useful purpose, and is not against the regulations. Ruth always uses it!"

Here I would like to interpolate one or two observations which I think it would be expedient to make. What I am setting down for you is the account of an actual case, a real occurrence, though it is typical of many. The young lad, Roger, is a person of real existence, who came into the spirit world in the circumstances precisely as I am now giving you.

Again exception may be taken to the conversation as I have accounted to you. There are folk who will object that the whole of it is too appallingly flippant and trivial to merit consideration for one moment. This is frivolous and third rate and such as would not, most certainly not be indulged in any region that could properly designate 'heaven'; that 'heaven' must surely be conducted upon lines far less common-place and far more holy and spiritual.

Every soul who arrives in these or other realms of the spirit world is completely untutored about life here, and is concerned with one thing and one thing only, what is to happen next! Just that. Because we are inhabitants of the spirit world, we have not become great rhetoricians who speak only in long eloquent periods upon matters of the highest spiritual consideration. Deo gratias that we do not. We are normal rational people, who speak and act in a normal, rational manner.

Roger has felt tempted to rise from his couch, a sure sign that he was gaining in strength and vigour. The fruit had made an improvement, as we knew it would. In matters of that kind there are no failures. At the same time, it would not have done to let him test his strength too far, and so for the time being we recommended he should remain where he was. He was - of course, still is - a most amiable fellow, and was ready to fall in with all our suggestions.

In such cases as these, that is in the initial moments of the newly arrived, so much depends upon the little incidents, those homely things, of great implications in themselves, and outwardly so very reassuring and comforting.

The boy suddenly turned his gaze towards the window, attracted by the sound of fluttering wings upon the window-ledge, when he perceived a small bird had made its entrance into the room and had perched itself only a foot or so from him. Roger remained perfectly still, as though scarcely daring to move lest he should frighten the small visitor away. Ruth, however, called to the bird which immediately flew to her and perched upon her outstretched finger. The bird was dressed in a smart livery of pale grey feathers.

There was no question that a great change had been wrought in the lad for he stood in the doorway - we drew near with every appearance of youthful buoyancy. No longer was that slight languidness to be seen, so common in such cases. 'Well Roger', said Ruth, 'you look ready for anything'.

So far, things were proceeding very favourably - would that all passings were as serene.

As you can imagine, a great deal of patience has at times to be exercised when we are confronted with minds that are tenacious of old beliefs and ideas that bear no relationship with the truth and facts and realities of spirit life, and it may take much arduous work to free the newly arrived person of so much that is mentally inhibiting and spiritually retarding. You will see, then, the wisdom of choosing instruments who are ably suited in all respects to the work in hand, so that an awkward or difficult case may not be rendered more so.

You will no doubt wonder how we are directed at the outset of our 'labours' to the actual 'chamber of death', to use a most lugubrious phrase. Incidentally, what a depth of gloom and lamentation it conjures up! It seems as though all the most doleful phrases are specially reserved for the simple act of passing from your world to ours. Of course you do not need to remind me that from the point of view of those who are parting from a loved one, it is no time for cheerfulness and 'joy abounding'! Yet were the truth known and realised, what a world of difference it would make, especially if that happy state of things were to exist to the end, that all the mournful trappings so closely associated with tradition were to be ruthlessly cast out. Is not the event, at the present day, sufficiently harrowing in itself.

The sun is always shining in these and other regions and there is no unpleasant wind or cold. It's always the same steady, unvarying, genial warmth you can feel so there is nothing from which we need protection as on earth, in the way of elements.

When we go higher - or farther along the road - we may move into other quarters, so join our small household. In other words, stay where you are. That should not be difficult as you have no "goods and chattels".

"Now Roger" said Ruth, "tell us what you think of things".

Our friend seated himself in a comfortable chair, and looked considerably puzzled. "What I cannot make out", he said at length, "is how all this squared up with religion. I was not taught much, and never knew exactly what to expect".

"You are not the first to wonder that, Roger. Millions do the same. Ruth and I did so. We were in no better case than yourself. What it comes to is, when you are on earth, this whole spirit world is regarded as the 'life after death', the 'next world' and is treated solely from the religious stand-point, except by a comparatively select few. I call them select because those few possess the truth, not all the truth, naturally, but sufficient for absolute comfort. The religions of the earth have assumed rights over this life to which they are not entitled. The passing

from earth to the spirit world is not a religious affair whatever. It is purely a natural process and one that cannot be avoided. Living a good life here on earth is not a religious matter. Why should it be? Have you seen visions of that sort of thing here, Roger? Yet who will dare to say we are not living good, decent lives here?"

"Sunday church-going, with the clergyman and the choir singing and the sermon - and the collection, do not forget that! Especially the sermon that did not seem to have any bearing on what you know now. How could you expect a person - as a person - to be able to instruct others on a particular subject, or on any subject, when the instructor knew literally nothing about it! That is the real trouble, ignorance, or lack of knowledge. Yet it is his job, the minister's job, to know. I should have known, but I did not. A person in my position on earth, should have been able to tell a person in Ruth's position, or yours, Roger, all that we know at the moment. There are abundant opportunities for finding out".

"The whole thing can be summed up in this way, Roger: the earthly religions know nothing about this world at all, about the life we live. No man on earth would be prepared to suggest - if he were sane - that the only thing to look forward to is a life of doing nothing for all eternity, in a place or region which was simply vaporous or void. The very thought of such an existence - it would be barely that - would fill him with deep horror!"

TIBETAN

(Evans- Wentz, Tibetan Book of the Dead, XXXV)

The first part called Chikkai Bardo describes the psychic happenings at the moment of death. The second part, Chonyid Bardo, deals with the dream-state which supervenes immediately after death, and with what are called 'Karmic Illusions' The Third part, Sidpa Bardo, concerns the onset of the birth - instinct and prenatal events. Soon afterward, the 'illusions' begin, which lead eventually to reincarnation, The illuminating lights growing even faster and more multifarious, and the visions more and more terrifying. This account illustrates the estrangement of consciousness as it approaches nearer and nearer to physical rebirth.

The book is a set of instructions for the dead. Through the changing phenomena or the Bardo world, that state of existence which continues for 49 days after death until the incarnation in the Sidpa state, permits and no going, because it is sealed off against the Chonyid state by an intense striving downwards, towards the animal sphere of instinct and physical birth.

The Chonyid state is one of Karmic illusion - that is to say, illusions which result from the psychic residence and previous existence.

As the products of imagination and delays in essence usual, their forms must, from the outset, have the character of images and moreover of typical images, which is why, following St. Augustine, we call them 'archetypes.'

The Bardo body, formed of matter in an ethereal-like state, is an exact duplicate of the human body. Retained in the Bardo body are the consciousness principle, and the psychic nerve-system (the counterpart for the psychic or Bardo body, of the physical nerve-system of the human body). He also quotes a description from the Tantra; "Having a body [seemingly] fleshly [resembling] the former and that to be produced. Endowed with all sense-faculties and power of unimpeded motion. Possessing Karmic miraculous powers, visible to .eyes [of Bardo beings] of like nature". Referring to the sense of sight in the Bardo body Evans-Wentz writes: "Only the natural light of nature (referred to by medieval alchemists and mystics as the 'astral light') is to be seen in the after-death state; and this 'astral light' is said to be universally diffused throughout the ether, like an earth twilight, yet quite bright enough for the eyes of the ethereally constituted beings in the Bardo". With regards to the food of the Bardo body he states: "Like fairies and spirits of the dead according to Celtic belief, or the demons of ancient Greek belief, the dwellers in the Bardo are said to live on ethereal essences, which they extract from food offered to them on the human plane or else from the storehouse of nature." In the Six Doctrines, there is a reference to the inhabitants of the Bardo: "they live on odours [or the spiritual essences of material things]". The material constitution of the Bardo body depends upon the strength of the links with the corresponding body on the earth and with the earthly womb to which the person is being drawn.

There are certain localities in the Bardo world particularly associated with rebirth or with entry into another realm. The following are included in The Doctrine of the After-death state:

'The three terrifying Precipices. .are the White, Red, and Black Deep Precipices; to fall over any one of them is to fall into a womb.'

'The taking shelter in the hollows of trees and in cavities and crevices of the earth is to enter into the world of .ghosts or into the animal world..'

The attractive force of the womb is suggested in the same writings. In a reference to the period spent by the spirit in the after-death state is the passage: [at this stage], one seeketh a womb; and therefore, this period is called 'the time where in the soul seeketh a womb for re-birth.'

ZOROASTRIAN, PERSIAN AND PARSEE

(*Darmesteter on Zend-Avesta Vol. 1 p. 213*) "The soul of the dead, on the fourth day, finds itself in the presence of a maid.. and she leads him into paradise or hell".

(*The Vendidad, Fargard xix, Haug's trans.*) "She, the beautiful, well-formed, strong, well-grown, comes with the dog, with the register, with children, with resources, with skilfulness. She dismisses the sinful souls into the glooms. She meets the souls of the virtuous when crossing the (celestial mountain) Haro-Barezaitl; (Alborz), and guides them over the Chinvad bridge (Paz.) the bridge of the heavenly spirits.

(*id. Darmesteter's trans.*) "30. Then comes the well-shapen, strong and tall- formed maid, with the dogs at her sides, one who can distinguish (Note: 'The good from the wicked' who is graceful, who does what she wants and is of high understanding..

(*Darmesteter, on Zend-Avesta Vol. 1.p. xxxvii*) 'The identity of the four-eyed dog of the Parsi with Kerberos and Yama's dog appears.. from the Parsi tradition that the yellow-haired dog watches at the head of the Kinvad bridge, which leads from this to the next world'.

(Note: In the Manichaeic doctrine an adept is guided to Paradise by "a light- maiden of Ishtar".) (*see Larson, Rel. of Occident, p. 555*)

(*Duchesne-Guillemin, Rel. de Iran Ancien, p. 39*) "The Hadoxt Nask describes the lot of the soul after death, like Vivedat 19, but with more details. The soul meets its religion (daena) under the form of a young girl".

(*Commentary by Darmesteter on Farradjn Yast XIII*) "Originally the Fravashis were the same as the Manes of the Latins, that is to say the everlasting and deified souls".

Manichaenism connects the Mazdean Moralism and the Hindu naturalism; according to a Sogdian text the dead man meets his own religion with the characteristics of a young maiden, then some women lead him to paradise. The Young maiden finds herself at the bridge, accompanied by two dogs; she is, like them, of Indo-European date.

(B) the bridge: - The bridge itself is a very old motif common to many peoples. Very often it is a matter, for the dead person, of a trial of strength or of skill. The bridge is only, with the most primitive of these peoples, the trunk of a tree, a liana etc. The ancient Germans identified this bridge towards the other world with the rainbow, and thus the Mazdaen bridge is explained; nothing confirms this hypothesis. However that may be the bridge is found in India, since the Yasar Veda until the Upanishad. Leading towards the other world, it has taken on partially a moral value, the sensation for crossing it to have made dark shine off or silk more in typically Indian fashion, in the Satapatha and the Upanishads, the mystical value of an identification with the Atman. The bridge links the earth to the heaven, the soul meets there the Wind. Vayu (good or bad) that is to say the intermediate space. This motif recurs at any moment of the voyage; perhaps after the meeting with the daena perhaps before (other texts), the soul feels itself surrounded with perfumed or stinking breezes. The connection between the idea with a part of man, with death, unites with the wind (above) is scarcely less evident. These traits are perfectly in agreement with what the Aogemadacca says that the path of death is a path of the Vayu.

If the feminine meeting proceeds the crossing of the bridge, and the latter is superfluous for the beauty or the ugliness of the maiden proves that the soul is already judged. The Menok Ixrat and the Bundhist have, intentionally, reversed the order and the episodes.

At any rate, why is a judgment still necessary? The difficulty is real and the teaching confused. (*p. 53*) Where, when, and by whom is this judgment to be given?

According to the Pahlevi Books, the Judges are Mithra assisted by Sraosha and by Rashona (the last armed with a balance). In the Gathas, it is not a question of them. It is perhaps Ohrmazd who has been deputed to judge the souls and with him is kept the list of Good and Bad actions. It is he who finds the bridge too narrow for it to pass

over. (*Vendidad Fargard xix*) "I praise the best life (paradise) of the righteous, (which it) resplendent and all-glorious. I praise the house of song (Garonemana, equivalent to paradise) the residence of Ahuramazda, the residence of the Ameshaspentas. The residence of the righteous ones. I praise the bridge Chinvad (created by Mazda in the self created intermediate region (between heaven and hell) (*Pahlavi Vendidad xixm 30*) "She who is graceful in appearance, well-formed, strong [that is, protection is with her]."

With replies [that is, of Goodness and crime] (note; probably meaning that she has the replies both of the good and the bad), willing (and) provided with skill. She supports the soul of the righteous across Alborz. They pass across the Chinvad bridge whose two extremities are their own heavenly angel one stands at Chakad, Daich, and at Alborz (note; the Bundehish states that the mountain Chakadoi-dai-itich is that of the middle of the world. The height of a hundred men. On which the Chinvad bridge (who would have chosen the term Cinvant, the exact rendering of which might be "chooser, decider" or 'rewarder'. Anyway the bridge itself is then superfluous) stands and that they take account of the soul of that place.

(*i.d.*) When Srosh is satisfied with the three nights (note; meaning the three nights after death, during which ceremonies in honour of Srosh are to be performed); After the third day and night ceremonies commence in honour of the Ardai Fravaid or righteous guardian angels.

(*Haug, Essays on the Parsis, p. 5*) In the later books of the Old Testament we find several Persian names. The most famous of these Persian words was in the Old Testament, now spread over the whole civilised world, the word 'paradise' which means originally 'a park, a beautiful garden, fenced in.'

(*Haug. Essays on the Parsis p. 165*) *Paraphrase of Yasna xlvi*

'Whatever man, or woman, O Ahuramazda, performs the best actions known to thee. For the benefits of this (earthly) life. Promoting thus the truth for the angel of truth, and spreading them through the Good mind, as well as gratifying all those men, to adore (the heavenly spirits) All these I will lead over the bridge of the Gatherer (heavenly bridge to Paradise). Note by Haug: 'None can enter paradise without first having passed the "Bridge of the Gatherer" (*Chinvat*), the passing of which can be facilitated to the deceased by Prayers recited for him'.

(*id. p. 225*)

"the third day (Arsitahisht) and the First month (Fravard) in the year at which the performance of Afringan Rapihoth devoted to the Spirit and presiding over the Southern Quarter (who is the Guardian of the path to paradise) is enjoined to every Parsi who soul wants to pass the great bridge Chinvad after death.(*id*)

'The Sirozah" is chiefly recited on the Thirtieth day after a man's death".

(*id, p. 244*) 'Whoever lies the whole night through without praying, without reciting (the Gathas) without repeating (the short prayers) without performance (of ceremony) without Studying, without intoning, in order to acquire a soul fit for the Chinvat (bridge), falsely is he called a fire-Priest."

(Note by Haug) That is, a soul so good that it will find the Chinvat bridge wide enough to allow it to pass over it to heaven, If the soul be wicked it is said which it has experienced.

In Iran, the procedure is the other way around; the maiden, to represent the virtue or the vice of the deceased, is doubled; the righteous meets the most beautiful girl ever seen, who says to him "By your good thoughts, pleasant as I was your good words, your good actions, your good religion, desirable, still more desirable." (Hadoxt Nask) The wicked on the contrary meets a terrifying shrew who keeps to the opposite words.

In the Vedas, the realm of the dead, the kingdom of Yama, appears sometimes a paradise of light, sometimes as a sinister underworld, an infernal abyss, where there leads a sloping road. And the post mortem happiness there appears as a privilege of the great, of heroes.

The Indian and Iranian beliefs present on this subject several traits in common, dating back probably to the Indo-Iranian period: the voyage to heaven, the bridge to cross, the questioning, the two dogs, the golden throne; these traits will be dealt with below.

A certain moral character seems to be attached to these conceptions of the Indo-Iranian epoch, for the same term, namely vtavon, compare artavan 'righteous' is adopted in connection with the other world.

Three motifs are placed together in the Mazdean eschatology: the feminine meeting, the bridge, the judgment or weighing. They were all ancient:

Mazdaism received them as a heritage or by borrowing, but it has given them a uniformly moral character.

According to the *Menok i xrat* and *The Bundehism*, the soul meets the daena after the judgment, according to the others texts she meets her beforehand from the morning of the fourth day. Other variations on the same kind will be seen below.

In Iran the procedure is the other way round. In the Indian belief, the soul is welcomed by five hundred apsarases. (*Kausitaka up. 1. 3sq*) This Celestial harem has already undergone a partial transformation in the actual sense not moral. Two of these lovers are called Manasi and Cakshushi 'intelligence' and 'understanding' that is to say they incorporate two of faculties the soul will have need of in the new state.

(*Zamyad Yast*) : 'This splendour attaches itself to the hero (who is to rise out of the number) and prophets called Saoshyants) and his companions, in order to make life everlasting, undecaying, imperishable, incorruptible, for ever existing, for ever vigorous, full of power (at the time) when the dead shall rise again, and imperishableness of life shall commence, making life lasting by itself (without further support). All the world will remain for eternity in a state of righteousness the devil will disappear from all those places whence he used to attack the righteous man in order to kill him.

(*Haug, Essays on Parsis, p.311*) 'The idea of a future life, and the immortality of the soul is expressed very distinctly already in the Gathas, and pervades the whole and later Avesta literature. The belief in a life to come is one of the chief dogmas of the Zend-Avesta.

Closely connected with this idea is the belief in heaven and hell, which Spitama Zarathustra himself clearly pronounced in his Gathas. The name for heaven is Garo-demana (Garrotaman in Persian) "house of hymns", because the angels are believed to sing hymns there (*Yast XX, XXXIV*) which deserves plan agrees entirely with the Christian idea as found in Isaiah vi and the Revelation of St, John, Garo-demana is the residence of Ahuramazda and the most blessed men (*Yas, li*). Another more general name for heaven is ahu vahishta 'the best life' afterwards shortened to vahishta only, which is still extant in the modern Persian Bahisht 'paradise'. 'Hell is called Drujo Demana 'house of destruction' in the Gathas. The kadu name is Dazhanhla (*Yasht xix, 44*) which is present in the modern Persian Duzakh, 'hell'.

That the resurrection of the dead was a common belief of the magi long before the commencement of our era, may be learned from the statement of Theopompus. Now the question arises has Spitama Zarathustra already pronounced this doctrine, which is one of the chief dogmas of Christianity, of the Jewish and Mohammanan religion, or is it of later perhaps foreign, origin? There can be no doubt that this important doctrine is genuine Zoroastrian dogma, which developed naturally from Spitama Zarathustra's sayings. There is not the slightest trace of its being borrowed from a foreign source. Besides these direct proofs of its forming a genuine and original part of Zoroastrian theology, it agrees completely with the spirit and tendency of the Parsi religion. If death destroy the body (in the natural course), it is not the fault of man who falls to an inexorable fate. But it is considered as the duty of God, who is the preserver of all life that fallen prey to death, to destroy this arch-enemy of human life, and so make life everlasting. This is to be done at the time of the resurrection.

A detailed description of the resurrection and the last judgment is contained in the 31st (of the Bundahish, which is, no doubt founded on original Avesta sources which are now lost). It is an old song embodied for the body (which once dissolved into its elements, and those elements scattered in every direction) to be restored again, yet nothing is impossible for the hand of the Almighty, who created heaven and earth, and endows the trees with sap, gives life to embryos in the womb etc.

And both a final judgment, different in character and purpose from the judgment of the individual soul of the deceased, and it also represents the ultimate victory of Ohrmazd over Ahriman. The whole dramatic event, therefore deals with the resurrection of the bodies of the dead. This resurrection is brought about by the Soshyans (Avestan saoshyants), a term which refers to each of the three posthumous sons of Zoroaster, who appear at intervals of 1000 years, during the last period of 3000 years. After the bodies of the dead have been raised and have been reunited with their souls, both the saved and the damned have to suffer an ordeal by molten lead for a period of three days. The ordeal is the final punishment for the damned, but to the saved it 'causes no discomfort'.

for the surging metal seems to them like warm milk'. Finally the Soshyans insure the immortality of the resurrection by preparing the white horn.

Paradise of the Apsarases.

(Duchesne - Guillemin, la Religion de l'iran ancien)

"In India belief the soul (after death) is welcomed by five hundred Apsaras".

(id. p. 334)

As the feminine meeting precedes the crossing of the bridge, it is superfluous, for the beauty or ugliness of the maid proves that the soul is already judged; anyway, why is a judgment still necessary? The difficulty is evident, to the extent that I asks himself (*p.13*) where, when, and by whom, the judgment is given?

Two conceptions at a different level have combined themselves (without completely harmonising the early text of the moral tribunal).

As to the three judges, they have an obvious parallel in Greece, with Minos Aeacus and Rhadamathus, whose names are probably pre-Hellenic; and the weighing of the souls is well known in Egypt. The problem of the historical relations between the three myths is much easier to ask than to answer.

A very early eschatology, adopted by Mazdaism perhaps is assumed among the Ossetes. The dead man receives a horse on which it must cross a river having been questioned by Aminion whose name means "the counsellor". The soul goes up to heaven in four steps of which the first three correspond respectively to its good thoughts (the stars), its good words (the moon) and its good acts (the sun). The Veda does not know of this supposition, but its paradise is called "the world of good action" which recalls the third Mazdeen degree.

The highest paradise, where is the dwelling of song, is in the infinite lights. The soul is led there by Vohu Manah who leads it to the golden throne of Ahura Mazda. Vohu Manah is then the Amesha Spenta nearest to the Lord. He is met by a maiden holding with her '(Haoma), (the drink) of immortality', and 'the material world will become immortal forever and ever'.

(Haug, Essays on Parsis, p. 261)

This heavenly glory is essential for causing the dead to rise at the end of the world. About this resurrection of the dead, which is a genuine Zoroastrian doctrine, we find in the Zamyad Yast two very interesting passages.

(Dresden, Mythology of Ancient Iran. p. 358)

'Paradise' or perhaps, rather 'heaven' is referred to in the Avestan texts in different ways. One expression is vahishta ahu, literally 'best existence' which later in the Persian quarters of Asha [Truth] we worship. Where dwell the souls of the dead.. the ashavans [possessors of truth] we worship. (which is) light (and) affording all comforts (Yasna 16.7) In a similar way the India Rita, etymological corresponding to the Avestan ashah, is connected in a number of passages with the ideals of heaven. This seems to point to a possibly Indo-Iranian origin of the concept that paradise or heaven is the abode, or least thought of, as being related to Asha-Rita.

Another rendering of paradise-heaven in Avestan garo nmana which has been rendered as 'house of praise' 'house of treasure' or 'house of reward'. Garo nmana, often with the epithet raoshna 'shining' is the abode of Ahura Mazda and the Amesha Spenta (Vendidad 19.32). It has recently been argued that it was thought of as situated above Hara, the first mountain created (*Yast 19.1*) which itself was part of it.

In spite of some variations in detail the Zoroastrian doctrine on what happened to the individuals soul after death was consistent and uniform. Through well-known, an outline of this doctrine, as it appears in the Pahlavi text known as the Menok I Xrat, deserves to be quoted.

'For three days and nights the soul rests beside the pillow of the body, and on the fourth day at dawn (the soul)... will reach the lofty and awful 'Bridge and the Requirer' [Chinvat Bridge] to which every man whose soul is saved and every man whose soul is damned must come...and it will (benefit by) the mediation of Mihr, Srosh, Rashn and will (needs submit) to the weighing (of his deeds) by the righteous Rashn.. .And his own good deeds come to meet him in the form of a young girl, more beautiful and fair than any girl on earth.. .Then with his first step he bestrides (the heaven of) good thoughts, with his second (the heaven of good words, and with his third (the

heaven of good deeds) and with his fourth step the Endless Light.... and for ever he dwells with the spiritual gods in all bliss for evermore.

In the case of the soul of the damned, his body, after three days and three nights, is carried off and dragged to the Chinvat Bridge by a demon and thence to hell. He is met by a young girl who has no resemblance of a young girl. He passes through the three hells of evil thoughts, words and deeds, and ends with his fourth step in the presence of Ahriman and the other demons.

In the Avesta the term Frasho Keverti (Pahlavi Frashkart), of which the exact translation ('rehabilitation' or perhaps, 'Miraculization', if any weight can be put on the Armenian loanwords Hrasht & Arashkert, 'wonder' and 'wonderful') is uncertain, is used to refer to the final miraculous transformation and consummation which the world will experience. This transformation is described as 'ageless, immortal, undecaying, not-rotting, ever-prospering, self-sufficient.' (*Yast 19.11*)

What is meant, becomes clear from the Pahlavi books.

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