

# **EVOLUTION: A FANTASY**

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Evolution: A Fantasy by Laurens Maynard & Langdon Smith

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**LAURENS MAYNARD & LANGDON SMITH**

**EVOLUTION:  
A FANTASY**



**A** FIRE mist and a planet,  
A crystal and a cell,  
A jellyfish and a saurian,  
And caves where the cavemen dwell —  
Then a sense of law and beauty,  
And a face turned from the clod;  
Some call it EVOLUTION,  
And some call it GOD.

*William Herbert Carruth.*

# EVOLUTION

A FANTASY, BY  
LANGDON SMITH

*"When you were a tadpole  
and I was a fish"*

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WITH CORRELATIVE POEMS  
SELECTED AND EDITED BY  
LAURENS MAYNARD

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BOSTON

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## PREFACE

In adding to this presentation of Langdon Smith's EVOLUTION a few kindred poems it has not been the editor's intention to attempt to make an anthology of the poetry of evolution or reincarnation. Although this poem is the best known (perhaps to some the only well known) verse expressing this line of thought, a great mass of correlative poetry shows that so far from the idea being an isolated one, peculiar to Langdon Smith, a belief in the continuity of life, and even in the persistence of essential identity, is one which has found constant expression by imaginative poets.

To gather adequately these inspirational utterances in poetry would make a large volume, more apt to serve as a reference book than as a *vade mecum*. But as there has long been a desire for a pocket edition of the title poem it has seemed good to include herein a few of the poems that in

one way or another express most concretely and most strikingly the ideas suggested by Mr. Smith's verses.

Two lines of thought harmonize naturally with his poem, for the idea of personal reincarnation is as dominant a note therein as is the conviction of the continuity of life. The editor feels that little explanation is needed for his choice of material since he hopes that the poems themselves and their sequence may make manifest the harmony which has appealed to him. While most of the verses are well known he believes that many people may be glad to find them gathered together in small compass, and doubtless several of them will be new to some readers. He also hopes that the appositeness of its subject matter may be a sufficient reason to condone the egotism of including a poem of his own which has not hitherto been published.

Los Angeles, 1915.

L. M.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The editor acknowledges with thanks permission from Small, Maynard & Co. to reprint *Similar Cases and Immortality* by Charlotte Perkins Gilman from "In This Our World."

Thanks are also due to Houghton, Mifflin & Co., by whose courtesy a somewhat shortened form of *Metempsychosis* from the *Poems of Thomas Bailey Aldrich* is included in this volume.