

**LIVING AGAIN**

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Living Again by Charles Reynolds Brown

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**CHARLES REYNOLDS BROWN**

# **LIVING AGAIN**



The Ingersoll Lecture, 1920

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By

Charles Reynolds Brown

*Dean of the Divinity School  
Yale University*

"If a man die shall he live again?"

—*Job*



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### THE INGERSOLL LECTURESHIP

*Extract from the will of Miss Caroline Haskell Ingersoll, who died in  
Keene, County of Cheshire, New Hampshire, Jan. 26, 1895*

*First.* In carrying out the wishes of my late beloved father, George Goldthwait Ingersoll, as declared by him in his last will and testament, I give and bequeath to Harvard University in Cambridge, Mass., where my late father was graduated, and which he always held in love and honor, the sum of Five thousand dollars (\$5,000) as a fund for the establishment of a Lectureship on a plan somewhat similar to that of the Dudleian lecture, that is — one lecture to be delivered each year, on any convenient day between the last day of May and the first day of December, on this subject, "the Immortality of Man," said lecture not to form a part of the usual college course, nor to be delivered by any Professor or Tutor as part of his usual routine of instruction, though any such Professor or Tutor may be appointed to such service. The choice of said lecturer is not to be limited to any one religious denomination, nor to any one profession, but may be that of either clergyman or layman, the appointment to take place at least six months before the delivery of said lecture. The above sum to be safely invested and three fourths of the annual interest thereof to be paid to the lecturer for his services and the remaining fourth to be expended in the publication and gratuitous distribution of the lecture, a copy of which is always to be furnished by the lecturer for such purpose. The same lecture to be named and known as "the Ingersoll lecture on the Immortality of Man."





## LIVING AGAIN

**W**HEN the honor of an invitation to give the Ingersoll lecture on Immortality was extended to me, I at once reread the score of little volumes containing the lectures of those who have preceded me in this office. They were all honorable men, no doubt — as honorable as was Brutus, the noblest Roman of them all — but they certainly showed scant regard for those who should come after them. They have calmly stolen all our best thoughts on this high theme, leaving us poor indeed. When I finished the perusal of their work I could have voiced my own mood in those words of the famous Double who undid another unhappy clergyman, according to the story — “There has been so much said and on

the whole so well said, that I will not further occupy the time."

However, my heart was somewhat assured when I read this generous, hospitable statement by William James. He was a Harvard professor whom the whole world delighted to honor, and he spoke, therefore, not as the scribes, but as one having authority. He was referring to the fact that these lectures were intended to supplement each other, turning the subject of Immortality over in all its possible aspects so that out of the series there might emerge a collective literature worthy of the importance of the theme. "Orators must take their turn and prophets and the narrow specialist as well. Theologians of every creed, metaphysicians, anthropologists and psychologists must alternate with biologists and physicists and psychical researchers. If any one of them presents a grain of truth seen from his point of

view which will remain and accrete with truths brought by the others, his will have been a good appointment."<sup>1</sup>

With this generous interpretation of the commission issued to those who stand upon this foundation, I come to you in my proper rôle as a teacher of religion, bringing you my lecture from that wide and fertile field of aspiration and of high endeavor. It will be in the light of religious faith that I shall bear my testimony to the value and the validity of the hope of "Living Again."

We have received all sorts of heirlooms from the Great War. Huge national debts on which our great-grandchildren will still be paying interest! Hard tasks of reconstruction for the devastated areas! Problems of statecraft which baffle the minds of the leading statesmen of earth! Hundreds of

<sup>1</sup> William James, "Human Immortality," p. 5.