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THIS WORLD—AND BEYOND

BY

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CASSELL & CO. LTD.

LONDON MELBOURNE
TORONTO SYDNEY

First Published 1934

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
EBENEZER BAYLIS AND SON, LIMITED, THE
TRINITY PRESS, WORCESTER, AND LONDON.

F15.534.

FOREWORD

by

SIR OLIVER LODGE

MY friend Mrs. de Crespigny has asked me to write an introduction to her book on the Beyond. She is so well-known that it seems to me quite unnecessary, but assuming it is any help, I agree. The book is practically an autobiography, and relates her struggles with scepticism at the beginning, until an interview with Mrs. Etta Wriedt of Detroit opened her eyes to the truth. Mrs. de Crespigny had what may be called a scientific bringing-up, which rendered her rather specially sceptical; but she had a mind that was open, and the evidence was too strong. Mrs. Wriedt is a good medium, with whom I have had sittings myself, her special phenomenon being what is called "the direct voice," which sometimes was so loud that, when sitting with the windows open, as Mr. Appleyard of Sheffield testifies, people walking in the road stopped outside the railings sometimes to listen to what was going on.

Mrs. de Crespigny's father was President of the

Royal Naval College at Greenwich, and First Sea-Lord of the Admiralty, and was made an F.R.S. She received ultimately very convincing messages both from her father and her husband, of which she tells. The result is that she has devoted her life to the work, has accepted the Honorary Principalship of the Psychic College, at 15, Queen's Gate, where she continues to do good work.

One episode in the book bears on a much controverted subject. She went through the Fire Test, and relates her experience,—it is a thing for which Crookes' testimony is very good, though the extraordinary nature of the phenomenon makes it difficult to believe without confirmatory evidence, which is here forthcoming. But the whole book represents the passage from incredulity to conviction, not only about survival, but about many other more unlikely things; and I commend it to anyone interested or willing to allow their mind to become interested in a subject which in spite of a growing tendency towards open-mindedness is still too much taboo.

But Mrs. de Crespigny has many ideas, some of which sound extraordinary but have a bearing on deep questions of Theology. She has expressed some of these to lofty spirits on the other side and has received from them approbation to a surprising extent. The most striking of these she narrates at the end of this book, and those who know the reverence usually felt for a personality as high as "Imperator"

may well be astonished at her recorded replies, yet they will feel it is a genuine record. Perhaps there may be truth in other modes of expression arrived at by the intuition to which she lays some claim.

8*th May*, 1934.

Acknowledgment is here made of the courtesy of various publishers for permission to use extracts which appear in these pages:

GEO. ALLEN & UNWIN LTD.
("Science in the Changing World")

ERNEST BENN LTD. ("My Philosophy")

BLACKWELL, OF OXFORD ("Writers' Club Anthology")

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THIS WORLD—AND BEYOND

CHAPTER ONE

ALTHOUGH I am well aware that there is already an overwhelming amount of literature on the subject of psychic research, I make no excuse for adding to it. Life, being made up of experience in every form, must be to some extent enriched by the presentment of facts, great and small, which may vary according to the outlook and mentality of the percipient.

Therefore these pages are written in the hope that they may be of some use to others in search of a truth hidden more effectually than at the bottom of any well.

With so many aspects of this difficult subject, it is not easy to decide upon which of them to begin; perhaps, before passing on to the more practical angle of personal experience, it will be well to approach it from the purely academical and logical point of view. Instead of asking "Does man survive?" let us put it the other way and ask "Why should he *not* survive?"

From the very beginnings of the race man has believed in the continuity of his personality after the death of the body. We know this was the

philosophy of primitive man by the traces of it he has left behind him, the unmistakable evidence that this was his creed. The ancient mounds and burial grounds all tell the same story of this primitive belief in survival. In those bygone days of Neanderthal Man, when the ape-like superciliary ridges were still a characteristic and he could only just walk upright, the traces of primeval burial rites are still eloquent of his belief in what is commonly called a soul.

The dead were buried with a respect not accorded to the lesser animals, whose bones are found thrown carelessly aside, but with the obvious signs of ceremonial practices, with moreover the tools, drinking utensils and weapons that had been used in this life placed conveniently, and bearing the one explanation—that they might still be of use in a further condition of existence to which their owner had presumably departed.

How this belief became rooted in the mind of man at this early stage in his evolution is an interesting conjecture. The scientist admits the fact but, so far as I know, offers no explanation. The sceptic has suggested that man's innate egotism is responsible for what he would term this primeval form of superstition; that an overweening opinion of his own importance in the universe was the origin of his refusal to accept the fact of his final extinction. But that will hardly hold water.

The power of argument from abstract principles necessarily based on experience was still in the future. His only basis for the forming of judgments and

drawing conclusions lay in his powers of observation, his arguments purely empirical. Through these channels he learnt that the physical body dies, decays and disintegrates; that dust returns to dust, and there is an end of it.

What led him to suppose there was any part of man capable of survival?

And yet he did believe it!

Intuition would likewise be ruled out by the sceptic. The actual meaning of the word being "the power of knowing without being taught" the materialist would object that when it comes to unseen worlds there is nothing to *know*, and that intuition is a false jade at best.

That the idea was pure invention cannot be upheld as an explanation. Our limited intellect is unable to conceive anything *new*. That there *is* nothing new under the sun is not only a platitude, it is a truth. Man cannot postulate anything that has not been in some form presented to him; he can invent neither colour, nor shape, nor circumstance. He can adapt, re-arrange, discover, but he cannot invent nor conceive anything that has not come within the range or experience of humanity.

And yet again—Neanderthal Man *did* believe in survival!

From the materialist's point of view what is the answer?

So far as I know none is forthcoming. But to those of us familiar with psychic research and its attendant phenomena surely there need be no mystery?

Natural law is the same yesterday, to-day and to-morrow. We hear it argued that if "miracles"—so-called—could be worked in the past they can be produced in the present; an argument of equal value if applied in the opposite direction. If supernormal phenomena can be produced to-day—and the evidence of those with experience goes to prove that they can—they could equally have been produced in the past, and the visions and voices seen and heard by sensitive to-day may also have been heard by primeval man, from the time God walked with Adam in the Garden of Eden.

In fact, man, in all probability, obtained his knowledge of the truth of survival from the same source whence we get it to-day—from those who have survived.

It is also possible that then, as now, there were those who believed and those who did not; that the burial-grounds still extant only represent the belief of a certain proportion of the population. It would be interesting to learn from the expert whether there are any signs of sceptics on this point who disposed of the remains of their relations as carelessly and irreverently as those of the animals.

If we attach any weight to legend and tradition, man learnt the greater truths through the early contacts with higher spiritual beings, which psychic research is now teaching us to be within the bounds of reason. The Churches may have asserted it all down the ages, but have refused to satisfy the demands of reason by furnishing any basis for the

grounds for their faith beyond the voice of authority.

And yet, down through the centuries, the hidden secrets that to-day are becoming commonplace have never been entirely lost. They were handed on by such bodies as the Gnostics, Freemasons, by Quakers and Eastern sages, although man outside those bodies has done his best to smother them.

Gradually, in the absence of the restraining influence of intellect, the threads of an entangling web of superstition became interwoven with the original fabric. Belief, in any and all forms of superstition, ran riot through ignorance and fear, peopling the world with spirits discarnate and otherwise; spirits that had to be placated, bribed by sacrifices, or rendered innocuous by religious rites, methods that were fostered and encouraged by successive priesthoods who knew that therein lay their power to rule the ignorant masses and to impose their will upon them.

After centuries of drifting along such lines, it became impossible to sift the wheat from the tares, to differentiate between pure fantasy or exaggeration, and the facts supported by reliable testimony. Habit has been responsible for so much that has crystallized into accepted tradition.

There is an amusing story told as an instance of this, of a High Priest, who daily performed the sacrificial rites of his religion. His domestic cat acquired a habit of following him to the place of worship and creating an unseemly disturbance at various points in the ceremony. So in the interests of order her

owner solved the difficulty by tying her to whatever represented the door-post in those days during the performance of his priestly office.

In due time the High Priest died and was succeeded by his son, who continued the daily established practice of tying the cat up while he conducted the rites of worship.

Finally the cat died, whereupon a new cat was obtained, and tied every day to the door-post in accordance with what had come to be considered an essential part of the religious ceremony!

It is easy to understand how some commonplace superstitions to-day have had their roots in habits and customs equally fantastic.

Meanwhile the evolution of man's brain was steadily advancing, and intellect began to jib at the demands put upon it. Science, springing in the first instance from guesswork or accident, but already establishing a methodology of its own, began to ask awkward questions to which tradition as represented by the various religious cults had no answer, a situation as exasperating in those early days as it appears to be in modern times. Had any attempt been made to furnish answers, to give reasonable foundations for faith, the war between science and religion waged throughout succeeding centuries with varying degrees of bitterness might never have started.

But intellect, coming into its own, was not to be gainsaid. Questioning, probing, discovering and imparting its newly found knowledge, it refused to

accept any longer the voice of authority without reason behind it. Traditional beliefs were overthrown in spite of the weight of the Churches launched against every innovation. Galileo, Kepler, Columbus, Giordana Bruno, who gave his life for daring to uphold the opinion that this comparatively insignificant planet was not the pivot round which the universe revolves, and a whole army of martyrs fought inch by inch for the advance of truth, overthrowing universally accepted principles, proving the notions that the earth was the centre of the universe, that the world was flat, that the sun and stars revolve round our planets were myths and, in even more modern times, that this world was created in six days, four thousand and four years before the birth of Christ!

It is easy to imagine the consternation of established tradition in bygone days when physical phenomena attributed by the priests—often for their own ends—to the machinations of angel or devil, were shown to be the results of natural law, and castles built on air and founded in superstition came toppling to earth under the ruthless onslaught of a growing understanding. Every step in advance gained by reason had to be won at point of bayonet, so hard is it to dig mankind out of his ruts and to break down the preconceived idea. But from such struggles progress comes, and the easy faith that accepted what it was told without sifting the evidence has been relegated to the limbo of things discredited.

It may have been ordained in the first order of things that matter should obtain the last *nth* of expression from physical conditions, that the infinite within man should be almost—though not quite—overcome by the finite. Possibly had religion—as represented by the Churches—asked less of reason, come to some sort of compromise, we might never have touched the depths of the materialism of the last century. But at the outrageous demands made upon it intellect rebelled, rejecting the dogmatic pronouncements of the unsupported word of authority, and in the natural reaction most forms of belief in either the Deity or a hereafter went by the board. During the latter part of the last century it became a sort of a hallmark of a developed intelligence to express openly disbelief in a God, or in Heaven or Hell.

On the one hand we had the scientist breaking up old myths and crystallized tradition, and turning on the searchlight of advancing knowledge into the dark corners of ignorant superstition; on the other, organized religion clinging to worn-out defences, refusing to accept new modes of thought in the face of facts, knocking with its own hand the last nails in the coffin of an unreasoning faith that, as interpreted by authority, had lost its grip on the minds of intelligent thinkers.

In a certain town toward the end of the last century, where a thunderstorm had played havoc with the parish church, it was seriously suggested from the pulpit that the catastrophe was due to

God's wrath at the fact of a statue having been erected to the memory of Charles Darwin in a central position in the town! A sidelight on the attitude of the Church toward science even in comparatively modern times.

The Bishop who, after a controversy with a protagonist of Darwinism, retorted: "If you leave me my ancestors in Paradise, you may keep yours in the Zoological Gardens" at least had the saving grace of humour!

It is curious that to Newton, who, it is said, was a deeply religious man, is attributed the mechanistic conception of the universe which landed us finally in the rank materialism of Queen Victoria's reign. Through a process of elimination, necessarily including some wheat with the great mass of tares, civilized man gradually reached a degree of learning that believed in nothing—nothing, that is to say, that could not be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the physical senses. Matter became his God, materialism his philosophy, and it was only at the beginning of this century when matter began to fail its champions and to force them from the solid ground, upon which they thought their feet were planted, into the ether, that scientists began to admit the possible existence of wide fields for investigation hitherto beyond their ken. The latest speculation with which science is concerning itself is whether, after many centuries of a contrary opinion, mind is not after all more real than matter.

It would seem that, in spite of Reason and of all

advance in the comprehension of the processes of cause and effect, of the many issues tending to confirm mankind in his attitude of materialism, there remains that something within that still reaches for heights—elusive though they may be—greater than anything attained by physical contacts; the something *beyond*—that *Infinite* rebelling against the limitations of body and brain which would clip the wings of his flight towards ultimate perfection.

And these steps forward in development and discovery, achieved with so much labour and difficulty, are only an extension of the known limits of natural law and order, an expansion of man's own powers of perception. Consciousness and Will have improved their own vehicle for expression, the body, through the widening of its powers of reaction, the brain devising artificial methods of making contacts with outside stimuli where the natural equipment of the body falls short.

That the labour, learning and sacrifice of all the centuries should have resulted in the materialism of the Victorian era, would seem almost an irony on the part of human destiny! That men should have striven and died, toiled and sweated to achieve so barren a victory! It is surely unthinkable that evolution itself has nothing more to offer than this guerdon of Dead Sea fruit!

If there be no survival, if man's life and personality is doomed to go out like a candle-flame, to what end are we bearing all that existence in this world brings? Why are we carrying the burdens of life, enduring,

hoping, helping where we can to ease the burdens of others, struggling forward in a hopeless race? Without the hope of a hereafter the only reasonable and sensible members of society are those who at the first hint of suffering or disaster commit suicide; the greatest benefactor he who could sweep humanity from off the face of the earth and end its struggles once and for all!

One of our foremost scientists has said: "Without the belief in survival, no religion of any sort could have lived"—and without religion all the ethical standards that have built upon religion would crumble—as surely we can see for ourselves if we look round us to-day!

With the world in this condition, in a century eminently devoted to physical achievement, with the evolving mentality of rising generations asking questions to which there appeared to be no answers, the Powers that be, deciding perhaps that the reign of materialism had gone far enough, sent two gifts to earth; two pearls of great price—one to Religion, clinging in spite of all to faith in survival—the other to Science, believing in no phenomena that could not be explained through the laws of matter.

CHAPTER TWO

THE first message was conveyed in a manner so homely that, according to our preconceived ideas, it might be said to border on the grotesque.

Not to the wise and learned was it delivered. It came through two simple girls, living with their parents in a village in the United States, girls whose education was probably of the most elementary description, "babes and sucklings" so far as their intellectual level was concerned, who accepted facts as they found them without straining after abstruse causations or attempts to explain away.

It came in the form of mysterious rappings at which they were at first alarmed, but eventually translated into a code that established a means of intelligible communication between themselves and the unseen operator.

The story of the Fox sisters, of how in 1848 the other world came knocking at the door of this with a renewed message of hope to befogged and doubting humanity, is too well-known to need repeating here. It is said the communicator, according to his own story, had been a pedlar in this life, had been murdered in the house and his bones buried in the cellar, and that excavation led to confirmation of the story.

It is also said that later on in their lives the sisters "confessed" to having produced the raps fraudulently; again later, that they recanted, asserting the "confession" had been drawn from them under the pressure of an urgent need for money.

Whether the phenomena were true or false the results were lasting, so lasting that one doubts if they could have been built on fraud. So high an edifice, of such obviously enduring material, was erected on the foundation of these early rappings—an edifice that has grown and flourished with the years—that it is difficult to believe its foundations were of sand, the outcome due to the mischievous invention of two half-educated girls! Fraud and imposition may "get away with it" for a little while, but in these days of education and the rapidly growing intelligence and experience of the public, time itself has justified the allegations of those early phenomena.

Of the experience of the Fox girls, spiritualism in its modern form was born; the whole army of investigators and the pioneers of the last century found themselves launched into the tangles, problems, controversies, disappointments, contumely and ridicule that for some abstruse, psychological reason was the lot of those who took up psychical research as a serious study. Why, in a country professing to be Christian, contempt and hostility should be shown toward those who attempt to prove one of the chief tenets of Christianity to be true, is a mystery that must go unsolved until secrets are no longer hid.

But so it is. Men's careers have been adversely

affected by their open profession of a belief in the possibility of communication with those who have preceded us in the next step on the ladder of evolution.

"Tell me the name of any reputable scientist who accepts spiritualism and I, too, will believe!" the public cries, and when name after name is given of men known to the world for their achievements in science or other lines, we are told they have "gone off the rails," and that, though sound enough in other directions, are suffering from aberration in this!

A vicious circle to which, like other circles, there is no end, and on a par with the mentality of a woman who said to me one day:

"Do people go mad because they are spiritualists; or do they become spiritualists because they are mad?"—an attitude of mind with which the gods themselves would find it difficult to deal!

In spite of opposition, open and otherwise, the great wave of a renewed belief in survival started by the Hydesville knockings, is flooding the world. The advance may be slow, as is the advance of everything worth while, but it is sure. The sifting of evidence, the attempt to place the investigation on as sound a footing as other branches of science, has gone on steadily, followed up by reliable workers, earnest inquirers with open minds, some of them bearing names of world-wide renown. After all, science in many of its branches started from beginnings as uncertain as those of psychic research; from accident, or guess-work in the first instance, followed up by persevering, indomitable work and research, until

what is called an inductive methodology was established and the phenomena of the individual branches became stabilized. The investigation of psychic phenomena is still far from having reached that point even approximately, owing in great part to difficulties to be dealt with later on.

That the movement is spreading and increasing in vitality and the arousing of general interest there is no doubt. Apart from the interest from a scientific point of view in the exploration of new territory, the message of assurance of a life to come offered to struggling humanity is at least worthy of attention. Professor MacBride, world-known as one of our foremost biologists, still in the attitude of an inquirer only, and therefore presumably unbiased, said lately in referring to the subject:

"—as time goes on more and more people encounter such phenomena and the revival of a belief in a future life spreads."

The use of the word *revival* implies the failure of the Churches to have kept alive the fundamental belief in the world of intellectual minds. To quote further from the same source:

"The belief is like leaven, spreading through the lump. No one who has not investigated the matter has any idea of the extent of this spread."—This opinion of a critical brain, outside the movement, eminently fitted to give it, is invaluable testimony to the advance made during the last eighty years or so.

The gift to Intellect, represented by Science, came in different guise; not in the homely fashion of the

Fox phenomena, but in the revelation of the wireless wave—discovered by Sir Oliver Lodge, and first demonstrated by him in this country—at a garden party in Liverpool—to be subsequently adapted and applied to practical purposes by others.

We learn there are many waves travelling through space, having their source in differing manifestations of energy, to which, until aided by recent developments, we have been blind and deaf; there may be many more not yet explored—we know there are some—and who is to say what further doors they might not open could we establish contact with them?

And here, with the object of avoiding confusion, may a word be said about the suggested ostracism of the term *ether*?

A sentence quoted from Sir Oliver Lodge will help to explain the situation:

"The ether in its various forms of energy dominates modern physics, though many prefer to avoid the term 'ether' because of its nineteenth century association, and use the term 'space.' The term used does not matter much."

Sir William Bragg, Director of the Royal Institution, in "Scientific Aids to Industry," (*Times*, 1931) justifies a continued use of this word:

"Some source of light there must be," he says, "to send out waves in the ether; this language is perfectly legitimate even though we may speak of light in other terms when we want to consider it in other respects. The ether waves are turned aside into our eyes by objects which they encounter."

If space or ether be endowed with certain qualities, it becomes a mere question of nomenclature and, following such eminent authorities, for the purposes of this book we may as well call it ether—whatever it may be!—as anything else.

The Rosicrucians postulated four different grades of ether, each with its specific function in the Universe; yet during the Meurig Morris trial it was suggested by the opposing counsel that her control, "Power," was talking mere jargon when he referred to different kinds of ether—a reference to which Sir Oliver Lodge, when in the witness-box, did not take exception.

Since the beginning of time many of these lately discovered waves—lately discovered at least within the present span of civilization—have been travelling about in earth's environment. Instruments have been invented through which we can "tune in" to the varying lengths of them, each wave-length bringing to us a different story, opening the door to a different world—worlds which have been there all the time. Through mechanical inventions we are beginning to realize in some degree how very limited is the range of wave-lengths to which our physical senses are able to react. The scale that modern science and contrivance has brought *within* our powers of reaction may give us some idea of the vastness of that which still lies *without*.

The man blind from birth is shut out entirely from a world with which those of us who are more

fortunate are familiar; without the normal machinery of vision he cannot "tune in" to it.

The same with the deaf mute. He is able to react to wave-lengths of which the blind man is unconscious, but he has his own limitations, and the world of sound, so far as he is concerned, is non-existent.

If it were not for the mass of evidence available through the fact that those who can see and hear are in a vast majority over those who cannot, the blind and deaf would doubtless refuse to believe in worlds which must appear to them to be entirely fabulous. The wave-lengths pass them by.

Take as a simile a block of ice. It is composed of oxygen and hydrogen, will react to heat and pressure, and to nothing else. It is, if it may be so expressed, conscious of no world beyond its own. A very limited field of reactions, while the beauties of a far more extensive world may be all round it; the limitations are its own.

Subject it to heat, that is, change its *condition*, not its location in space, and the door of another world is opened to it; it becomes tuned-in to the unseen conditions surrounding it. As *water*—though still composed of hydrogen and oxygen only—it reacts to the skies above it, which it reflects on its surface, to various sources of energy within its reach, to obstacles in the path of its passage in rivers to the sea, in a hundred ways to which, in its condition as ice, it was dead and unresponsive. It can itself become, as water, a means of energy in the driving of machinery and the work of the world.

But the change has been in itself, a readjustment to conditions that have always been there.

Is it unreasonable to believe there may also be worlds around us—real, well-ordered worlds—to which the normally equipped individual cannot react without a readjustment of his own limitations? Is it not almost more reasonable—especially in the light of later scientific discoveries—to postulate that there are?

If we study the whole gamut of vibrations to which naturally or with the aid of artifice we are able to respond, extending from the radio-active rays below, to the cosmic or Millikan rays above the spectrum, what a tiny tract in space is included!—the spectrum itself, comprising the whole field of man's power of vision, is a mere thread in comparison with the fields that have already been explored. What then of the fields beyond?

The ancient Egyptians seem to have been familiar with the fundamental law which the modern physicist in this civilization is only now beginning to grasp. The present conception of matter in terms of energy and ether seems also to have been theirs, although they described it more poetically than we, with our dry, scientific terminology and mathematical abstractions. They postulate the cosmos as a series of octaves of vibrations; they certainly do not speak in modern phraseology of atoms and electrons, but when they assert that in the seven notes of the lyre lie all the laws of the universe, it comes to much the same thing as the electronic theory of to-day.

Matter is no longer conceived of as "solid" and stable, but as fluid and liable to variation as the ether of which it is composed.

That the great import to spiritualism and psychic research of the discovery of the wireless wave should be stressed, is not so much on account of any direct connexion between them as for the effect it has had on the mentality of its own and succeeding generations. The developments that have followed are now a matter of universal acceptance and understanding. To the man in the street no less than to the scientist, it forms a link between the seen and the unseen, the opening of a door to a world of which he had been unconscious. Science, it is true, has opened many doors in many branches of science, but not to worlds into which the ordinary layman found he also could enter, to which he too could turn the key once he had been shown the way.

The worlds laid bare through difficult mathematical calculations, the technical knowledge required for the proving of such phenomena as the velocity of light, the movements of planets and such-like, he has had to take on trust. But to this other he can turn the key himself and enter when he chooses.

Not a new world, springing suddenly into being, but a world which had been waiting for us all the time. It has raised the average of the general power of perception and brought man a little nearer to what has been called "thinking in space."

Professor Levy, quoted in *Science and the Changing World*, edited by Mary Adams, complains that a

correspondent seems to suggest that modern researches into the constitution of the atom provide some information about life after death. In his own words:

"I am completely baffled by the apparent relationship between atoms and immortality, and I doubt if the most sturdy believer in psychic research would countenance the suggestion of any relationship. And yet the belief is fairly widespread that, in some peculiar way, recent investigations into atoms and electrons point to the discovery of something 'spiritual' at the core of scientific theory."

Up to a point, the psychic researcher would agree with Professor Levy. But the suggestion would not be of a spiritual core to a scientific theory, but that the nature of scientific theory since the advent of the wireless wave and the present theory of the constitution of the atom, have effected this readjustment of the general mentality. Men's minds have become more fluid since the scientist himself has more or less deserted the old strongholds, to find himself led by the light of his own torches from the concrete into the ether, to deal with problems of time and space, and to theorize about dimensions further than those with which we are already familiar. The whole trend of scientific and philosophical thought seems to be undergoing a change.

Sir Oliver Lodge says, writing on "The Spirit of Science"—"But every increase of knowledge ought to advance true civilization, and enlarge our perception of the material universe. . . . The revelations of Astronomy have enlarged the universe beyond all

previous conception and raised strange problems about time and space and the fundamental nature of matter and energy. . . . All this study is valuable in the highest degree. It does not affect the bodily welfare of man, but it affects, what is more important, his whole faith and outlook."

That is what the "new background of science" is doing. The suggestion to which Professor Levy objects is not that there is a spiritual core to the *facts* revealed by modern discovery; it is rather that the facts admitted through the evidence now available have become signposts pointing in the direction which, through our powers of inference, we may presume our future road may lie. It is beginning to dawn in the minds of many intelligent thinkers today that reason is ranging itself on the side of the cloud of witnesses to which hitherto science and learning have turned deaf ears. If there be this world of sound which has revealed itself to us without any doubt or question, a world that interpenetrates our own, to which we become aware only through the tuning-in to certain wave-lengths, why should it be illogical or unreasonable to suppose there are still others, invisible, inaudible, waiting around us, within our environment, waiting, as that other has waited, until man's powers of perception, aided or unaided, have advanced to the point of definite contact?

In making that suggestion I am quite aware that I am "extrapolating"—unforgivable sin in the eyes of science! But as I have no claim to be enrolled in the ranks of the learned I can extrapolate if I choose!

CHAPTER THREE

I WAS quite a child when circumstances first brought me into contact with the serious side of life.

My father—eventually The Right Hon. Sir Astley Cooper Key—in years too far back to count, was Adm. Supt. at Portsmouth Dockyard when H.M.S. *Captain* was fitting out for her first cruise; she was one of the early ironclads and her tripod masts were something of an experiment. Captain Burgoyne, in command of her, and Mr. Cooper Coles, the constructor, were, if I remember rightly, guests at our house in the Dockyard. At all events, we saw them constantly, and some of the younger officers of the ship were the friends and self-constituted playmates of my small brothers and myself. With the sailor's kindheartedness toward children they entered into our games, told us stories, and added considerably to the joy of life in both nursery and schoolroom.

We often visited them on board the *Captain*, and I remember taking a particular interest in the furnishing of the after cabin, Captain Burgoyne's special domain; it was decorated in a scheme of black and gold, a new idea in those days, and in effect heavy and gloomy, and considered by many in the wisdom of after events as almost prophetic.

When the time arrived for the ship to start on her cruise we took most reluctant leave of our friends on board, watched her cast off from the jetty and move slowly forward with the peculiar dignity of a ship as she gets under way.

That was the last we ever saw of her. Within a week the *Captain* went down off the coast of France with all hands, with the exception of seventeen men and one officer, who got away in one of the boats and were blown ashore by the gale at a point near Cape Finisterre.

It is said they passed Captain Burgoyne clinging to a dinghy, but in spite of their offers of assistance he preferred to go down with his ship.

That dramatic incident in early childhood was my first introduction to death, and I think it set my feet upon the path that all of us must tread in the quest for truth.

Where were those men who had been our friends?—who had been for weeks a part of our lives and from whom we had parted so short a time previously. Where had they gone to? What were they doing?

Over and over again I asked the question—and always got the same answer. They were in heaven—in life everlasting—happy—praising God—worshipping at the foot of the Throne.

I refused to believe it. I pictured them, those young, light-hearted playmates of ours, eager for the future before them, full of energy and enjoyment of all life could offer. I did not analyse it in that way, but instinctively my imagination followed orthodox

lines, coloured by the hymns I sang in church—not the sermons, because I never listened to them. I pictured them clothed in white with the inevitable harp in their hands, singing hymns day and night, for ever and ever.

Frankly I did not believe it—and said so—that it would bore them stiff, as it would bore me—or words to that effect—and thereby earned a reprimand from Authority, and from our nurse of many years standing in particular, as a staunch adherent of the Scottish Church; and as no sort of effort was made to substantiate these descriptions of the heavenly state by any kind of evidence or logical argument, I continued to reiterate my question—where are those friends of mine now?

The mind of a child is tenacious, often full of a simple logic, and arrives directly at conclusions without the hampering side issues that mature experience brings. But in those later days of the nineteenth century, Authority—especially in the Church—stood no nonsense with regard to the "whys" of the young generation. You were told that to question was in itself a sin, that faith must accept without asking why—as presumably Galileo and others of his kind were asked to accept in bygone days; that it was wrong to ask this and that—we were not meant to know. An unsatisfying reply, it must be admitted, to a perfectly sincere question. I might have felt less impatient had I known that Authority itself did not know the answer!

The inability to give reasonable answers to reason-

able questions did more harm than was realized by a generation that in the main could accept what it was told of religious dogma. But even in those days a new age was dawning, intellect was beginning to assert itself, and once a question about a vital truth has come into a mind either young or old there is no turning back in the search for an answer. Materialism was in the air all around us, permeating the serious literature of the day, determining the trend of thought. The names of Darwin, Huxley, Herbert Spencer, John Stuart Mill, were bandied about in ordinary conversation, and although expressions of opinion became guarded when within reach of juvenile ears, a question mark began to loom big in our lives, and if we failed to get answers from others, we proceeded to worry them out for ourselves.

I come of an argumentative family. My brothers—of whom the eldest was afterwards Sir Aston Cooper Key, chief of the Explosives Department at the Home Office during the War and for many years after, and was well known in the worlds of racquets and tennis, having held the "Silver racquets" as second amateur champion at Lords for some years—and cousins—of whom the present Lord Cushendun was one, and endowed from earliest youth with an eloquent tongue—and I, argued from childhood about everything on earth and elsewhere—especially elsewhere, because the wider the field of discussion the less anybody was likely to know about it, which minimized the chances of contradiction. We formed

very definite opinions, and ignorance was no bar to the vehemence with which we expressed them. To misquote Henley, when it came to argument, our heads might be bloody, but they remained unbowed in spite of any bludgeoning.

So while Authority imagined its rulings were meekly accepted, we of the young generation were busy formulating our own creeds, wrangling among ourselves about what to believe and what not to believe, throwing the caps of traditional opinion over windmills and rejecting unanimously the wings and harps so necessary to the Paradise of our grandfathers—and I, who had been forbidden to read the innocuous works of Miss Charlotte Yonge, lest I should become infected with "high church" views, was busy making up my mind whether or not I should become an atheist!

For what is now recognized as a justifiable agnosticism was in less tolerant times called atheism.

In an atmosphere so controversial, it may well be imagined the question of Survival was continually the subject of discussion from both the philosophical and the religious point of view, and to my young mind the practical evidences of the uncertainty of this life inseparable from the conditions of the seafaring profession, emphasized the importance of certainty about the next one, one way or the other. To lie awake at night and listen to the howling of a gale outside strikes a poignant note to the ear of a child whose father is somewhere, perhaps, battling desperately with the wild forces of nature, and the

dangers of the sailor's life were further impressed on my imagination by singing the hymn for those at sea nearly every Sunday in the year, either on board ship or elsewhere.

Some years after the loss of the *Captain* had set me thinking of the worlds beyond, the dramatic disaster to H.M.S. *Eurydice* again brought the eternal question vividly to the surface of my mind.

She was of the old school, one of the last of the wooden sailing ships, and was used as a training ship for boys. She visited Bermuda and the West Indies at the time my father was Commander-in-Chief on the North American Station, and we knew many on board. To this day I remember the unusual accomplishment of Captain Hare, who was in command of her, of playing tunes on his teeth with a teaspoon with surprising dexterity!

The *Eurydice* had almost accomplished the journey home, had arrived off the Isle of Wight, where she was seen under full sail by many on the look-out for her, including the Captain's wife.

A snow squall came up, swept across the waters and blotted the ship—a noble sight with all her sails set—from view.

When the squall passed, the *Eurydice* had vanished!

There was not a sign of her. The friends we had known, her ship's company, the boys training for the sailor's life had gone to their deaths in that moment of time; the ship had disappeared. The sun, coming out again after the passing of the squall, shone placidly on a waste of empty waters.

No wonder, as it was said at the time, the crowd of expectant friends and relatives, waiting to greet those from whom they had been parted, rubbed their eyes, hardly believing the evidence of their own senses.

To those who lived through the devastation caused by the Great War, such incidents may appear comparatively trivial. But at that time the Great War had not happened; moreover, during that disastrous interval, the world was keyed to a note of expectancy, of preparedness for the worst—and even in those circumstances the loss of the *Lusitania* seemed to strike a chord apart, made a notable impression against the grim background of death and chaos.

But when I was young and living in a world of comparative peace, a ship going down with all hands as the *Captain* and the *Eurydice* went down in so dramatic a setting, was as a bolt from the blue, and I am sure those events had a more lasting effect on my life and trend of thought than I was conscious of at the time.

After Portsmouth Dockyard, our next move was to Malta, where my father was Admiral Superintendent of the Dockyard and also second in command of the Fleet, and a great part of my life was spent on and in the sea. It was here I was brought into every-day contact with a religion other than my own—a religion that had so far in my life figured mainly in fiction, and that, according to the tradition of those days, I had been taught to believe was fundamentally

wrong and personally engineered by the Devil and his lieutenants! It is curious how all through the ages there has been no form of creed or opinion the Devil has not had to shoulder from somebody's point of view!

I can still recollect the feelings of awe and mystery aroused by the first sight in the streets of Valetta and elsewhere, peopled to a large extent by priests of Roman Catholicism in their flapping cassocks and shovel hats. Although making no attempt to justify it, to this day in the hands of a psycho-analyst my reaction to the word "priest" would be "inquisition," as it certainly was then! But what with the public observances of saints' days, ringing of bells and street processions, one quickly became familiarized with the religion of the island as something more than a mere romantic tradition, intermingled with and mostly concerned with history—a definite step in the evolution of a child brought up within the limits prescribed by the simpler forms of the Church of England.

It effected a broadening of one's general outlook to realize that the majority of people one met in the streets thought *they* were all right and *we* were all wrong in respect of a religion I had been taught it was wicked even to question! Surely they could hardly *all* be going to Hell?—and I think for the time I left it at that.

Not that I was in any way attracted even in those immature days by a religion demanding the surrender of so much of will and conscience to the

charge of another. The idea of "confession" repelled me, entailing the abandonment of so much of reserve and emotional reticence; I do not believe in the shifting of personal responsibilities, and hope I never shall!

Anything savouring of convent or monastery, the uniform of the cloisters in any form, has always aroused an instinctive repulsion, which has been explained to me as a legacy from a previous incarnation in which persecution and torture played a part. That may or may not be so; I am only conscious of certain idiosyncrasies ingrained and to all seeming totally unreasonable, including a loathing of bells whether tolled or chimed, or triumphantly proclaiming a wedding.

Variations of creeds and dogmas were never the focus of family discussion in our most argumentative days. We confined ourselves to the wider issues of theology! The point was not so much the merits or demerits of any particular Heaven or Hell, but whether such speculative localities existed at all; we were occupied less with the diversity of the interpretations of the "Word of God" than whether the authorities were justified in calling the Bible by that name on the evidence available!

Truly there is no stouter henchman to Valour than Ignorance!

Odd little incidents out of all proportion to the more serious events of life seem to stand out and impress themselves quite unjustifiably on a child's memory for all time. Who can ever say what memory

will retain or reject? Knowing what jade's tricks it can play on us here in a world of which we have a little understanding, is it not unreasonable to lay down the law, as one so often hears the law laid down, as to what we should remember and what we should not on arrival in the next? The subconscious memory will be referred to later; but if we could consciously remember the things that matter with the ease and certainty of the things that do not, we should be walking encyclopædias—and probably bore one another stiff!

For instance, I have completely forgotten my duty towards my neighbour, diligently hammered into me by weekly repetition of the Catechism throughout all the years of childhood; but I can remember perfectly the "sailors' oath," a fearsome rigmarole of about fifty words taught to me at the age of six by my father's coxswain!

I have a vivid recollection of a certain occasion about this time when I covered myself with disgrace. It might be called a lesson to Authority to speak the truth. There was a lot of unnecessary camouflage in Victorian days, and on asking my governess the meaning of "the King's illegitimate children," as given in addition to the legitimate family at the end of every reign in Mrs. Markham's "History of England," I was told the word meant "adopted."

Shortly afterwards there was a luncheon party, and one of the guests referring to certain recent arrivals in the island, remarked: "Why should Lady Robinson's daughter be called Miss Jones?"

Whereupon I, eager to display my knowledge of a nice long word, suggested brightly: "Perhaps she is illegitimate."

To this day I remember the cold silence that fell like a pall on the company, and the homily I received about the advantages of being seen and not heard; but I still consider I was blameless in the matter!

The Dockyard Admiral's house at Malta was once the Palace of the Knights of St. John, hedged round with history and romance; a place of stone balustrades and stone floors, with a wide veranda almost overhanging the water. Malta had played a prominent part in the history of the Mediterranean; if ever I could have laid claim to psychic gifts surely they would have come to the surface in such surroundings! I feel sure a clairvoyant would have found the place peopled with "ghosts," relics of past days, happy and unhappy, and of those who had figured importantly in the island's history. But beyond a dim recollection, not so much of reluctance as a sort of expectancy when finding myself alone on the wide stone staircase mounting in three flights at right angles to one another from the floor below, I had no definite feeling of anything "uncanny" about the place. No doubt had there been stories or legends of a ghostly nature, they would have been carefully suppressed with young ears about, although not being of a nervous disposition, probably little harm would have been done.

Also, I was beginning to question in a vague way why it should *not* be possible for visitors from another

world to appear occasionally in this. That if the Bible were true they certainly could, and if they could *not*, the Bible was not true. A line of reasoning leading to the usual vicious circle and getting nobody anywhere. The Church spoke with no finality on this point. The most it offered was *hope* on the prospect of reunion; the rest would have to be *faith*. But although in my heart I always believed in the fact of God and a hereafter, reason clamoured for evidence more substantial, and the Church doctrines and interpretations of the Scriptures have done their share in confusing the evidence available.

A few years ago there was a memorial service held in one of London's big churches. The lesson chosen spoke of the dead leaving their tombs at the second coming of our Lord and rising into the air to meet Him. Five minutes later the officiating priest in his address expressed the hope that the deceased had joined her husband in the new life and was doubtless still taking an interest in the friends she had left behind.

How could he have it both ways? A "faith" that could accept both those statements would be unworthy of a child of three!

The Victorian parent has been much maligned, certainly those of the latter half of the century. My two brothers, my younger sister and myself never had anything from them but the greatest love and devotion, which we returned; and in the great majority of the families we knew the same conditions were to be found. It is always the black sheep we

hear about, in whatever flock they may be; unfortunately they generally arouse more interest than the white ones! It is the same in history and Bible stories; the prodigal who ran away has always been an object of more attention than the son who lived at home, and we take much more interest in Henry the Eighth and his matrimonial enormities than we ever shall in good Queen Anne.

I spent a great deal of time in my father's company whenever he had it to spare, imbibing an insatiable desire for knowledge that has lasted a lifetime. Fortunately the Victorian idea that ignorance in woman was a virtue was dying out, and I learnt more from him than the whole curriculum of the schoolroom taught me. He had the faculty of putting romance and colour into the driest of scientific facts, with unlimited patience in answering questions—until it came to religion, when he, too, had a way of side-tracking problems that discouraged further enterprise along the same lines. Not that I was of a particularly studious disposition. Quite the contrary; active and outdoor pursuits drew me all the time, and Malta was a child's Paradise in the way of nautical amusements. Swimming was my greatest delight, and "knocking about" in the harbour with my youngest brother in a dinghy which was our own property, propelled when there was breeze enough by an open umbrella, as sails were forbidden!—and when Authority could be successfully eluded, going up aloft in a brig moored close to our landing-steps to the giddy height of the maintop by route, I am

ashamed to say, of the lubbers' hole, the more dignified approach by the futtock shrouds being too desperate a venture to be even contemplated!

May I be forgiven for these excursions into personal reminiscence? The environment of childhood colours the whole of life, and they give an indication of the atmosphere in which I was brought up, which has its bearing on the developments and experience of later life. Through all the gaiety and frivolity that may have come my way, the search after truth, blind and groping though it may have been, was always interwoven with the fibre of my being, born of no upstart impulse or emotional crisis, no sudden following of a will-o'-the-wisp nor easy acceptance of plausible speculations. It has meant the slow travelling of a difficult road, beset with obstacles, indicated by inadequate signposts, bordered with quagmires, but always worth the journey for the sake of the lovely light shining at the end of it.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE gift of adaptability, of moving with the times, is a valuable asset, and one which my father had in a marked degree. During his office as First Sea Lord of the Admiralty, which he held later on for seven years, he was sometimes referred to as the link between the old Navy and the new. In his early youth he had been familiar with life in the old wooden sailing ships, not so very far removed from the types of Nelson's day, in conditions difficult to visualize in these times of comparative luxury. Among other discomforts and hardships provisions were kept in storage for seven years before issue, in case of siege, and weevils in the biscuits were incidents of everyday occurrence! I have seen him absent-mindedly tap a biscuit on the table before eating it, a legacy left by a habit of long ago.

When the first ironclads, the *Warrior* and the *Black Prince*, ushered in a new era in the Navy, his scientific knowledge and ability readily adapted themselves to the step forward. Besides being in his later years a Privy Councillor, he was made a fellow of the Royal Society, an honour rarely bestowed upon an admiral whose chief claim to distinction was success in his own profession.

When the Royal Naval College was moved from Portsmouth to the more palatial quarters of Greenwich Hospital, my father was selected for the first President. He accepted with reluctance; it was a different sort of work from the command of battleships, and finally he made his own terms to the extent of hoisting his flag on board the *Fizgard* lying in the Thames off Greenwich, and wearing uniform —with the result that he was continually mistaken, to his own amusement and his children's indignation, for one of the park-keepers when taking his morning walk in Greenwich Park!

This appointment entailed a knowledge of current developments in science, and a power of organization, and necessarily brought him into contact with many of the leading scientists of the day. The old type of naval officer, commonly called the "salt horse," was going out of fashion, ousted by the advance in knowledge and the necessity for training in the many branches of science that in the future were to form so essential a part of the sailor's equipment.

The Admiral's quarters were in one of the great pillared blocks of buildings overlooking the river that in its day had been a royal palace, and there we lived for three years, growing familiar with all the different types of craft passing up and down the great waterway; brigs and brigantines, barques and full-rigged ships flying the national flags of pretty well all the countries under the sun. This sight ever before one's eyes of the increasing traffic on the world's highway made its impression on growing brains, linking

England up with the whole globe, and widened an outlook on men and things that left its lasting effect. Not only that, but it put a romance into commerce and the exchange of merchandise—ships going up the Thames with one cargo, and down on the return journey with another that could not fail to make an appeal to the dullest imagination.

It was at Greenwich College, owing to the general atmosphere around us perhaps, that the intense love of natural science in all its forms, flourished and grew into something that has lasted me all my life, and has been the core and motive force not only of the interest in psychic research, but also of the attitude toward religion which has been inseparable from it.

As a child I always preferred stories of earthquakes, floods, volcanoes, to ordinary fairy stories; the dynamic causes fascinated me, bringing home the beauty and poetry underlying the laws of nature; the grandeur of God's message to man, which is surely man's business to decode so far as he can. Alfred Noyes' wonderful poem "The Torchbearers" is touched with this beauty, his description of the great telescope filling the mind with awe and reverence, though some have pronounced it a prosaic theme for poetry.

Professor Huxley and Professor Tyndall were among our visitors in those days, and well I remember the awe with which upon a few occasions I regarded them; and there were others less well known at the time who later rose to eminence. If I recollect rightly, Professor Huxley was beginning to try and

produce life spontaneously from what I irreverently called a "boiled vacuum."

But one of the most vivid impressions left on my mind is that at least half the world at that time must have been busying itself in an effort to produce perpetual motion—a secret the present generation seem to have solved for themselves without any trouble!

Everyone with a turn for invention appeared to indulge it with a passionate desire to set something going that would never stop. No particular aim seemed to be in view; nothing necessarily to be achieved; it was in fact hard to see what could be achieved, as one of the first essentials was the absence of all resistance, including the friction of the atmosphere.

Elaborate devices of cog-wheels and scales, wheels in vacuums, wheels not in vacuums—the correct plural sounds too pretentious—delicate balances, disks poised on pin-points, clocks which once wound up were to go for all eternity, fairy-like pistons worked by water, devices to eliminate every conceivable form of friction, and devices that, according to the inventor, appeared to be independent of most of the known laws of nature, were continually arriving for my father's consideration, and adorned our dining-room mantelpiece in rows.

He received a remarkable letter upon one occasion, among many remarkable letters, from a crank eager to persuade him the world was not round but flat. A pamphlet accompanied it containing many arguments by the author in support of his contention,

which he hoped would be taught to the students at the College.

My father replied that he feared it would be difficult to convince the naval officers in his charge that the world was *flat* as so many of them had sailed *round* it!

The Shah of Persia visited the College while we were there, and never shall I forget the gorgeousness of the pageant—a real one and no fake about it! He and the royal party arrived in the state barges at the main landing gates and proceeded to the Painted Hall where they were entertained at luncheon. He and his suite wore jewels that sparkled in the sun as the whole procession walked into the Hall. My most vivid impression is of the Princess of Wales, afterwards Queen Alexandra, arm in arm with her sister, the Tsarina, dressed alike in navy-blue with a bird's-eye spot on it!

And throughout all these years my mind was working; rebelling against the unsatisfactory answers to problems offered by the orthodox Church; questioning the authority upon which those answers were based. Why were the books constituting the Bible called the Word of God and said to be inspired, and those called the Apocrypha ruled out as not inspired?—and who by? How did the "fathers" know the latter was not inspired?

How did they *know* we went to Heaven—or Hell when we died? They did not pretend to *know* whether we met our friends again; they only *hoped*; they admitted that much. I frankly refused to believe,

without any supporting evidence, that our physical remains were brought from the grave and caught up into the air against all the laws of nature—not being built on the lines of the White Queen in "Alice in Wonderland," who could believe as many as six impossible things before breakfast!

Above all it puzzled me where to draw the dividing line between the sheep and the goats. If half the world went up and the other half went down, there must be a sharp and definite boundary line between the two; and how near to that line was it possible for a sheep to go without becoming a goat? It seemed a pity to be unnecessarily good!

It all really did puzzle me and, needless to say, I got little help from Authority—was only told it was wrong and irreverent to ask questions and throw doubt upon the Word of God; I should have more faith, when what I wanted to be sure of was that it *was* the Word of God.

I was thrown back upon myself as scores of other sincere seekers after truth have been—was given no intelligible answer to anything. Any answer would have been better than none, but merely to be told not to ask, besides being unsatisfying, was an insult to one's intelligence. A world was beginning to arise which must have a reason for its faith, and the Church was making no effort to supply the demand. That the Clay must not question the Potter was quoted at me *ad nauseam*. But the Clay wanted to be certain first that it *was* the Potter.

If there is one proposition more impossible than

another it is to believe when you do *not* believe. Neither conscience nor intellect can persuade you. Once the query enters your mind you embark for good *willy-nilly* on the sea of inquiry. You do not ask it to enter—who puts it there? God knows!

But no fulminations from the pulpit will ever put it out!

My mother died while we were at Greenwich. With the inexperience of childhood, life lost for the time all its colour, seemed as though it would always be grey, never the same again. That is part of the tragedy of youth.

The Sunday before she was taken ill—she was ill for five days only—I had what is called a "true" dream. I dreamt I went to my room—at that time my mother was in her usual health—and on the bed was laid out an entire set of mourning clothes. Mourning *was* mourning in those days, and it was all dead black and heavily laden with crape. It was a vivid dream and I mentioned it to several people.

That day week the mourning was there. My dream had come true! I suppose some friend or guardian from the beyond had tried to convey to me some sort of warning of the blow about to fall.

Not that I had any claims to psychic gifts; certainly not at that time. We all have our moments probably when conditions make it possible for contacts to be made. I can remember nothing further of the sort happening to me for many years, but about this time I began to speculate—stimulated by my own loss and the sight of my father's deep sorrow

—as to whether, if we really did survive, it might not be possible to get into touch somehow with the people who had gone before. Stories of "ghosts" offered an interest such as they never had previously. If these visitors from the other world, recognizable by their friends, could appear, it must be the result somehow of natural law—for the idea of "miracles" had gone by the board long before!

If they could appear now and then, they must be there all the time; and the trouble was—why could we not see them?

This started a new subject for argument among the young generation of the family, the insuperable obstacle to any conclusions I could bring to them being the impossibility of persuading them to believe in ghosts at all on the evidence available!

Among other men of science of the day Sir George Airey, the Astronomer Royal, stands out in my early memories. My father and I used sometimes to walk up to the Observatory in Greenwich Park to have tea with him and his daughters. I used to look at his head and think about all the knowledge there was stored in it—and where would that knowledge go when he died? How could he take it with him to another world if his head was left here? I was allowed to see the great telescope with its enormous field of vision shifting as the earth revolved on its axis. I saw the craters in the moon through it once, and was terribly intrigued about the other side of that satellite which we have never seen, prompted, it may be said, by the curiosity which is supposed to be

a vice of my sex. But if the other sex were entirely free from it we should never have got to the North Pole!

It filled me too with an odd sort of awe—and does still—to realize that our feet point plumb to the centre of the earth, and that the great cosmic law of gravitation has to be put into operation to prevent us from turning upside down!

Schoolroom tea was a great institution in those days, into which friends and acquaintances drifted between four and five, including various well-known sailors and men who were to become well-known later on. Sir Edmund Commerell, a frequent visitor, was always an object of morbid interest to us youngsters, owing to the fact that he had a "slug" embedded in the neighbourhood of his lungs, an unpleasant memento of the Ashanti war. Prince Louis of Battenberg, who was First Sea Lord at the Admiralty at the time the Great War broke out, was a young lieutenant—or sub-lieutenant—at the College, and paid his farewell call on my mother with a face patterned with adhesive plaster, owing to a controversy with a messmate who had emphasized his remarks with a claret decanter!

Sir Leopold McClintock was another admiral who came to our schoolroom teas—of Arctic fame; it is said he was directed in his discovery of the body of Franklin by "spirit guidance." The story of it is as follows:

After several fruitless Government expeditions in search of Sir John Franklin's remains in the Arctic

regions, Sir Leopold McClintock, in the *Fox*, equipped by Lady Franklin and some of her friends, succeeded in solving the mystery, although in the opinion of the experts it would remain unsolved "unless by some unexpected miracle."

The "miracle" materialized, and for the account of it I am indebted to Lieutenant G. Hunt, late R.N. and at present Curator of the Museum at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich; in the book which he kindly lent to me, "Sir John Franklin. A Revelation," published in 1889, a detailed account of the incident is to be found.

At a time when everyone believed the ill-fated expedition was to be sought for in the neighbourhood of Wellington Channel, and five vain attempts in that area had been made by the Government, a little girl, daughter of Captain Coppin, who lived at Londonderry, had a vision.

Captain Coppin had lost a child of four years old, and the rest of his family were often conscious of "Weasy's" presence about the house, and one evening her sister asked her to tell them where the Franklin expedition was to be found. Immediately the sister saw on the floor a complete Arctic scene, with two ships embedded in blocks of ice, with a clear channel leading up to them. The child seems to have caught up the conditions, as we know to be so often the case with mediums, and shivered with cold. She at once drew a careful and skilfully outlined chart of what she saw.

She then asked how the spot was to be reached and

on the wall opposite in large letters there appeared: "*Erebus* and *Terror*. Sir John Franklin. Lancaster Sound. Prince Regent Inlet. Point Victory. Victoria Channel."

No such place at that time was to be found on the charts.

Lady Franklin was at the time sending out a fresh expedition with Wellington Channel still their objective, and after some cogitation and natural reluctance Captain Coppin decided to tell her of his little daughter's vision. The chart and the story differed so entirely from all preconceived opinion that he doubted if he would be believed. Fortunately, the story brought back to Lady Franklin's memory something Sir John had said about his return voyage before leaving, and so convinced was she that there might be something in the vision, that she decided the second ship in the proposed search expedition was to follow the child's chart.

Needless to say, the whole army of scoffers and sceptics were immediately to the fore—which perhaps was not to be wondered at in those early days of psychic research. It directed the search to be made in an entirely new district instead of the Wellington Channel. But Lady Franklin persisted; the second ship of the expedition, commanded by Captain McClintock, was to go by the chart that had appeared on the floor—a "little child should lead them," and in spite of discouragement from official quarters, the area to be searched was to be that described on the wall of the room.

To recount the details of the voyage would take up too much space but, as all the world knows, within the area indicated on the chart the cylinder with the full record of Franklin's expedition was found, with the history of the attempt and failure written on the margin of the document, with Franklin's death and the total losses at the time. In the Victoria Channel the ships had found their grave. A little way from Point Victory a boat was found, in which were two skeletons and some guns.

The writer of the book remarks that Captain Kennedy, who commanded the other ship, admitted his failure through not having followed the route pointed out by the child, and that Sir Leopold McClintock was "often struck at the literal truth of what the little girl must have seen."

Admiral Nares at this time was on the eve of starting on his Arctic expedition in command of the *Alert* and *Discovery*, and though the expedition failed to reach the North Pole, it did yeoman service of a scientific nature in other ways. I was proud to have helped to make one of the Union Jacks carried by the sledges later on!

The sailor's life is perhaps conducive to contacts from the "other side," especially in the old days, when for weeks and even months they were in close touch with nature in her grandest moods. Living at high tension very often, danger never very far away, nerves and attention stretched to the limit of endurance, are capable of reactions denied to more normal moments; just as you will get a high

note out of a fiddle string at its tautest that is not possible when it is slack.

My father, although he would have called himself a sceptic so far as psychic experience goes as we know it to-day, used to speak of two incidents in his life that had made an impression upon him, without any attempt to explain them.

When passing an important examination in mathematics as a lieutanant at the old R.N. College he *dreamt* the solution to a difficult problem and, acting on it, passed with flying colours.

On another occasion he was in command of the *Bulldog* and was carrying as passengers the British Ambassador to Rome and his party during the trouble in Italy of '48. They were running up a long bay or arm of the sea with, according to the charts, ample deep water when my father joined his guests at the dinner-table below.

After a short time he became uneasy, reassured himself by remembering the chart, sent up to find out what the soundings were, and told himself there was no cause for alarm.

Quite suddenly, however, and, as he thought, unreasonably, his uneasiness returned with great urgency; he ran up on deck and with no apparent justification gave the order to go full-speed astern. As the vessel lost way her bows ran gently into a sandbank that had silted up at the head of the bay! It had not, by some error, been charted. Owing to his prompt action there was little difficulty in extricating the ship from what might otherwise have

been a serious position, but he could never account for the urge that sent him racing up on deck.

That is the story as he told it to me and, in spite of the years that are gone, it is, I think, accurately recorded.

A small picture stands out in my memory, a vignette of a little incident at Greenwich—of my sister at the age of eight, curls bobbing about her head as she moved, running to and fro between the grass lawns of the College and the railings along the river path, with hastily gathered bunches of daisies which she presented to a row of grimy little hands thrust through the railings to receive them! In the love of flowers surely all the world is kin! As Mrs. Stawell she has made a name for herself since as a translator of French into English, particularly in connexion with books dealing with the French Revolution and its period.

From Greenwich we went to the North American Station for two years, a very pleasant life for a girl from sixteen to eighteen years old. During the six summer months the Fleet had its headquarters in Halifax, Nova Scotia; during the winter at Bermuda. We made the transit twice a year on board the Flag-ship, crossing the Gulf Stream, the masses of gulf-weed reminding one of Christopher Columbus and the legends of dark, weed-infested oceans of his day.

It was a gay life; lawn tennis, much dancing on board ship and on shore, boat-sailing—I won many a race with my hand on the tiller—dodging about

among island and coral reef in a real birch-bark canoe presented to me by the North American Indians of Nova Scotia, and in which I was twice capsized and had to swim ashore with the canoe in front of me! I have wondered since whether the good feeling and gratitude engendered by that act has influenced my relations with the Red Indian "controls," for whom I have a sincere respect and affection, so often receiving from them friendly messages through third persons.

There was an earthquake and a hurricane while we were in Bermuda—and a centipede quite six inches long inside my mosquito curtains when I woke up one morning. I have never got out of bed so quickly before or since.

Captain, afterwards Lord Fisher, was my father's flag-captain for part of our time on the North American Station. We knew him all our lives; he was one of my earliest recollections in nursery days, when he was a young lieutenant on board the *Excellent*. I could tell many an incident of life out there which might have its interest, both grave and gay, but would be perhaps outside the purpose of this book.

From Bermuda we visited many of the West Indian Islands, the Fleet being, of course, fêted and entertained everywhere, and I remember on one occasion on landing from the ship for a ball at Government House at Barbados, with a heavy sea running, having to take our opportunity of springing on to the landing-stage when the launch hovered

momentarily on the crest of a wave, in our ball-dresses with long trains to them! A crowd of laughing negresses met us on the jetty and cut off so many bits of my blue sash for "souvenir" that by the time we reached Government House I had hardly any of it left!

One of the greatest thrills life has given me was to stand at my father's side and hear every gun in the Fleet thundering out a salute to him—not so much for the personal element as that for the moment he stood for all the glories of the British Navy!

Mark Twain visited Bermuda and came to Admiralty House while we were there; a special object of reverence, as "Tom Sawyer" had been published not so very long before and was being read with avidity by young and old. The author remained in the island for a short visit, but was unfortunate in the weather—Bermuda can be as damp as anywhere when it puts its mind to it—having, as he described it, rained hot water for a week; he went back to New York. I have the honour to be an Honorary Fellow of the Mark Twain Society of America, a literary society created since his death.

Bermuda in those days was a comparatively quiet corner of the globe, not easily got at. A steamer plied between the islands—Bermuda is a group of 365 islands, some no more than a coral reef—and New York, carrying not only the mails and passengers, but onions, one of the staple products, and tomatoes, less insistent on advertising their

proximity! To look over the gunwale of a boat on a radiant, sunny day straight down into the emerald deeps of a Bermuda sea was to open the gates of a fairyland, the mysteries of a fascinating world just out of reach. Great waving forests of seaweed, swaying unceasingly, rhythmically, at the bidding of a restless ocean; spiky fingers of coral pointing upwards, passing flotsam, glistening "angel" fish darting in and out of a brown and orange undergrowth; and patches of yellow sand, all as clearly revealed as though through the glass of an aquarium. And on the surface, paper-white Portuguese men-o'-war, fragile, sailing their delicate shells, making heavy weather of every ripple—and ready to give you a very nasty sting should you be rash enough to interfere with their course!

CHAPTER FIVE

LIFE at Halifax during the summer months was equally full of colour and incident, but in spite of external excitements the thread of serious thought never ceased to wind and weave itself into the background of my days, were they for the moment ever so concerned with the affairs of this world.

I heard many banalities from many pulpits; ceased to ask questions to which experience had taught me I should get no answers, and, as I left the schoolroom behind gradually, accepted the fact that if I wanted solutions to problems that refused to cease from troubling, I should have to find them for myself; which is perhaps what we all have to do sooner or later. I never lost faith in what seemed to me the basis of scientific truth underlying the history and facts as recorded in the Bible; it was the interpretation, or want of interpretation, offered by orthodoxy that common sense and an innate respect for natural law—God's laws—perforce rejected, including miracles in the generally accepted meaning of the word. But I believed in the phenomena recorded as a matter of history. Christ Himself claimed to work through the law, not against it. I accepted them not as miracles outside law, but as demonstrations of super-physical laws so far beyond

our knowledge; an attitude I have lived to see to some extent justified through the discoveries of science and personal experiences in the séance-room—and having proved so much to be true I can wait patiently for the solution of the rest.

At the Sunday morning services on board ship, which we generally attended, nothing very suggestive or erudite was wont to come from the pulpit; I am afraid my attention during the sermon on such occasions took lively excursions into the fourth dimension or time-space, or anywhere except the dimension in which it should have remained!

In the absence of a chaplain the service on board a ship, of course, is taken and the sermon preached by the captain; and there is a story told of one who afterwards became a well-known admiral who, quite unversed in theology, found himself in this position.

He spoke briefly but with the voice of authority, taking for his text, Eternity.

"Eternity," he told the ship's company, "is very difficult to understand. None of you men can hope to understand it. Great minds in all ages have failed to understand it. Even *I* can hardly understand it. Pipe down!"

Would that all our knotty points could be disposed of so simply!

One of the finest sights I remember was that of the Fleet progressing up the wide waters of the St. Lawrence and coming to anchor under the cliffs upon which stands the historic city of Quebec. From there we cruised to the northern waters of

Newfoundland, off which, in the following year on our way home, we came on icebergs in latitude not far removed from that in which the *Titanic* met her tragic fate.

The sailor has always been renowned for his superstition, and my father, wishing to throw discredit upon evil tradition, on one occasion ordered the start for our return to Bermuda to be made on a Friday.

He hit upon an inauspicious moment, for north of the Gulf Stream we encountered so violent a gale of wind that the ships were in considerable danger, and it was even reported in the American newspapers that the flag-ship had gone to the bottom.

To which the moral will doubtless be pointed according as you believe in Friday's ill-luck or not!

The fogs in those latitudes are well-known and we were once hung up for three days outside Halifax—an experience that inspired the following, written many years afterwards, one of the first of my poetical effusions to appear in print. It has also figured in "The Writers' Club Anthology", and is shortly to appear in another.

A FOG AT SEA

Silent and grey 'neath ocean's sombre thrall
The stagnant moisture hangs 'twixt sea and sky
Drenching in dark salt mist relentlessly
All that within its soft embrace may fall.
While unseen dangers lurk beyond the pall
Of hidden mystery. Nor any sigh
Of faintest breath is there, nor seabird's cry
To break the sullen silence over all.

The water with a restless strength endowed
Laps gently in faint effort to be free
And drip, and drip, and drip from mast and shroud
With soft reiteration ceaselessly,
Is all that breaks the hush of that grey cloud
Wrapping in gloomy union sky and sea.

ROSE CHAMPION DE CRESPIGNY.

Looking back on it all now, the life then seems to belong to another plane of existence altogether. The curtain came down on that particular phase of it so far as I was concerned, when we came home and at the age of eighteen I married, and for family and financial reasons my husband, who had been a lieutenant on board the flag-ship on the North American Station, retired from the service. He was a brother of Sir Claude Champion de Crespigny, sometimes called the sporting baronet, a great lover of sport and games of all kinds, and with a passion for flowers and gardening. He was a fine golfer and played cricket for his county. He was not interested in my particular lines of thought, except in so far as he liked to hear about what I was reading and writing, and, since his passing, has told me what a great assistance even the little he knew had been in adapting himself to the new conditions in which he found himself.

We settled down in that loveliest tract of English scenery, the New Forest, to what might be called over thirty years of ideal married life—happy in spite of financial and other worries, and the usual buffets fate deals to most of us when we are not looking.

But the old problems, although dormant for the time being, were still very much alive.

When I had read all the novels I had not been allowed to read in the schoolroom!—adapted myself to the conditions of a life so different from that in the past; had in fact, had time to look round, the serious side of thought and speculation re-asserted itself, the everlasting riddle again raised a head only temporarily suppressed. I found myself tackling the old vexed questions that so persistently eluded solution, and that all the sifting and winnowing in the world seemed to end in conclusions more destructive than constructive in their nature.

From rural pulpits in those days there was little to be gleaned—whatever may be the case now—of theological argument likely to assuage the doubts of the sceptic. The dogmas presented were narrow and unsatisfying, full of leakages, so it seemed to me, that required a good bit of tinkering before they would hold water.

In a parish not far removed from our own a sermon was actually preached when aeroplanes first came into use to the effect that man, not having been provided with wings, was flouting Providence by flying in His face. No witticism was intended.

When the congregation broke up, a retired naval man shouted to a friend across the churchyard: "Have you got web feet?" and on being answered in the negative, asked what in that case he meant by swimming, when a beneficent Providence had evidently intended him for dry land!

A situation between Church and Science that surely takes us back to the days of Galileo!

What are commonly called "ghost-stories" had always greatly interested me. It must be remembered that at the time of which I am writing, spiritualism as we know it to-day, and psychic research were only beginning to emerge from a chaotic muddle of tradition, rumour and sensational accounts of apparitions that were for the most part attributed to hysteria and hallucination, and considered beneath the serious attention of sensible people.

But with the inception of the Society for Psychical Research, and greatly owing to the efforts of the late Mr. W. T. Stead, beginning with the publication of "Julia's Letters" and the establishment of the "Bureau"—object of so much newspaper witticism at the time, in which I regret to say I was at first inclined to join—the subject of psychical research began to be more widely talked about. When such names as Sir William Crookes, Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir William Barrett and others began to be linked up with serious investigation, the roots became established from which has sprung a spreading tree of knowledge that is now bringing hope and consolation to mankind in every part of the habitable globe.

While spiritualism was going through these early struggles—and by spiritualism I mean the belief in and practice of communication with the so-called dead—theosophy was attracting a good deal of attention among those who were not only serious thinkers but had a certain power of "vision."

Materialism was rapidly spreading with the advance of education and its consequent effect on the general level of mentality. The world at large was beginning to think for itself and in the tenets of theosophy could find a rational and logical solution of many riddles—up to a point.

It interested me as it interested others. It answered so many questions to which otherwise there appeared to be no answer. It finally disposed of the old orthodox trappings of Heaven, the wings and crowns, and the conditions of the life hereafter, so hopelessly removed from any possible conception of an ordinary three-dimensional brain accustomed to seek for law and order in all things. It made it possible to accept a much more rational idea of the world to come, without in any way rejecting the fundamentals of the Christianity in which I had been brought up.

My reading was catholic and avid. Huxley, Darwin, Haeckel, Alfred Russel Wallace, Herbert Spencer, all came as grist to an insatiable mill, and that epoch-making book, "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," in which Professor Drummond, at the risk of being accused of heresy and blasphemy, was brave enough to suggest that law and order as we understand it might extend to worlds other than the physical; that a scheme of evolution having in it no gaps, no lapses from the eternal cosmic laws of cause and sequence, was a nobler conception and more worthy of its Creator than a scheme liable to arbitrary interference and interruption, even by the Hand presumably responsible for its creation.

Professor Drummond in effect put into words what so many had been groping for, whose intelligence forced them to believe in the principle of law working more or less automatically from a first cause, but who were instinctively reluctant to let the old traditions go and accept the alternative—a materialism that every fibre of brain and mind assured them was a stone and not bread.

That, unknown to himself, Professor Drummond was endowed with pronounced psychic gifts seems probable according to his biographers. He radiated apparently a personal influence of which all who came in contact with him were aware. Most writers —all in fact of those who practise any of the arts—are conscious of some inspiring influence at times that appears to be quite outside themselves, and in "Natural Law in the Spiritual World" traces of these inspirational sources are evident to those whose experience has been sufficient to make intelligent comparisons.

Quoting from an article published some years ago by A. W. Trethewy, well-known as the author of "The Controls of Stainton Moses," we find comparison made between some of the characteristics of Drummond's writings and automatic script, and Mr. Trethewy finishes his article with the query: "Is it not possible that he was inspired by a higher power more than he realized? May he not have been a channel for a further instalment of revelation, and may not some of his theories which are criticized as weak in scientific argument be anticipations of future discovery?"

Truly a great book; throwing a wider and deeper ripple across the surface of contemporary thought than this generation, accustomed to a greater toleration, can realize. It is easy to be wise after the event, and to accept what others have been at pains to discover, and even to imagine you have known it all the time.

My sister, when seven or eight years old, was shown the church window at Folkestone put up to the memory of Harvey. When told that he had discovered that the blood in our bodies continually circulates: "Good gracious!" she exclaimed. "Why, *I* could have told him that!"

I have found in life that necessity is not the mother of invention only, but of most of the effort that has "made the world go round," and that one of the most eloquent arguments in favour of an Intelligence behind the universe as against the purely mechanistic theory seems to lie in "nature's" power of *prevision*. A cosmos produced from chaos through automatic processes, an exclusively emergent evolution might be admitted, for the sake of argument, to have found birth in a "fortuitous concourse of atoms" —wherever they may be supposed to have come from—and subsequent developments be the result of an endless chain of cause and effect.

But what of the evidence of looking ahead on the part of "nature," of what appears to be an ordered arrangement of machinery for the bringing about or inhibition of certain eventualities?

How account for the foresight that gave man a

physical body for whose sustenance and well-being physical food is a necessity, the acquisition of which is dependent upon his own exertions? If it had not been for the immutable law that he should dig for his dinner, would a hand's turn of work ever have been got out of him? The necessity for food made a hunter of him in the first instance, or, as in hot countries where food is easily obtainable and a little goes a long way, is it not more likely he would have been content to lie on the beach and throw pebbles into the sea? But the body must be fed, and there are other instances of a controlling force of sufficient intelligence to foresee certain contingencies and to provide for them.

Natural inhibitions that have so often cropped up in the history of man's advance, point surely in the same direction; inhibitions that have automatically raised barriers and prevented his discoveries in physical law and extended opportunities for the exercise of free-will, to outrun his sense of responsibility. According to Professor Millikan, the American physicist, the latter will always keep pace with the former. The Angel with the flaming sword has never ceased his vigil, but continues to safeguard mankind in his ignorance and presumption from self-destruction.

Perhaps it was natural that with so much working and seething in my brain, I should feel an urge toward the expression of it in some form. In the first instance this certainly sprang from a desire to clarify and tabulate thought and ideas for my own satis-

faction, rather than any wish to inflict it on my fellow creatures. I began to write about ghosts—short articles trying to prove there was nothing super*natural* in apparitions, but that it would probably be found such phenomena obeyed some law which at the moment we did not understand. It did not seem common sense to reject wholesale the testimony of so many persons otherwise reliable and obtainable at first hand; nor should tradition be entirely discredited by the majority merely because they had had no experience of such phenomena themselves. Mr. Stead's "Borderland" came out and excited a great deal of interest, and the S.P.R. were beginning to collect and tabulate stories of reputed "hauntings" and attracting the attention of quite serious-minded people.

But there were other urges goading at me. As the responsibilities of married life increased, I became vividly aware of the necessity for some definite and strenuous effort to "balance the budget"! And this is the point at which I return to the statement that invention is not necessity's only offspring. It may be humiliating but is nevertheless true that she will plumb depths in the individual that would otherwise be undisturbed; her whip can be as compelling as that of any slave-driver. She countenances no keeping of talents in napkins, but will bring to the blossoming all there is in either man or woman with ruthless pertinacity.

I can honestly say that had it not been for the exigencies of various financial crises—to make mole-

hills into mountains—the little that I have attempted to do in the world would probably have been left undone, not so much perhaps to the world's detriment as to my own, when accounts are finally made up.

I always had a passion for painting, and worked hours a day to teach myself, as in the heart of the Forest the ordinary channels for learning were out of reach. Having been brought up by and on the sea, my efforts ran in that direction. I believe it is often the case that artists, although finding themselves in quite different surroundings, will revert to the type of environment in which they have been born and bred and attain their happiest results, the surroundings of youth making an indelible impression on a young and growing brain.

Anyway, in the middle of the verdant glades and heather-clad stretches of the New Forest I wanted to paint ships!

And paint ships I did; travelling here and there on the quest, within reach of the battleships at Portsmouth, and studying the varied craft on the Thames, from red-sailed barges to full-rigged ships, in and below the London Pool. I had many "one-man" shows in Bond Street, and exhibited otherwise a great deal, a fact continually referred to in the séance-room and given as "evidence" from the other side.

Before the War I could state the displacement and armament of every battleship in the Navy and most of the cruisers. When the "hush-hush" régime arose,

naturally sources of information as well as opportunities for drawing them ceased. With a growing family, money melts as quickly—or more so—as it materializes; the evidence of work done lies in the many pictures of mine that are scattered over the world, some of which have been reproduced in newspapers and elsewhere.

I also, while in my twenties, started to write a novel, of which the foundation came in a dream, and whatever its faults no one could have accused it of dullness!

It was called "From the Grave," and in the first chapter the hero, having apparently died of an obscure variety of catalepsy—which I feel sure would have greatly interested the medical profession—was buried alive and the coffin deposited in the family vault. The undertaker had evidently not made a good job of it, for the occupant, having come to, pushed up the lid without any difficulty, sat up and looked over the edge—just in time to see the villain of the piece enter the vault and bury a dead body under the stones of the floor.

The rest of the story was equally gripping, and it was accepted by the editor of a magazine in the North. He asked for my photograph and biography —at which I am not surprised—and published the first number. The magazine immediately collapsed, whether as the result of my contribution or not never transpired, but the editor eloped with the rest of the story, and I have neither seen nor heard of it since—and I hope I never shall!

CHAPTER SIX

THAT first effort was followed by a second, this time on less lurid lines. I had a strong desire to write a story embodying the philosophy of life that had been gradually shaping as the years went on. But it is not easy to put such a thesis convincingly in the form of fiction.

At the moment I was interested in the hypnotic experiments carried out by Charcot and others at La Charité in Paris, more particularly where they dealt with the transference of certain diseases from one subject to another. It seemed to me that here was possibly a clue to the principle of vicarious punishment, an idea I followed up many years later, and that formed the basis of an article I wrote that was published in the *Nineteenth Century,* and that will be dealt with at length in a subsequent chapter.

So in the new venture in fiction, a thread of hypnotism ran through the fabric of it; politics also played a part. I have no recollection of the story now; according to the psychologists it is stored somewhere in my subconscious memory, and I can only hope nothing will bring it to the surface again. My leading lady was a sort of modern version of Hypatia and Sappho welded into one. The manuscript went the round of the London publishers without getting

a kind word from any one of them, and finally came to roost in my wastepaper basket!

The determination, however, to write a novel that *would* find a publisher remained unshaken. Faint though still pursuing, I gave up trying to be clever, and served an apprenticeship in short-story and article writing, and some years later "From Behind the Arras" came out in Fisher Unwin's *First Novel Library* and launched me seriously on my career as a writer. The thrill of the moment that first book saw the light has never been eclipsed by any of the twenty-two novels of which I have since been guilty—an experience I believe common to most of the craft.

It was shortly after that first early attempt that I met Laurence Oliphant. We were fellow guests at a house in Scotland, and at the time his writings were attracting a good deal of attention. He was attempting flights in philosophy and theological problems that fitted in with the awakening mentality of the time. Minds were beginning to question the unassailability of the old traditions, to reach out toward something more satisfying to the intelligence than mere statement from authorities that could bring forward no credentials, and Laurence Oliphant, with his suggestions of a philosophy founded on rational deductions, had a following.

Looking back in the light of these later years he stands out as a remarkable personality; in essence, however vehemently he might have denied the impeachment, a spiritualist. As a matter of fact,

I believe he admitted it, but the word was rarely heard in those days.

He openly professed to be conscious of the constant presence of his dead wife, that she stood behind his chair at the dinner-table and on other occasions, and that he was in frequent communication with her.

To have admitted to spiritualism in those days was to put yourself on a level with a nigger revivalist, or a "shaker," or a follower of any other "crank" denomination; in the early days it was considered not only unintelligent but not respectable, and I am afraid Mr. Oliphant's professions excited more covert amusement among his fellow guests than serious interest. He was too shining a light in the literary firmament for open ridicule, but, at the time, the genuineness of his psychic gifts was certainly not recognized. We younger ones used to try experiments. At the mention of his name, were it whispered ever so softly from the far end of a very long room, he would turn slowly and stare at the speaker in a most disconcerting manner. No doubt the unbeliever would suggest unusually good ears, or mere coincidence, but the unvarying result of the experiment seemed to call for something further in the way of explanation even to our ribald and irreverent minds!

Another interesting personality I met about this time was Queen Victoria's marine painter, Sir Oswald Brierley. I mention him especially in connexion with the name of a ship that figures later on in these pages.

When the Duke of Edinburgh commanded

H.M.S. *Galatea* on her voyage round the world, Mr. Brierley, as he was then, was a passenger in his capacity as official marine painter. My husband was a sub-lieutenant on board—it was some years before we first met one another—and he told many stories of the risks the artist would take and the discomforts faced in the determination to capture certain effects.

There is a well-known picture by Brierley of the *Galatea* in a typhoon which they encountered in the Indian Ocean. Undismayed by the desperate conditions, he stood under the poop, bound to a stanchion to prevent him from being washed overboard by the heavy seas continually flooding the decks. Great towering waves came swooping down on them, sea and sky blended into a blinding mist of spume and fog, as though all the devils of the deep had broken bounds in their efforts to engulf the ship, a mere cockleshell in the grip of furious nature. And through the welter Brierley sketched, undeterred by the surrounding chaos, making the studies from which his picture was ultimately painted, only concerned with keeping his canvas protected from utter destruction, and with getting the best effects possible in the circumstances. An instance of what the artist will brave in the pursuit of his ruling passion.

The Queen's marine painter had not attained to that position without an intimate knowledge of ships and sailors; he knew as much of the technical side of the profession as anyone on board. But he loved to "pull the legs" of the youngsters on board by asking

questions about the rigging and sails, of this world information they were more than ready with as much deference as if he had not known it about it before most of them were born—until they found him out!

My husband often talked to me about that cruise; coming as it did early in his naval career, it made a vivid impression and left many memories. It was in its way like a royal progression. Queen Victoria's subjects in the outlying parts of her dominions, eager to show their loyalty to her son, wonderful and lavish hospitality was shown at every stage of it. At the Australian ports in particular it seemed enough could hardly be done in their honour; meat, chickens, fruit were sent on board with a generosity sufficient to have fed twice their number. All as a free gift; the ship's company took up savings and had their share of the general goodwill, and for years afterwards it was looked upon by both officers and men as the "time of their lives."

I am emphasizing this episode as it has a bearing on the manner of my introduction to definite communication with the other world. My husband, for financial reasons, left the Service when we married; he became a very fine amateur carpenter and when the *Galatea* years later came to an end of her career and was broken up, a friend, knowing of his skill, sent him a bit of one of her beams which he made into a box that is still in my possession.

Life in the New Forest was as different from the life in which I had been brought up and he had

H.M.S. *Galatea* be imagined, but I quickly grew to
Mr. Brierley's new surroundings.
Communicators from beyond often insist upon the importance of contacts with growing things, confirming what some philosophies teach and many nature-lovers have believed through past ages. Some sensitively developed persons say they can *hear* plants grow; certainly, during the many hours I have spent in the heart of the woods, surrounded by the splendid oaks and beeches of the New Forest, I have been very conscious of the active life around me. Nor do I think it necessary to have pronounced psychic gifts in order to sense the latent and active energy of growing trees.

The scientists tell us that every centre of chemical change creates around it a disturbed area in the ether. The processes of nature in both the animal and vegetable kingdom involve chemical changes, presumably projecting waves into the ether which cause the disturbance, and these presumably may be picked up by any ultra-sensitive organism within reach.

Living so many years, as I did, not only in constant contact with these woodland giants, but making of them a special study from the artist's point of view, I grew to *feel* the life in them, to know that in laying my hand on the surface of their shining or rugged stems as the case might be, I could absorb that life, make their vitality my own, identify myself with their strength and steadfastness, and through the wonder of their beauty and the realization of their undeviating obedience to law, be for the moment

removed from the material conditions of this world and nearer to the God who made them.

We are losing something in this mechanical age. It may bring its own compensations but we seem to be getting farther from these contacts with the sources of life, and contenting ourselves with mere reflections. In every direction we see the denser forms of matter intervening between us and the vital springs of life.

We get our drama, our music secondhand; in the cinema, and in the mechanically worked musical instruments of to-day we lose contact with the source, the life, the living, human emotions that are directly conveyed by the singer, the instrumentalist, or across the footlights in the drama, and reacted to by the audience ready to receive them. Conveyed through the machinery of inorganic matter we get a reflection only of the real thing. There is no life in it. It is the same with art.

My father once said when looking at a sketch by one of his sisters: "Even a *bad* water-colour is better than a photograph!"—not the way one would have wished to express it perhaps!—but indicative of the sense of dissatisfaction with a mechanical reproduction instead of original creation, be it ever so halting.

Our medicines are synthetically produced from minerals and chemicals instead of the magnetically charged herbs of the soil; we are in daily contact with motor-driven vehicles instead of horses, instinct with the breath of life; even our letters are typewritten—which in some cases may be considered an advantage rather than the contrary!

Man lives and thrives in the sunlight, but cannot live in moonlight only. Yet it is the same ray, the one is a mere reflection of the other. What has the comparatively dead matter of the moon done to the sun-ray? Or is it just a matter of quantity? I think the race is losing something in this age of mechanical device. Perhaps it gains in other directions.

Filled as I was with doubts and scepticism during the later years of the last century, trying to evolve for myself a scheme of philosophy that would reconcile the doctrines in which I had been brought up with the advance of scientific discovery and the calls of common sense, I found the religious education of my growing family a serious problem. I have never been in sympathy with merely destructive policies, and would always hesitate to sweep away without something to offer in replacement. There was no trouble with regard to the ethical side of the question, as I considered and do consider, true Christianity as preached by Christ the finest religion in the world, representing the purest and most altruistic teaching possible. Neither spiritualism nor anything else has ever presented us with anything finer. In my pre-marriage days I had determined to allow any children I might ever have to grow up without prejudice as regards any or all religions and allow them to take their choice of them when arrived at years of discretion.

But when in due course I had a family of my own I discovered it was other people's children I wished to try experiment on! So every Sunday morning in

orthodox fashion we walked, or occasionally drove, two miles to the village church of Bramshaw, mentioned in Doomsday Book, with its ancient yew from which in the long past bows and arrows for anything but Christian purposes had been made, and which was situated, as so many old churches are, on the apex of a hill inconveniently removed from the village it served. What was given from the pulpit might not have been particularly inspiring, but the walk in all weathers was so much to the good in discipline, and I hoped the Bible truths imbibed and the habit of church-going might have their lasting effects.

But one's best efforts go agley! After years of church advantages and my own endeavours to inculcate an understanding of an all-loving, all-merciful Father, I heard one of my sons of about eight years old, when asked by a well-meaning visitor to explain what thunder was, answer: "I always thought it was God growling!"

Theosophy at that time was very much in the air. A. P. Sinnett—who later on became a valued friend—had published his thought-provoking book, "The Growth of a Soul," and his logical arguments and sound reasoning threw light on much that was obscure in the Bible. It confirmed the conception of different spheres or planes of progression, and of hierarchies in the worlds to come, although the terminology might not be the same. The Arhats, Masters, Brothers, Logoi and so on corresponded to some extent with the Angels and Archangels of the

Scriptures. It taught of the powers latent within us all, and of the training necessary to the development of clairvoyance, clairaudience and other powers beyond the ordinary—a secret knowledge never lost sight of entirely during the dark ages of ignorance and materialism, but handed down through the centuries by such sects as the Gnostics, Rosicrucians, Freemasons, Quakers and other disciples of occultism.

For various reasons unnecessary to go into here, theosophy has failed to make the headway with the serious-minded public that was at one time expected of it, but putting the theory of reincarnation aside, there is much to be learnt from its conception of the construction of the various bodies, active and latent, possessed by man, and from its exposition of the world that is man's immediate heritage at death, and is already here around us; not situated as a locality far removed in space as the old idea of Heaven implied, but a change of condition; a re-orientation of the consciousness, a tuning-in to wave-lengths that enables us to react to a different and more subtly constituted environment. It taught in days when the teaching was not so generally accepted as it is now, since we have been in communication with those "beyond," that man himself in regard to his characteristics, emotions and mentality is not radically altered by the phenomenon we call death; and that the surprising leap in evolution from the ordinary individual to angel or devil on the casting of the flesh that orthodoxy had required us to accept, could be ruled out.

This conception of man's next state has become so familiar now that the channels through which it has filtered are apt to be overlooked and the idea accepted as though always presented by religious dogma. It is assuredly to be found in the Scriptures, but theosophy as well as spiritualism, have been responsible for getting rid of the old conception of harps and crowns.

I was told of a well-known bishop at the end of the War who, in addressing a large gathering of men, assured them that five minutes after death they were exactly the same as they were five minutes before. How did he *know*?—unless he had been told directly or indirectly by those already in the future life and therefore in a position to speak with certainty.

Theosophical theories, to my mind, seemed to fall in with the more rational conceptions built upon observation of the natural processes going on around us. In evolution there seem to be no "gaps," all advance, in whatever direction, being accomplished in steps so ordered and gradual as to be for the most part imperceptible.

But to establish these facts, each one for himself through direct experience, as theosophy invites, is to entail an arduous training and the sacrifice of a vast amount of time; more than those engaged in the strenuous life of to-day might be able to give. The practice of Raja Yoga, even in its early steps, demands time, patience and quiet, and may be practised for years before definite results are attained. Those results are attainable, but unless they are

demonstrable, although invaluable to oneself they are of no sort of use to others; more is required to bring comfort to those who mourn and to those, so rapidly increasing in numbers, who can no longer accept without question doctrines that had satisfied a less intellectually developed generation, and for whose doubts and struggles in search of light that might not prove a will-o'-the-wisp, I had so profound a sympathy.

So, as a working hypothesis I was—and am—ready to accept theosophy from a logical and reasonable point of view; but as real proof of the survival of personality it was a failure. But my own inner conviction through experiences of an inner spiritual nature—I am not speaking of the psychic aspect—remained unshaken, as was my belief in the Bible, regarding it as a storehouse of occult, psychic, scientific and spiritual knowledge, in which was to be found by those who could rightly interpret it, the fundamentals of the Christian religion as taught by Christ, and the survival of personality.

And short of this strenuous training for development of the inner faculties, acceptance or rejection of the theories offered by theosophy obviously depended upon the clairvoyance or clairaudience of *others*.

So what did it amount to? A reversion to the old position—appeal to Authority; and having been unable to accept the authority of the Archbishop of Canterbury, why should I accept that of Madame Blavatsky?

CHAPTER SEVEN

SHORTLY after the controversy had been waged between Professor Huxley and Mr. Gladstone in the later years of the last century on the authenticity of the first chapter in Genesis I had the pleasure of meeting the latter through the introduction of Sir William Harcourt, who was a near neighbour of ours in the New Forest. The discussion excited a great deal of public interest at the time, and I had been so warmly in sympathy with Mr. Gladstone's opinions that to meet the author of them was something of an event. He was kind enough subsequently to read the MS of the article on the subject of the "atonement," which in rather altered form appeared years afterwards in the *Nineteenth Century*, and encouraged me very much to follow up the line of thought. Since then I had a communication from the "other side" which has thrown considerable light upon the opening phrase in the Bible, which Professor Huxley had discredited on the plea that according to the narrative light was created four "days" before the sun, presumably the source of it, came into being, the absurdity of which he pointed out.

Since then a good deal more has been discovered about light and light-rays and the manner of their

transmission, and a communicator later on incidentally outlines what might now be recognized as a reference to the cosmic rays, many years before their discovery by Professor Millikan.

As Mr. Gladstone recognized the importance of the question of spiritualism in his day, the confirmation from "beyond" of his opinions on the first chapter of Genesis, from one claiming to be endowed with a wider field of vision, might have interested him.

The high peak to which rank materialism attained during the latter half of the nineteenth century had at least one beneficial effect. It set, not only the more highly educated classes, but the man in the street, thinking as he had never thought before. The practice of discussing serious subjects, the things that really matter, began to creep into ordinary social life; different points in theology, arguments for and against the various forms of religion, were no longer *taboo*, and ceased to be "bad form."

Mrs. Humphry Ward arrested world attention with "Robert Elsmere," a presentation, daring in its novelty, of the orthodox priest beset with doubts as to the foundation of his faith. Edna Lyall, although not perhaps on the same level of literary excellence, set the world considering how far a man was justified in professing an atheism—that would now be termed agnosticism—due to a perfectly sincere desire to arrive at truth; both books being a step toward the breaking down of a religious intolerance that had turned into argument the age-old hostilities between science and the Church.

Possibly this deeper plunge into materialism was pre-ordained by the powers that be to obtain the reactions necessary to a higher and a more widespread spirituality; a spirituality with a firm foundation, drawing all the faculties of man into the vortex of essential spirit, adding intellect to the emotional content as balance to the less stable qualities of intuitional impulses.

My father had died in 1888, after seven years as First Sea Lord of the Admiralty and three years spent in retirement on the outskirts of Maidenhead. No man could have left a cleaner record nor a deeper regret for his loss among the friends who knew him. He shed a radiant influence of kindness and goodwill and steadfastness wherever he went; I can see it now and give it due appreciation, but the young are apt to take so much for granted, and my girlhood had been left far behind before I realized how widespread was this influence. Every workman in the Dockyards in his charge knew he had a friend to come to when in trouble or distress, and although at the time of his death he had lived in the neighbourhood of Maidenhead for only three years, it was a tribute to the influence of his personality that during the hour of his funeral the principal shops in the town put up their shutters and flags were flown at half-mast.

There is a window to his memory in the parish church.

His death was very sudden. A telegram was sent to me late in the evening, which was not delivered until the following morning. But, again, as at the

time my mother died, although unaware of his death, I dreamt uneasily throughout the night. I was looking for him—searching, searching, in a grey city of high walls lit by a dim twilight. It has always been a comfort to me that I failed to find him.

When later on I found what I had been seeking for so many years—a sure foundation for faith in a hereafter, he was one of the first to come and speak to me.

In September 1912 my husband died after a long and trying illness. We had been inseparable companions, and leaving the home so full of memories, I came to London, and embarked on the third phase of life that for me seems almost to have been divided definitely into three acts, the curtain coming down sharply between each.

My daughter and two sons being out in the world and living their own lives—as each generation should—I was more than grateful to the Powers that be for making it necessary to carry on the painting and writing that by dint of much real work had been steadily developing during those years spent in the country. There is nothing like hard work for easing the sadnesses of life, and from the first I was able to fix my eyes on the future instead of dwelling on the past. Too much so, perhaps, some of my friends think, for if I express impatience for the moment when the door to the "great Adventure" will be opened I am told I am morbid!

I did a great deal of sketching on the river during the first year or two in London. The days alone by

the riverside, watching the many craft moving up and down, suited my mood. I had permits for all sorts of points of vantage; the penny steamboat piers, the river police stations, the Port of London jetties, and most especially the frontage of the Custom House, a luxurious sketching ground, and much to be recommended to any who wish to go and do likewise.

I had many amusing adventures when in search of subjects, such as arriving at a river police station armed with my permit, to be received by a dubious-looking sergeant, who assured me the landing-stage on which I proposed to pitch easel and chair would be rather dirty. It was a blazing hot day with a sky of brass; ideal for sketching, and it was going to take more than dirt to deter me.

"What sort of dirt?" I asked.

"They are landing bags of sugar," he replied still more discouragingly; I got the impression, in fact, that my room, as they say, would be more welcome than my company—which added to my determination to enforce the privileges of the permit.

"I don't mind sugar," I replied firmly.

"It's brown sugar," he added.

"I don't care what kind of sugar it is," I protested.

"It's melting in the sun," he eyed me tentatively, "and turning into treacle—all over the landing-stage," he finished.

The sergeant won.

I could relate many amusing little incidents of the sort, but would like to register this fact; that never

in all my wanderings on the river and its purlieus have I ever—except on one occasion when I lost my way in the neighbourhood of the Docks—encountered anything but the greatest civility from everyone with whom I came in contact. I found the bargee, accredited in general with language more picturesque than polished, always ready to let me on board his barge, anxious to furnish me with water or any other concomitant of the artist's trade within his reach, and I could only come to the conclusion that the language attributed to him is after all only skin deep!

Then, not long before the machines of war ripped their way through the peace of nations, and turned life into temporary chaos, I met Mrs. Etta Wriedt.

It was in May 1914!

Everyone with any knowledge of this subject of psychic research knows Mrs. Wriedt as a celebrated medium for the direct voice. Her home is in Detroit, but at one time she spent a great deal of time in London and was well-known to all the prominent pioneers of the moment at that time. To her I owe one of the greatest privileges of my life—my first introduction to Sir Oliver Lodge, who has many a time extended a helping hand when I have been floundering in doubt or difficulty.

I was introduced to Mrs. Wriedt by a man who at the time was a mere acquaintance, afterwards developing into an intimate friend—the late Colonel E. R. Johnson, who knew nothing of my life in the past, had never met my husband and who first

mentioned Mrs. Wriedt's name to me in casual conversation.

I may as well confess at once that I was full of prejudice; no objections on principle, nor disbelief in the possibility of communication; but I was "up against" mediums in any form, connecting them with fraud, hoaxes and audiences of credulous people ready to swallow anything that came along, which latter is an attitude often adopted by persons toward others who happen to believe something they themselves do not!

All I can say in extenuation is that I took the means at hand to correct these erroneous conclusions, and quickly realized that I was faced with a marvellous truth that every sense I possessed of logic, understanding and reason told me was fundamental and had been there waiting for man to open the door to it ever since the world began.

I had disliked the very word *medium*, although now I know no other term so aptly describes the living organism that appears to be the link between physical, etheric and astral conditions—the intermediary wave-length that can contact both worlds. Every known force in nature requires a medium through which it can make itself manifest; without it our senses are unaware of its existence. Electricity, magnetism, gravitation must have a means of manifestation. Séances, sittings, circles were all terms which in my ignorance were the expression of the entire gamut of trickery and imposition; but in spite of that I was ever conscious

of the inborn conviction that somewhere lay the clue to communication between ourselves and those who had passed on to another world—a common-sense world of some kind, unconnected with harps and wings, and that if we could only put our hand on the key we could open the door. It was something impossible to put into words—an echo perhaps that clung to me and had come with me into this life from somewhere else?

So, as I was always ready for adventure, I felt the experiment could do no harm even if it led to nowhere; through the kind offices of Colonel Johnson a sitting was arranged, my name being kept in the background, and on a fine bright day in May I found myself at a house in Wimbledon which I learnt later had once belonged to Mr. W. T. Stead.

The knowledge of technical procedure in psychical research has so advanced during the last twenty years, and experiences in the séance-room become so widespread that it seems superfluous to go into a detailed description of the conditions under which my first séance was held; but as I hope to interest readers who perhaps have not been able to gain first-hand experience for themselves, I will give a brief description of the technical differences between a "direct voice" séance and that of the variety known as "trance."

Etta Wriedt never went into trance, so far as I know. She remained throughout the sitting her fully conscious self, entering into the conversations in her ordinary voice, remembering afterwards all

that had taken place, and on many occasions overlapping with her own conversation the voices of communicators trying to "come through."

On this first occasion we were alone, in a large room empty of furniture beyond the chairs we sat on—I think there was a sofa in one corner of the room—with a distance of five or six feet between us, and the aluminium trumpet—used to assist those operating on the other side in concentrating the vibrations, as a megaphone is used here—at my feet between myself and Mrs. Wriedt.

The room was darkened, an essential with this medium in obtaining the best results; for the same reason that a wireless message will travel considerably farther at night than in the daytime. The action of light has a destructive effect on ectoplasm and all phenomena dependent upon the use of it, and as the movements of the trumpet and no doubt the "larynx" formed by the unseen operators and instrumental in the transmission of the voices involve the use of this tenuous substance thrown out by the physical body, darkness is of the greatest assistance in this form of demonstration.

At the same time the phenomenon has been produced in my own room when conditions made it impossible to exclude the light completely, and I have seen the levitation and movement of the trumpet take place without human contact of any kind.

Mrs. Murphy Lydy, a direct voice medium also well-known in America, produced the voice successfully in full daylight.

It was rather a weird experience, sitting in the pitch dark with a total stranger waiting for—I hardly knew what!

But once the communications began the commonplaceness of the situation and the voices robbed the phenomenon of any feeling of ghostliness or uncanniness. I did not recognize the voices, but the explanation of that is simple enough. The difference in tone of *physical* voices is due to the formation of the organs through which they are produced, and as these organs disintegrate with the physical body, the physical voice as we knew it can never be counted on in the different conditions. Some people, I believe, do recognize some of the voices that come through, but I say frankly I have never done so. Mannerisms, tricks in expression and so on continue and can be identified; I once recognized an uncle by his laugh before he gave me his name.

Very shortly after the light was turned out I was touched on the knee, Mrs. Wriedt still talking from the same spot five or six feet away, and immediately afterwards I heard a voice speaking through the trumpet. It was a physical voice and would have been audible to any number of persons had they been in the room. There was no question of imagination or telepathy; it was an objective voice, and as Mrs. Wriedt continued to talk, I was obliged to ask her to desist as someone was trying to speak.

Mrs. Wriedt described a figure she saw come into the room, a good description of my husband "in dark blue uniform with gold lace and shiny things

on the shoulders." (Epaulettes.) She said he was dancing—we had both been very fond of dancing—and before he spoke *a bar from our favourite waltz "Daheim" was whistled through the trumpet!*

A voice then that claimed to be that of my husband spoke. He called me by my Christian name and seemed to be greatly agitated, but as it was not like my husband's voice, and moreover spoke with a pronounced American accent, it was not surprising that I doubted the identity of the speaker! Elucidation has to come gradually. But although in the first flush of a novel experience, and ignorance of the laws governing the situation, I doubted the claims of the speaker, I knew myself to be face to face with a marvel greater than the birth of steam engines, aeroplanes or anything yet discovered by the ingenuity and perseverance of mankind.

I was "up against" the most marvellous incident in my life!

The voice spoke for some time asking and answering questions; the answers seemed to me a little illusive, unsatisfying. I wanted *proof*—indubitable—complete. We all do—incontrovertible proof, that will save us the trouble of further doubt and inquiry—proof, that we shall never get without patience and persistent seeking.

I wanted to set my own tests, a line of action and a frame of mind that always seems to inhibit the best results. Patience and a certain attitude of tolerance when things do not go exactly as we expect, hardly ever fail to bring proof in the end. That, at least, is

my experience, but the evidence must be furnished by the operators on the other side in their own way. To attempt to impose our way on them while we are so ignorant of their limitations generally ends in disaster.

After this, another voice claimed recognition, giving a Christian and surname which at first were unintelligible. Finally the speaker explained who he was by reference to my husband by a name that only a few members of his family had used, and I recognized him as a brother-in-law who had passed over as the result of an accident at polo fifteen years previously.

I was much surprised. I considered him one of the most unlikely people to speak to me, but I asked what he was doing and if he was happy.

"Quite happy," he replied. "I am studying the subject of evolution and am much interested in all such subjects now."

"I have always been interested in natural science," I replied.

"Yes, I know, but I never expected to find you here."

"Why not?" I asked. "Communication with another world has always seemed to me one of the solvable problems of the future."

"Well, you are the only member of the family who has tried to speak to us."

That was true, but might have been a guess. He then went on to remind me of a dance we had been to when we were both young and of some flowers I had worn. Which was correct.

He added, my husband had asked him to come through and assure me it was he who had spoken first.

I had other visitors, including one who, although a stranger to me on this plane, has since become a valued link with the other.

She said she was Florence Nightingale and showed me her lamp as an "identification mark"—the Lady of the Lamp. It was a luminous disk about the size of a bicycle lamp and as sharply defined. She waved it several times close to my face and I put out my hand and passed it right through the light. A case of fools stepping in where angels fear to tread! I certainly would not do such a thing now!

I left Mrs. Wriedt's not satisfied. There is no need to deal with the usual objections urged by the novice, and which any ordinarily intelligent investigator is of course keeping in mind, such as—

Ventriloquism?

On one or two occasions Mrs. Wriedt was speaking at the same time as the voice through the trumpet. I had to ask her to stop. Also, I am told ventriloquism is not possible in the dark.

Telepathy?

At this first sitting this might have accounted for the *matter* of the communications, but not for the *manner* of conveying them. No one of any intelligence who has ever heard the direct voice in favourable circumstances will try to account for it through telepathy. It has no bearing on the problem.

The subconscious mind?

Even this overworked beast of burden may plead not guilty. The subconscious mind cannot—it is to be presumed—create an objective voice and, with telepathy, may be dismissed as of no assistance.

The identity of the sitters remained the knotty point. Mrs. Wriedt might have been suspected of looking up family names, if by any chance she had managed to learn my own, and refer to members of my family correctly. There had been nothing absolutely convincing in anything that had taken place.

In fact there had been a big error in a statement made.

The voice alleged to be that of my husband had said, among other things: "Thank you for the flowers!" I, wishing to make my own tests, replied:

"Do you mean flowers I put on your grave?" and I thought the answer had been "Yes"—which was quite wrong!

CHAPTER EIGHT

YET, there were points that required a good deal of explaining away.

I went over the evidence carefully bit by bit, weighing the pros and cons with as little prejudice as possible; convinced only upon one point. Whoever their owners might be, the circumstances of my surroundings and my own common sense indicated that the voices came from that country from which Shakespeare in direct contradiction of the Bible, has told us there is no return.

There seemed to be no other explanation—if my ordinary senses were of any use to me at all! And in the main they had spoken of affairs that could not possibly have been known to the medium.

My first argument took a more or less negative form. If *any* person could communicate from the other side, my husband should be equally able to do so; and if he could, he *would*—a point those who have lost anyone for whom they greatly care would do well to consider.

But—and it was a big *but* in those first days of uncertainty—the voice was not *his* voice, and he had made little mistakes in diction and phrases it was difficult to account for. I had not learnt then, as I have already explained, that the timbre, the actual

ring of the old voice had presumably gone for ever.

But my brother-in-law, who had given his name and referred to trivial incidents that could not have been known to the medium, nor found in any reference book—how was he to be explained?—and how about the bar of "Daheim" that had been whistled as an introduction?

Thought-reading? But that was merely suggesting a fresh miracle to account for the first; and anyway it did not explain the *voices*—nor the whistling.

With so much uncertainty in my mind it might have been a long time before I visited Mrs. Wriedt again. I should have done so eventually, because I was puzzled—and when you have an inquiring mind you are not content to remain so; but the following day Colonel Johnson, whom I have already mentioned, spoke to me after a Theosophical lecture we had both attended; he said he had a message to give me.

He had visited Mrs. Wriedt that morning, had taken notes of the message on the spot, being an expert at doing so in the dark, and written them out afterwards.

"I don't know what it means," he explained, "but was told you would understand, and I give it to you verbatim."

A voice, it seemed, had spoken to him from the trumpet in a state of great agitation, giving my husband's Christian and surnames, saying his wife had been there the previous day and had gone away

doubting his identity; that she had misunderstood him, and he was most anxious Colonel Johnson should put it right. He said her father, Sir Cooper Key, was there, very happy and they had spent many hours together.

He then said most earnestly: "She misunderstood me—she thought I said she put flowers on my grave. But it was *her* mistake. I have no grave. My body was cremated."

He then added: "It is very difficult to do this—as difficult as she found her painting when she first began. Ask her," he went on, "if she remembers the *Galaton*—on the Australian Station. This will be understood.

"I am sorry I mismanaged it. (The séance.) We often do the first time."

It is quite impossible to describe the overwhelming flood of conviction this message brought! It was as a crowning point of evidence after a lifetime of inquiry and honest speculation. I had been knocking all my life, and the door had at last opened.

No one but my husband would have sent me that message. Those who have read the previous pages may understand the full force of it. The name of course should have been *Galatea*, showing how little Colonel Johnson understood the point of it.

None of it was known to the medium, nor to Colonel Johnson. Even if she had had the means of finding out so many details in my husband's life, she would only have had two days in which to do it. He had left the Navy thirty-four years previously,

and to have suspected her of consulting ancient Navy lists, which are not at all easy to get at, would have been childish. Nor, if she had had the opportunity of doing so, would she have had any reason for selecting the *Galatea* among all the ships he had served in as of special interest. In its very triviality lay the weight of the evidence.

At the séance my husband had been followed, so Colonel Johnson said, by his own wife who had died some years before I made his acquaintance, and we had been unknown to one another during her earth life. She, too, sent me a message, to the effect that "Mrs. de Crespigny's father was present with her, and wished to say something about Malta, where she had been when she was a little girl."

These messages, may it be noted, were brought to me by a *third* person, who knew nothing of my past life nor of the names given to him and passed on to me. They were not drawn from his subconscious mind as the information had never been known to him, and it was all sufficiently arresting to send me again to Mrs. Wriedt—this time to have all doubt removed, and to be convinced of a truth that is indeed the Pearl of great price.

At the next sitting with Mrs. Wriedt my husband was preceded by his brother, who said the message about the *Galatea* had been sent to me as a proof of his identity, as he knew all it would convey to me, and he had been so distressed at having been previously misunderstood. My husband followed, called me by the old names and again mentioned the

Galatea, and did I remember how often he had told me of the good times they had?

Trivial? Of course, most of life is made up of trivialities. If he had told me the names of our children, the date of my marriage, or of his own death, the medium might have looked it up in a book; if he had given me a dissertation on philosophy, it would have been so unlike him I should not have believed in him at all; if he had described his life in that other world, I had first to be sure there was another world to describe. It was the reference to the little insignificant things in life—things known perhaps to him and me alone, that drove the truth home as could nothing else in the world. How would you prove your identity to someone who doubted it on the telephone?

I remember a case in point. At the time the search for the poor little Lindbergh baby was going on, the Captain of the liner which had a short time before conveyed Colonel Lindbergh from England wished to speak to him on the telephone. Colonel Lindbergh, distracted, poor man, as he was, insisted upon the establishment of the communicator's identity before he would answer the call, and it was only after a trivial incident that had happened on board, known to them both, had been mentioned that he consented to go to the telephone.

My husband and I at that sitting had some really intimate talk, and when he said he must go my eyes filled with tears.

Although it was pitch-dark and my voice was

under perfect control, he exclaimed at once: "Don't cry!"

My father came at that sitting, to my great delight. The bond between us on earth had been very real. He asked after his sisters, using the pet name of one of my aunts who at that time was in physical life; she has come to me many a time since she passed on. He again reminded me of Malta—and mentioned our old Scottish nurse, calling her by her not very common name, Euphemia, and also the pet name by which we had all called her as children.

Then an uncle whom I have already mentioned, having recognized him by his laugh. He had been a Bishop in South Africa on this plane, and when I asked him if he was surprised at his surroundings when he found himself in the next world, he replied: "Indeed I was!"

Then came further confirmation. Two days later I received a letter from Admiral Usborne Moore.

He was a stranger to me and addressed me as "Madam." He was known as the writer of several books on spiritualism and was a keen investigator.

He wrote that at a séance with Mrs. Wriedt a voice had come through claiming to be that of Philip de Crespigny.

"But I never knew you," the Admiral protested. "Which of the de Crespignys are you? I never knew any of them, but one was in the Navy and married a daughter of Sir Cooper Key."

"That is my wife," was the answer. "I am Philip.

I was in the Navy, and I have two brothers still alive," and he gave the names correctly.

"But I did not know you," Admiral Moore went on. "Why have you come to me?"

"Because you knew Sir Cooper Key. He is here."

"When did you pass out?"

"About a year and a half ago."

The Admiral fancied vaguely he had heard of my husband's death *five* years previously, and wrote to a mutual friend to inquire. The friend also thought it had been about five years; but the year and a half given by the communicator from the "other side" was correct—putting any suggestion of telepathy or the subconscious mind out of court again.

I had at this time a near relative who wished to verify for herself the experiences of which I spoke. I was anxious she should have something of a convincing nature, so previously to her projected visit I asked my husband to recall some incident that would satisfy her with regard to his identity.

I asked him to give the pet name by which he had called her. After some hesitation he said he could not quite get it, but it was a short name with three letters in it. This was correct, and he made a further attempt which was almost successful, and interesting as being evidently a genuine effort of memory.

He told me that as they leave the physical brain to disintegrate with the body, it is uncertain how much they can take over with them of facts stored in the memory. There is also to be considered the readjustment of the vehicle of consciousness necessary before

they can tune in to physical conditions; for us on this plane to attempt to arbitrate upon how much or what they ought to remember when returning to communicate, is probably a display of ignorance on our part.

My relation obtained the evidence that certainly convinced her at the time, and she said afterwards had robbed her of the fear of death for good and all.

My husband gave his name and asked if she remembered a ring he had given her many years ago. She was nervous and hesitated; then with an effort of memory asked:

"Do you mean the silver ring you gave me in Bermuda when I was twelve years old?"

"Yes," he replied, "with the crown on it."

She gasped with astonishment. The ring referred to was of silver beaten out of a shilling by the ship's armourer in the days when my father had been C. in C. on the North American Station, leaving the pattern of laurel leaves round it and the crown in the centre.

"And you lost it," he went on, "but knew when you lost it."

It seemed she had allowed it to be put into a Christmas pudding and had never seen it again.

Trivial—but it went home!

I have heard many languages spoken in Mrs. Wriedt's séance-room; one of special interest, both sides of the conversation being carried on in Hindustani.

A man known to me, and his wife, had lately

returned from India, where he had held an official position, and the latter came with me to a sitting with Mrs. Wriedt at which about ten persons were present.

A native landowner known to her and her husband in India spoke in—to me—a strange language. She was touched by the trumpet, showing the communication was for her; someone suggested she should answer the speaker in Hindustani. This let loose the flow of his eloquence; a torrent of words in a strange tongue was the result, some of which was evidently intelligible to her. The only syllables I could disentangle from the riot of speech were "Bala Khan," which I heard distinctly, and was repeated when he finished up at the top of the scale in a sort of screech which I was told was very characteristic.

Then Colonel Johnson, who was present, and had himself spent a great part of his life in India, said:

"Tum Hindustani bolta?"—I think I have got it right; the other voice shot out: "Beshakk!"—the question being: "Do you speak Hindustani?" and the answer: "Of course!"

"Dr. Sharp," who controls Mrs. Wriedt's séances from the other side, then came to explain that the old man, Bala Khan, was trying to say how much he loved the family, and added:

"You have a daughter."

She said yes, and the voice then, so strong and powerful, it could have been heard easily throughout the house, went on:

"The old man was saying that he was living in the glory of God."

"Has he forgiven the man who sent him across?"

"That man was innocent," was the reply.

"Then who was guilty?"

"He will tell you that himself," and later on at another sitting he came again and described the conditions of his own murder, exonerating the relative who had been suspected of it.

On one occasion after a sitting, when the light was turned up, the trumpet that a moment before had been on the floor in the centre of the circle, was hanging by its thin end to the ceiling of the very high room; it hung there sufficiently long for everyone to see it. Then, as the ether was thrown into movement by the sudden influx of light, it fell and hit one of the party a really sharp blow on the shoulder—sharp enough to convince him it could not be put down to his subconscious mind!

One evening I was sitting alone with a reading-lamp at my left shoulder, when quite suddenly a shadow passed between me and the printed page. It was so unlike an ordinary flicker of the electric current that it caught my attention. There seemed to be something more deliberate about it as though a bat or bird had passed between me and the light. But discovering nothing to account for it, I resumed reading and thought no more about it.

The following day I was lunching with friends and unexpectedly to me Admiral Usborne Moore—whom I had met and made friends with after his

first letter to me—was one of the guests. On meeting me he exclaimed:

"I did not know I was to meet you, but apparently the Lady of the Lamp, who I suppose was Miss Nightingale, did, for I was at Mrs. Wriedt's this morning and she asked me to give you a message. It conveys nothing to me but you may be able to understand it.

"I was to tell you it was she who threw the shadow across your book last night."

There we have another instance of a communication that cannot be explained by the subconscious mind.

At another time the Admiral, before witnesses who can confirm the circumstances, greeted me with:

"Have you a son in the Dardanelles?"

I hesitated.

"I thought you told me your son was fighting in Egypt," he went on, "but at a séance this morning your husband came through and asked me to tell you not to be anxious about your son in the Dardanelles, as he and others were looking after him."

My son had been fighting in Egypt, but two days previously I had received the news of his appointment as A.D.C. to General Sir William Birdwood in the Dardanelles, with whom he served afterwards in France until he finally rejoined his regiment in India.

There seems to be a tendency on the part of newcomers into investigation of this subject to ignore the good evidence and batten on the bad!

Many a time have I been to séances and in subsequent discussion the novice—and sometimes some of those one might have expected to have learnt better through experience—will pass over the really sound evidence put before them and emphasize the weak spots, where, often owing to our own ignorance or misapprehension, some small but inexplicable error may have been made. A sitter will complain—quite reasonably—when his father's name has been given as William when it should have been John, but pass over without comment a string of familiar names his neighbour may have received that put the genuineness of the message beyond question.

If *why* is asked in the first place, why not with equal insistence in the second? Not only should the lesser in weight and quantity not be allowed to swallow the greater merely because it is adverse, but the smallest bit of evidence *for*—so long as it *be* evidence—should carry just as much weight when explaining-away begins as the other. Quality is of even more importance in this direction than quantity.

CHAPTER NINE

I HAVE heard four voices speaking simultaneously in Mrs. Wriedt's séance-room; one at my ear, purporting to be my husband in a voice audible to everyone present, speaking apparently from the air about my own private affairs, while one at the further side of the circle was speaking in Dutch. At various times thirteen or fourteen different languages have been spoken; Mrs. Wriedt is familiar with no language except her own. These languages have included Bréton-French—a very distinctive *patois*—Hindustani, Croatian, Serbian, Maltese, modern Greek, besides the more ordinary French, German, Swedish and others. There was no fumbling among the sitters for a response; in every case the communicator directly addressed the *one* person in the circle without any hesitation who understood the language spoken. This in itself is evidential. On occasions when it was an unusual tongue such as Serbian or Croatian there would be present only one person who understood it, and there might be great difficulty in getting through more than a word or so; but sufficient for recognition by the sitter for whom it was intended. "Dr. Sharp," the control, would then speak and throw light on the situation. With no direct voice medium have I ever heard so

many strange and unusual languages articulated in the séance-room.

Sceptics are apt to accuse psychical investigators of credulity and easy acceptance of so-called physical phenomena. It becomes wearying after a time to be assured by some quite new inquirer that he—or she—is "very hard to convince." The implication is not flattering! "It's all very well for *you*," the speaker seems to imply, "but *I* require some really sound evidence before I can accept the phenomenon as genuine!" May I say we have *all* been hard to convince; all of us who are serious thinkers have required "sound" evidence before accepting the results. But the fact of the phenomena once established it is not to be supposed that every case of a similar phenomenon is to be met with incredulity and rejected until it has been sifted to the dregs. Life is too short for such procedure. We *know* the thing to be possible.

Let us suppose that in the early days of the electric telegraph a message might be received from a distance in what seemed to the recipient an incredibly short space of time. He might refuse to accept the statement without verification, pay a visit to the Post Office, interrogate the postmaster, inspect the instrument, cross-examine the operator and become at last convinced of the genuineness of the message. He may even repeat this process half a dozen times before being finally satisfied.

But is he, every time he receives a telegram, to go through the whole performance for the rest of his

life?—And if he omits to do so is he necessarily to be considered credulous if on some occasion a faked telegram should take him in?

In recording instances within my own experience, of communication with those who have "gone before" I am selecting so far as possible those that seem free from any possibility of suspicion of owing their origin to the subconscious mind or thought-reading on the part of the medium. Phenomena that do come under this suspicion lose their interest from the psychical point of view and become purely psychological. They cast no light—nor doubt—upon the vast number of instances that appear to be quite independent of any such agency.

Mr. Hereward Carrington, in his "Story of Psychic Science," observes with regard to the tendency to fall back on the subconscious mind in the search for explanations:

"The structure of mechanistic science is based upon a certain set of observed phenomena—entirely ignoring another whole set of phenomena (psychic) which cannot be dovetailed into their system——" and may I suggest with all respect that when it comes to some of the explanations of psychic phenomena seriously offered by the mechanist, the credulity does not lie on the side of the psychic researcher!

When my father's time as C. in C. on the North American Station came to an end, he was recalled with some urgency to England with Captain Fisher, as he was then, to take command of an emergency fleet specially mobilized, owing to what was

at the time called the Russian "scare"—though of what the particular scare was about I have no recollection. Whatever it was, it came to nothing; fortunately the situation was cleared up and the fleet waiting for orders at Weymouth was eventually demobilized as rapidly as it had been called into being.

In Mrs. Wriedt's séance-room on one occasion I was talking to my father, who had passed over more than five-and-twenty years previously, and for some reason I referred to this incident—mainly, I think, as a small test of memory; but on this occasion I was hoist by my own petard!

"Do you remember," I asked, "taking command of the emergency fleet assembled at Weymouth at the time of the Russian 'scare' in 1879?"

"Of course I do," he answered instantly, "but it was in '78 not '79."

My memory was at fault, not his! He was perfectly correct, as I found out afterwards. In 1914, when the sitting took place, very few even among naval men would have remembered the Russian "scare," which came to nothing, of all those years ago—much less Mrs. Wriedt; but the voice, as objective as yours or mine, corrected me without a moment's hesitation.

When in Malta as a child, among the friends of my parents I can remember a Captain and Mrs. Morant; the latter was specially impressed on my mind owing to the fact that she gave me my first paint-box—a tin box with real water-colours! very different from the pale substitute generally con-

sidered good enough for the early dabbler! I had entirely lost sight of them and had never seen or heard of them since those days of childhood.

At the sitting at which my father first spoke, he was followed by a voice giving the name "Sophie."

"I am sorry," I replied, "I never knew anyone called Sophie."

"Yes, you did—you knew me," was the answer.

"Can you give me your other name—your surname?" and when the name Morant was given I remembered and placed the speaker.

"Your father brought me to speak to you. Do you remember me?"

"Of course I do!" I exclaimed. "You gave me my first paint-box when we were in Malta. But I didn't know your name was Sophie."

"You probably never heard it. We were friends of your father and mother, and we still are friends over here."

"Have you been over there long?"

"About two years. My husband is still in earth life."

On consulting a book of reference after the sitting, I found the Christian name of the speaker had been Sophia, that she had passed over about two years previously and that her husband was still alive.

On another occasion the sitter next to me, whom I knew, was the mother of a young lieutenant in the Navy, who had been killed a short time previously in the War. Some engravings of some value had been missing since his death, and as he had been very interested in them his mother was anxious to trace them.

When a voice "came through" giving his name, she explained how they had searched for them everywhere in vain, both in their country and London homes, but the engravings seemed to have entirely disappeared.

He remembered them perfectly, said he had sent them to be framed, and told her to write to a well-known firm in Portsmouth, giving the name quite clearly, and from whom he felt sure she would get the necessary information.

His mother wrote to me later as she thought I should be interested in the subsequent development.

She had written to the firm in question asking if they could tell her anything of the missing engravings.

The reply was that they remembered them perfectly, but they were no longer in their possession; they had been framed, packed in a case and despatched to their country house in Oxfordshire.

On receipt of this information another search had been carried out in the house, and finally the missing engravings were discovered inside an unopened packing-case lying among some lumber in an attic. As often happened during the economical days of the War, an *old* packing-case had been used, which had put the searchers off the scent in the first instance, and they had not taken the trouble to open it. It is difficult in such a case to see where the subconscious mind could have come in, without stretching the point beyond the bounds of probability.

During the years Mrs. Wriedt was in England the number of my sittings with her must have run cer-

tainly into three figures, and I think I may say I could count the blanks upon the fingers of one hand. Her kind-heartedness toward those who mourned was never-failing; she would use her gift for them freely and with a generosity that often left her tired and spent. On the rare occasions when there were no results she refused to take a fee, saying that "if you pay for a pair of boots you have the right to expect to get the boots!" and that if she gave nothing she would take nothing.

Shortly after one of Mrs. Wriedt's visits to England, a newspaper was sent to me anonymously from America. It contained an article headed "Exposure of Mrs. Wriedt."

The main indictment was that after one of her sittings the writer had detected drops of water adhering to the inner sides of the trumpet, which obviously suggested the condensation of human breath, with the implication that Mrs. Wriedt had been herself speaking through it.

As it was her invariable custom to hold the trumpet under the cold water tap between each sitting—an office I had often performed for her—the "exposure" made no more impression upon me than many other "exposures" of the same description, which I hope to consider in a later chapter.

The evidence for survival of personality bearing the hallmark of characteristics, memory, temperament and so on was given me in such abundance through the channel of Etta Wriedt's mediumship that it is impossible to record more than a mere

fraction, and the repetition of instance after instance is apt to become wearisome. It is also a fact that nothing will ever bring conviction with the force of first-hand experience. It is possible to accept what you hear, to acknowledge the probability, the logic, the *truth* itself on the evidence of others, and to be to that extent convinced. But to believe intellectually is not to realize, and realization in its full sense comes only with personal experience, an iota of which is of more value than all the arguments in the world.

And it is through the little everyday references to life, the trivial happenings, that conviction comes.

My husband's grandfather, on his mother's side, Sir John Tyrell, came to speak to me at a séance; I had never known him in earth life and it greatly surprised me that he should wish to communicate. He had been very autocratic in earth life; a few years ago his family place was bought by Mr. Henry Ford, to be near his works at Dagenham, and had the sale taken place before my interview, I have no doubt he would have had something to say on the subject!

He spoke on several matters not only connected with the family, but gave some information about his own development since passing over. He also made one or two allusions to matters I was not clear about.

At my next sitting, his daughter, my husband's mother, came through to explain, and solved some confusion I felt as to her identity by describing herself as the "Dowager;" she referred in detail to family dissensions and their consequences, about which the medium could have known nothing, and

of which I knew very little, as it had all happened before I married into the family.

No subconscious mind could be reasonably held accountable for such results, nor for the strong objective voices audible to everyone present.

At one time I had very excellent results with Mrs. Roberts Johnson. Through her mediumship many of my friends became convinced of survival. Of late years the voice of her control has appeared to be located so near the throat of the medium herself that it became extremely difficult to persuade newcomers of the genuineness of the phenomenon. But I have heard the voice travelling to and fro on presumably an ectoplasmic cord or rod from the trumpet to Mrs. Johnson's throat in the manner of a flame running up and down a thread of smoke, and have also heard her singing while voices were issuing from the trumpet.

I have had, and have heard others receive, convincing proof of survival through Mr. Maskel, who is totally blind; and have sat with Mr. Sloan, through whom Mr. Arthur Findlay obtained his evidence, and who on one occasion covered my hand with ectoplasm—and very unpleasant it was! Cobwebs, cold, made of silk, slimy, is the only way in which I can describe it, which clung to my fingers and refused to be removed until they dissolved naturally and melted away.

The Misses Moore's mediumship has been dealt with *in extenso* by the Rev. V. Duncan in his book "Proof;" a clear and most convincing record to put into the

hands of the new inquirer. Through the Misses Moore, Lord Fisher came to me. As Fisher had been the maiden name of one of the sitters, a friend of mine, she very naturally claimed the speaker as her father. But the voice repudiated the relationship, refusing to be turned aside, and finally I realized it was "Jack Fisher" who was addressing me. He called me by my name and reminded me that the last time we had met he had kissed me in the middle of Piccadilly! Quite true, and not unnatural as he had known me from the age of four, but very unlikely to have been known to the mediums!

I have sat with frauds in the séance-room; an unpleasant experience from every point of view.

There was a man off Baker Street who professed to produce the direct voice, whom I visited anonymously on a voyage of exploration. He was very anxious I should write my name in his visitors' book before the sitting, which I firmly refused to do. He was equally anxious to have my money. There were five sitters, and the first point that aroused my suspicion was the thick black cloth with which the trumpet was swathed *outside*. It naturally added considerably to the weight, an important and undesirable factor in its manipulation by the unseen operators, and the only possible object would be to prevent any glint of reflected light that might help the sitters to locate it, should there be a leakage of light in the room or reflection from a luminous wrist-watch.

Secondly, the trumpet appeared to be worked as

though from the hub of a wheel, and a narrow li. of luminous paint on the *inside* of the rim showed up the face of the sitter when turned in the right direction; no doubt to enable the medium to locate each individual and run no risk of an accidental blow ni the face or eye! The messages were all in the medium's voice—though that is no evidence either way—and were of the "if you are good you will be happy" type that conveniently fits everybody.

A few weeks later he was definitely found out and "warned off" for good and all.

Probably the movement will never be free from attempts at fraud—what movement is? But fortunately it is much more difficult to "get away with it" than it was at one time. Science has furnished us with further devices for the detection of imposture, and the public is more versed in what to look for. But in spite of any advance we should bear in mind our still abysmal ignorance of the laws governing the forces with which we are dealing, and the whole subject suffers from the tendency of fools to step in where angels fear to tread.

Those who seek will always find—eventually, but the seeking must not be of the superficial sort that considers a single visit sufficient basis upon which to build theories, or proclaim incredulity. Many professed searchers after fact seem more anxious to prove they are right and the rest of the world wrong than really to find the truth—which may be human, but does not add much to the world's store of knowledge.

CHAPTER TEN

DURING the years of the War, owing perhaps to the state of tension and nervous strain prevalent on all sides, there was evidence of a more general response to psychic influences than in normal times; which does not for a moment indicate that the influences were not genuine; merely, that the instruments were more ready to respond to them. I will repeat my earlier parallel: A fiddle-string stretched to its greatest capacity will produce a higher and more piercing note than when slack. It may be that the human organism when keyed up to something beyond normal, may be capable of responding to more subtle wave-lengths on the mental plane than in ordinary conditions.

There is an apt illustration of this.

Suppose that the consciousness of the child newly-born into this world may bring with it a dim recollection of worlds from which it has come, the notes of the celestial flutes still echoing in its ears. As it advances through the years it becomes gradually and inevitably tuned in to the more insistent vibrations of matter and the things of earth; the beating of the big drum of material environment may drown the delicate notes of the flute and the child in maturer years lose touch with them. But if for any reason

the beating of the drum be muffled or stilled, the soft notes of the flute are heard again—never having really ceased, going on all the time, although the beating of the drum may have temporarily smothered them.

I was sitting on one occasion with a friend, Miss Tweedy, who has since married but was quite a young girl at the time. We sat at a small table round which were ranged the letters of the alphabet, and messages were spelt out sometimes slowly and laboriously, sometimes very rapidly by means of a glass "pointer" upon which we each placed a finger.

A name was given, spelt out slowly, of which neither of us knew anything.

"Are you for me?" I asked.

"Yes—I want you to send a message to my wife," was the answer.

"But I don't know your wife. Have you ever met either of us?" meaning my companion or myself. The answer was in the negative.

"Then how am I to give the message? Can you tell me her address?"

He then gave his name in full with the prefix of Captain, said he had been killed in France about three weeks previously and was most anxious to let his wife know "they were all happy with Bessie."

He then gave an address in the North of London of which I had never heard, and said I should find his wife there.

So, without much hope of any result, I wrote a

postcard worded in such a manner that should it be returned through the dead letter office I should run no risk of arousing suspicion with regard to my sanity, and awaited events.

After an interval of about a week I received a card in answer. With the exception of the number, *the address was correct!* I had traced his wife solely through the information given by the unseen communicator.

His sister-in-law answered my card, saying his wife was out of London but she would forward my communication to her. I followed it up with the sister-in-law and learnt that she also had lost her husband a few weeks previously—the two brothers having been killed within a day or two of each other. The sisters-in-law were living together while their husbands were in France; but she did not know who "Bessie" was.

No more did I! So it looked as though it must be left at that. I had found the address and given the message.

However, we arranged to meet. She was interested and wanted to hear further details. After a short conversation she admitted incidentally that Bessie had been her husband's mother's name!

On asking why she had not accepted the name in the first instance she objected that he would not have referred to his mother by her Christian name.

But why not? How do we know how they may refer to one another, nor how far earth relationships and customs may stand in other conditions? There

would have been a purpose in the mention of the name which was recognizable, whereas the general term "mother" would have conveyed nothing in the shape of evidence.

Having been entrusted with a message given in circumstances which appeared to give it the stamp of truth, from one who was unable to give it himself, I wrote to the wife giving her merely an accurate account of the occurrence; but I received no reply! Each one to his taste, but I think I would take a risk—even to my own soul's safety!—on the off-chance of the message being genuine rather than turn a deaf ear to such an appeal from a "dead" husband.

Another experience with no "professional" medium present was striking in that there would seem to be no flaw in the chain of evidence.

I was dining with two friends—Miss Julia Smith, whose psychic gifts and writings under the pseudonym of "Pax" are well-known; and the late Mrs. Kelway Bamber, author of "Claude's Book" and sequels received "inspirationally" from her son in the other life.

After dinner it was suggested we should lower the lights and see if anything interesting transpired.

This is what came—imparted to me by them jointly, the one apparently seeing clairvoyantly; the other hearing through clairaudience.

There was a man, they told me, standing behind my chair, who looked like Mephistopheles. This was not such a shock as might be supposed—and

our enemies would say no less than was to be expected! I had never met Mephistopheles, but I felt convinced he would do nothing so crude as to come dressed for the part, so I merely asked for further enlightenment.

They went on to say he was a foreigner, and as I did not consider any country entitled to regard the Prince of Darkness as a *foreigner*, I still awaited further developments.

The next words brought me sharply to attention.

He was a foreigner, they repeated, connected with music. He came from Milan. They got grand opera with him.

Above my head there was an M outlined in gold.

Memory returned with a rush, and when it was added that he wished to thank me for a service I had done him in the Law Courts, I knew precisely who "Mephistopheles" was!

Years previously, before I had become acquainted either with Mrs. Kelway Bamber or Miss Julia Smith, when my husband and I were living in the New Forest, an Italian opera-singer called Mhanes, with an invalid friend, had taken rooms in our village. Before I married, while I was in the schoolroom, I had devoted my chief aims in life and interest to music, and as opportunities for indulging any particular taste are not always forthcoming in the country, I naturally jumped at the chance when it offered.

So Signor Mhanes often dined with us, and in the evenings we played and sang, mostly from *Faust*, an

opera of which my husband was very fond, sometimes until one or two o'clock in the morning. For him to have reappeared in the garb of Mephistopheles was quite intelligible, and certainly neither of my friends could have had any idea of the explanation.

In those far-back days Signor Mhanes had known the composer, Claude Trevor, who came occasionally to stay with him and his friend in the village and with whom I also became acquainted.

When eventually Signor Mhanes' companion died, leaving to him whatever property he was possessed of, the will was disputed, and it was greatly owing to the evidence given in the law court by my husband and myself that his rights were vindicated and the will made to stand. This of course explained the message clairaudiently heard.

I admitted the correctness of my friends' "reading," but that was all. I had lost sight of Signor Mhanes ever since he had left the village over five-and-twenty years previously, and did not even know if he were alive or dead. Nor had I heard of Mr. Claude Trevor since Mhanes had won his case in court. I had to leave it at that.

But *within a week* of this sitting I received the following letter, forwarded through the office of *Light* and dated 1921:—

17 Lung Arno Torrigiani,
Florence.

"Dear Mrs. de Crespigny,

"I do not for one moment imagine you will

remember me, though I do you very well and the kind hospitality you and your husband extended to me during a visit of my dear friend Signor Luigi Mhanes to you both in the New Forest many, many years ago. I have so often seen your name in the pages of *Light* that I have often been tempted to write to you and speak of the constant companion of my life for thirty-four years, and who passed away in 1917, but I have up to now been deterred from doing so thinking it might bother you. However if such is now the case I can only ask you to forgive my doing so. During our long comradeship he was constantly used to speak of you and your husband so warmly, and your kind help when he was fighting a lawsuit and you both appeared for him.—" followed by a few remarks not relevant, and signed

"CLAUDE TREVOR."

It would surely be difficult to pick a hole in that bit of evidence of an agent beyond the normal at work?

There were the two witnesses besides myself to confirm the account of what took place, neither of them having the slightest knowledge of the original circumstances.

During all those years I had heard no word of Signor Mhanes, nor did I know of his death.

Finally the letter, written by a man who could not by any means have known of the sitting and the "reading" given by the two ladies, and received by

me within a day or two after that event, following a silence of more than twenty-five years.

Under what urge I wonder was the letter sent so opportunely!

The well-known medium, Mrs. Eileen Garrett, as she would herself admit, owes much of the fine quality of her mediumship to-day to the painstaking and intelligent training of Mrs. Kelway Bamber, who gave up a long period of time to sitting patiently, not only for the development of Mrs. Garrett, but also of her control "Uvani."

Mrs. Bamber believed the super-sensitivity of the medium in trance could be greatly modified, and working to this end, she impressed upon the Arab guide the necessity for calm imperturbability in spite of noise or interruption.

I was present on some of these occasions; with "Uvani" in control the trance state of the medium remained undisturbed by such incidents as the banging of doors or the sudden intrusion of visitors. It is possibly due to this rigorous training that Mrs. Garrett has faced so successfully the tests of a scientific and psycho-analytical nature lately applied to her mediumship with such invaluable results, the trance condition having become so stabilized that the usual super-sensitivity has not interfered with the experiments.

I have seen very remarkable results from circles similar to my sitting with my two friends—private circles with no "professional" medium present, the phenomena being obtained through contributions

from all the sitters, or from one in particular. These circles, in my opinion, lead to more satisfactory results than a strictly "home" circle where all the sitters are familiar with each other's private affairs and those of the family to which they mutually belong, besides the possibility of being imbued with the same mental bias; evidence in these circumstances, free from the suspicion of having come from the unconscious influence of some mind present, is difficult to obtain.

The trouble in establishing such a circle is to find the requisite number of sitters who may be counted upon to attend without fail, which is not so easy to do as it sounds. It entails patience, perseverance, enthusiasm and a certain amount of self-denial, and behind those qualities a sense of the deep importance and value of reliable results. The attitude of mind that will allow trivial circumstances to intervene and prevent a regular attendance is not likely to be a valuable addition to any circle. The excuse "I have married a wife and therefore I cannot come" is no more justifiable to-day than it was in days of old, and nowadays a tea-party is often good enough as a plea for absence. I am sometimes told by persons who think they are earnest followers of the subject: "You know I have given up everything for spiritualism!" and I long to ask what exactly they *have* given up! And unless you *give* something you have no right to expect to *get*. To get something for nothing is against the laws of God and man.

If the sitters are in earnest—real earnest, honestly

in search of the truth—nothing short of some inevitable call of duty will be allowed to interfere with regular attendance.

For about eight years I sat in such a circle. It was composed of Captain and Mrs. Henshaw Russell of 4 Leinster Gardens, Colonel E. R. Johnson and myself. We sat alternately at each other's houses, and never missed the meeting except on account of illness or an absolutely unavoidable call elsewhere; no one besides ourselves was ever admitted.

We obtained many remarkable results, some of which in the nature of prophecy could not be attributed to anyone's subconscious mind. There was much that, although interesting, we had to take on trust and accept with a certain amount of caution. There was a proposition which we definitely discarded. But we were given information that threw a rational complexion upon vexed questions and that came either in the form of symbols or allegory, but were never of a nature to save us the trouble of thinking for ourselves. We might be given a clue, or stimulus, but the unravelling of the problem was left to us for final solution.

We were all interested in theosophy and other forms of Eastern philosophy, and much of the instruction received was in theosophical terms, and referred to the theories and arguments of that line of thought. There was not a great deal that could not have been learnt through the literature, but it was differently expressed, confirming or elucidating matters to be found in the Hermetic Doctrine, the

use and development of the vital centres—the chakras—and the constitution of the various bodies of man; the auras and the inner meaning of some of the ancient Egyptian ritual.

I have already referred to some information given to our circle one day by a "teacher" from the other world. He spoke of "bringing light to a dead planet."

I asked what was meant by that.

"Certain heavenly bodies," he answered, "have their appointed period of activity and then become 'dead'; that is to say cease to have any power of reaction to outside stimuli."

"Like the moon?" I suggested. "Although the moon is not really dead matter or, I suppose, it would not react to light and give back a reflection."

"The whole universe," he went on, spelling out the words so rapidly we could hardly follow, "as the Easterns have always maintained, is in an alternate condition of *maya* and *prelaya*—a period of rest followed by renewed activity. When we wish to reclaim the dead matter of a planet—to bring it to life again as one might say—we direct upon it rays of light which stimulate the physical particles into life again."

"Light from our sun?" a sitter asked.

"No. Rays of a different order brought from far distant stars. If I were to try to explain it to you, you would not understand at present."

Might not this have been a dim foreshadowing of the Cosmic rays discovered by Professor Millikan about ten years later? Rays, not from our sun, but

from the vast distances of interstellar space, bombarding our earth's surface day and night, and replenishing the wastage through radiation, of the earth's crust; in the words of one of our scientists, "winding up the universe as fast as it runs down," and incidentally putting new meaning into the opening phrase of Genesis "Let there be light!"

Is it not also true that the dark and apparently empty patches seen in space and hitherto called "pockets" are now suspected to be due to the intervention of dark celestial bodies—in the condition described as *maya*?

Science is indeed a magnificent poem, and the poet perhaps more of a scientist than he is aware. Whether man studies in God's laboratory or His garden, as Wordsworth has it, the message comes out much the same in the end.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE methods of communicating through ouija-boards, planchette and other instruments of the same variety might be regarded as a bridge between physical and mental mediumship. This would include the two forms of automatic writing, physical in that the manipulation of any sort of matter seems to require the use of the connecting link of a material nature; mental, in so far as the brain of the medium is also called into requisition as an aid in setting up conditions necessary for communication; to what extent and upon what occasion the latter is used seems to depend upon the decision of the unseen operators, and, it may be supposed, the capacity of the medium.

In automatic writing, no less than in the use of the ouija-board, the motive force immediately behind the operation may be essentially of an inspirational nature. In this case anything of an ectoplasmic origin would be dispensed with, the directing force acting directly upon the medium's brain, which in its turn conveys the necessary message to the arm and hand in the ordinary normal manner. This more delicate expression of the forces at work seems to connect the phenomenon with the mental side rather than the physical, whereas in automatic writing the

reverse would be the case. It has, however, the drawback of arousing in the medium a suspicion of the reliability of the results; as the words to be registered are formed in the brain and therefore known to that brain before they find expression through the hand, the medium is not unnaturally led to imagine they "come out of her own head"!

In the case of purely "automatic" writing the unseen operator manipulates directly the hand of the writer and, so far as we know, for this a certain amount of ectoplasm must be drawn upon in order to make contact. This would bring the phenomenon more strictly under the heading of physical, and in my experience—I have no desire to dogmatize—communications are not generally on so high a level as those obtained through "inspirational" methods.

We hear a good deal, from our opponents, of mental unbalance in connexion with the practice of spiritualism and psychic research. We try to pin the matters of these statements down to verifiable facts, to find generally they are lost in a maze of confusion and inaccuracy. Our lunatic asylums are *not* filled with spiritualists; there are far more religious maniacs and sex maniacs to be found in them than ever will be found in spiritualism, not to mention other sources of lunacy!

But if there is a danger in "dabbling" in psychic matters on the part of the ignorant and the ill-balanced, in my opinion it would be more likely to lie at the door of automatic writing than at any other.

It is the commonest form of mediumship and the easiest come by. With care and training it can be developed into a very perfect channel; but to allow either brain or hand to be lightly used without that care and training is to step in where angels fear to tread. The very fact that perfect passivity is a necessary essential to results, should speak for itself. A door is opened through which anyone can walk, and as in the case of doors in this world, it is easy enough to allow a person to walk in, but may be a very different affair when it comes to persuading him to walk out!

My own recommendation to those who find themselves becoming obsessed by the desire to write automatically in season and out of season is—cut it off altogether, at all events for a time; it would be advisable to nip a desire for drink in the bud, or addiction to drugs, and the uncontrolled self-indulgence of writing automatically whenever the urge is felt is equally weak-minded and may be as pernicious. In other forms of communications such as trance, direct voice or materialization, the risks are run by the medium, rarely by the sitters, and the former have learnt—if they are wise—how to minimize those risks, and guard the sitting from adverse influences.

In a right and proper use of spiritualism there is nothing but good; but in other circumstances it is playing with fire—or worse still, with unknown forces not understood and often but only half-believed in.

Private and home circles may have their advantages as a method of communication, but they also have their inherent drawbacks. The Angel with the flaming sword again interfering to prevent man from obtaining access too easily to knowledge, for the right use of which he requires long years of training and preparation. Just as he has had to earn his right to every stage of scientific advance by the overcoming of apparently insurmountable obstacles, so is his path toward the final solution of the greatest problem of all strewn with difficulties—Aunt Sallys, many of them, erected by his own intellect and which he is therefore all the more reluctant to demolish!

After a long period of close and intimate contact between members of a "home" circle, the harmonious relations obtained may possibly act not only beneficently as a perfected channel between the two planes of existence—as it undoubtedly does—but may also incidentally develop any powers of telepathic intercourse latent in the sitters, and so frustrate the evidential value of the communications.

Harmony, so far as we can judge by the evidence available, is an appreciable adjunct to successful telepathic results; in a family circle the possibility of telepathic interference would be greatly increased, and so decrease the value of the results.

Communications obtained through a strange medium, entirely ignorant of even the name of the sitter, is more likely to bring conviction to the fresh inquirer than circumstances tainted with the suspicion that the evidence obtained might be due to a

knowledge of family history or to memories stored in the subconscious minds of relatives forming the circle.

The fact is that we all look for the definite, clear-cut evidence that will settle the question for us once and for all! But in every step in advance in knowledge and discovery since it dawned upon man's brain how to fashion tools out of flints, we have had to dig and to probe, to fail and try again, before the desired end is reached. A fresh rung attained on the ladder of human endeavour may cost and often has cost not only labour and sacrifice but life itself to the pioneers who have dared all in the struggle.

From the dawn of the race to the iron ships, the steam engine, the miracles of the surgeon's knife, of the harnessed electric current, the wonders of air and ether, all of which are our heritage to-day, man has been obliged to carve the way for himself; Heaven may have indicated the track but man has had to do the blazing. Help from higher Powers may have been available when sought, but we have had to solve our own riddles.

And to this—the greatest riddle of them all—are we to get the answer ready-made?

Are we to expect the solution of the most vital question in the whole world, compared with which the discoveries of all the ages melt into nothingness—does man survive?—handed out to us the first time we knock at the door?

Moreover—are we to get it for nothing?—as many seem to expect. Are our mediums to work and train

and live lives of self-denial for no material reward while we reap the fruits of their labours?

There is nothing necessarily *spiritual* about communicating with friends merely because they are divided from us by the narrow stream of death. Holy influences such as love and gratitude may prevail in the séance-room; but they may also prevail in the hospital, and we do not consider that a sufficient reason for not paying our dues! In these communications we are using a telephone and a super-sensitive instrument at that! But that is by the way!

In the past there have been fine examples of inspirational writing, quite apart from the traditional sources of many of the sacred books of all ages and nations. "Spirit Teachings," given through the hand of Stainton Moses and well-known to all interested in the subject, is a fine example and has been exhaustively dealt with by A. W. Trethewy in his book, "The Controls of Stainton Moses."

At the present time we have Mrs. Hester Dowden, who has a world-wide reputation; and Miss Geraldine Cummins, who, as the transcriber of "The Scripts of Cleophas," "Paul in Athens," "The Road to Immortality," of which Frederick Myers is believed to be the instigator, and "The Great Days of Ephesus," published November 1933, may well claim place in the front rank of modern inspirational writers.

But, to the uninitiated, there is danger in playing with fire, with forces of which we understand but

little, and I would recommend would-be automatic scribes in their own interests to leave the practice to the past-masters of the art, *unless* they are prepared to devote both time and trouble to the requisite training. As in the case of every other branch of psychic research work, the quality and reliability of this particular form of phenomenon among those really qualified to practise it has risen to a high level, much to the advantage of spiritualism in general. The whole subject has suffered, more definitely than any other line of investigation from the uninformed and irresponsible claimants to abnormal powers, whose "guides" profess to descend from the highest spheres for the purpose apparently of expressing themselves in pious platitudes, poetical effusions of the doggerel variety, or instruction in science of a nature to make the entire Royal Society turn in its grave—had it arrived there—while the various scribes, honest, earnest and sincere as they may be, overlook the fact that they themselves are entirely incapable of adjudicating on the merits or demerits of any communication dealing with subjects beyond the facts of ordinary life.

This, naturally, has done as much in the past to bring the whole subject into disrepute among those who *are* capable of judging, as the exposure of materializing mediums, and supplies the scoffer with a keen-edged weapon for further attack. I am not attempting to throw discredit upon all automatic writing—far from it—but merely suggest it is an easy way to "go off the rails" from more than one point

of view, unless approached with care and diffidence.

The attitude toward the subject of spiritualism in all its branches has so altered during the last ten or fifteen years that it is difficult to recapture the sense of hostility and ridicule which its adherents once had to face. A broader-minded and more tolerant generation has arisen—the tolerance that comes of indifference, perhaps, on the one hand; on the other, a true tolerance, brought about by the wonders of modern science which seem to make all things possible. It is certainly a generation less prone to scoff at other men's gods merely because they do not understand them.

Few of us are protected by armour so chink-proof that it cannot on occasion be penetrated by the subtle shafts of ridicule, and to be regarded with indulgent amusement by persons whose intelligence you know to be no less, and perhaps more, limited than your own is an unenviable position! When the same measure is meted out to the really great minds who have been brave enough to declare their faith before the world, the martyr's crown in very truth should be awaiting them!

With a natural but foolish reluctance to face such a situation, I once found myself in an inconvenient impasse of my own making. It was in the early days of my life in London. I wished to visit Mr. David Gow at the offices of *Light*, then situated with the headquarters of the London Spiritualists Alliance in St. Martin's Lane.

Unfortunately, when I got there I could not

remember the number, and having tried two numbers without success I turned, as we all do in distress, to the nearest policeman.

I have always more or less had the courage of my opinions, but I *did* shrink from the use of the word "spiritualist"—firstly because being new to the practical side of the subject, I was not sure how far the representative of the law might not feel justified in "taking me up" as a vagabond; secondly because, to be frank, I was reluctant to invoke the amusement I suspected would dawn under the shadow of the austere official helmet that stood for common sense *in excelsis*.

So, carefully avoiding the pernicious word, I asked if he could direct me to the Alliance Rooms.

"Yes, madam," he replied promptly, "last door down on the left, next to the Coliseum," and following the direction I found myself in a Lyons restaurant!

So I tried again—this time selecting a messenger-boy, and varied the form of the inquiry.

"Can you tell me the way to *Light* office?" I asked.

"Yes, mum," was the answer, "—last door up the street on the right—'lectric light office you mean!"

So I gave it up.

Soon after I came to London to live I met the well-known theosophist, A. P. Sinnett; in spite of his years upright, alert and with the bluest eyes I have ever seen. Our friendship lasted until his death in 1921. His personality was remarkable, his brain keen-edged, his flow of words and readiness of reply

and metaphor on the public platform amounting at times to the heights of oratory.

For nine years he had held the position of Editor to the *Pioneer* in India, relinquishing the post eventually because he and the proprietor of the paper did not see eye to eye, and Mr. Sinnett preferred to stand by his faith and his principles rather than his own interests. He had been a personal friend of Madame Blavatsky and told me many experiences in connexion with that lady's undoubted powers—many of which I have had confirmed by other reliable witnesses.

From him I learnt much—of practical value and otherwise—that greatly increased my wish to know more of the scientific side of both theosophy and spiritualism. A. P. Sinnett had no psychic gifts himself, beyond very considerable mesmeric power which, however, I never saw him put into practice. His books, of which there are many, deal with both subjects from the intellectual standpoint. The modern edition of his book "The Growth of a Soul" traces the journey of man's spirit through the mazes and tangles of evolution from the view-point of ancient Eastern philosophy, amplified by the discoveries of modern science, much of which is shown to have been foreshadowed in early sacred writings. Much of it no doubt must be placed under the head of conjecture, but conjecture built upon logical reasoning, affording glimpses of a cosmic scheme that seems to bring us a step nearer to an understanding of God's purposes with regard to man.

It was through Mr. Sinnett's introduction to Mr. Robert King that I first came in contact with psychometry, that wonderful gift that seems to lie in the borderland between the physical and super-physical world. Mr. King's reputation as a psychic is widespread, and as in psychometry the facts can be immediately and more directly verified than in the case of most other psychic or semi-psychic phenomena, it affords a valuable introduction of the subject to minds likely to be interested in the more scientific side.

I had already heard of the abnormal powers of Mr. King. Colonel Johnson, of whom I have already spoken, had related to me one incident personal to himself, having taken a small image carved in ivory to be psychometrized.

After holding it in his hand for a few moments Mr. King gave the following interpretation:

"I get a sensation of rushing water. The owner of this object must have been drowned—no—that is not so—the sensation I am getting is pleasant—water—rushing water—cold—nothing but water—and that's all!" he finished and handed it back.

The image was carved out of a whale's tooth!

That story is not of a personal experience; it was told to me and vouched for by Colonel Johnson, but it is such a fine example of psychometry that I give it here.

My own experiences with Mr. King have been no less remarkable. The following is one outstanding example of many.

For some years after my husband's death I wore his gold-linked watch-chain twisted twice round my wrist as a bracelet. On my first visit to Mr. King, who knew me so slightly at the time that he was not certain of how to pronounce my name, he asked me to give him something to hold to link him up with my conditions, and I handed him the watch-chain.

After a short pause he proceeded to give me every detail of my husband's last illness, with all his main characteristics, quite correctly; connected him with water and the sea; referred to his predilection for sport and games; even sketched in a little bit of his family history, and finished off with a description of our house in the New Forest where we had lived for over thirty years, and a remark about the happy atmosphere and close comradeship of our married life.

That was the first stage in the incident; I have drawn attention to the detail on account of what followed.

Some ten or twelve years after his death, the links of the chain which I continued to wear as a bracelet began to wear out. Over and over again I had to take it to be repaired, and finally I was warned it was unsafe to go on wearing it as it might fall off in the street and I should lose it altogether.

So in face of such possible disaster I handed it over to be put into the melting-pot and then to be remoulded in the form in which I now wear it, a solid gold bangle.

Not long after this, I visited Mr. Robert King,

whom I had not seen for a considerable time, and on being asked by him for something to hold, I handed him, without a word, the gold bangle, quite unrecognizable in its present form. Having worn it for so many years since it had first been psychometrized, I fancied the original "vibrations" or "associations" or whatever the right term may be, might have taken up the overtones of my own life and have somewhat confused the original.

But the first question Mr. King asked me was:

"Has this been in the San Francisco earthquake?"

"Good gracious, no!" I replied. "What makes you think so?"

"I am getting nothing from it but the feeling of a violent cataclysm! Fire—a terrible heat—it might be a volcano?"

And that was the only reaction he did get, and I had to give him something else I was wearing to establish the necessary link.

CHAPTER TWELVE

WHAT laws lie behind these psychometric phenomena?

Call it a super-sensitivity that reacts to stimuli of a more delicate nature than the normal. The super-sensitivity of—what?

None of the physical senses are called into action on these occasions; the psychometrist is obviously drawing on a centre of feeling, or it may be of intuition lying beyond the range of ordinary normal reactions.

In animals, the more highly developed senses of sight and smell may be called, from our point of view, super-sensitivity; but that applies obviously to the physical senses and! gives us no help toward a solution of the processes of psychometry.

The laws of association may offer a clue if it can be called as much. A word, a sound, a scent buried under the weight of years may suddenly re-awaken into consciousness some slumbering cell in the brain, a long-forgotten memory that, until the impingement of some particular wave-length, was to all intents and purposes dead. In a flash a scene is reconstructed of long ago and lives once more in all its vibrant colour as real to the mental perception as in the first moment of its creation in physical matter.

The fragment of a song—a whiff of red roses—and like a picture flashed on the screen, some incident long dead confronts the "mind's eye" with all the vivid detail of yesterday.

At Admiralty House in Bermuda the crew of the Admiral's galley were housed in a wooden structure built among the trees by the path that led at a steep gradient to the cove and garden below. One of the boat's crew—I never discovered which—played the flute, and on still nights the thread of some trivial little melody used to reach our ears up at the house. He was not an accomplished performer; a hesitating and tremulous uncertainty appeared to be the key-note of his inspiration; the music was of no account and could make no impression but of the most superficial.

And yet—all through the many decades that have intervened whenever the thin notes of a flute fall on my ear, in a flash the scene rises up, reconstructs itself and confronts me—the soft indigo of the tropical sky pierced with stars of a brilliance never seen in these more sober climes, the moon shining with a pale radiance upon the darkly outlined branches of trees, great clusters of "Indian pride," the blossoms of purple in the daylight a luminous grey under the moon; tangles of palm leaves thrusting spiky fingers upward toward the soft void of the night; the creamy bells on a flowering aloe—and all so still—so still and motionless it might have been a scene on a stage; the gentle lap-lap of the water in the cove below against the rocks—and that thin

little tune, repeating itself, meaning nothing, leading to nothing, yet with a power so indelibly to impress itself that upon one memory at least the record will remain for a lifetime!

Is that a sort of mental psychometry? And if so, may it not be as real as the other—and just as wonderful!

Frau Lottie Plaat is one of the most accomplished psychometrists in the world. From a tiny bit of rough stone held in her hand I have heard her rebuild a scene stimulated into being—heaven knew how!—and described by her as:

"—violent noise—fire—volumes of smoke——" then, just as the listeners were deciding on a volcano in eruption, she added, "—crowds of people——" and finally, "—water—water!" and from the owner of the fragment we learned that he had himself chipped it from the mole at Zebrugge after the action.

How was the history of that event recorded in the stone?—and will it through all the ages continue to radiate its life-history for those who have the psychometrical sense through which to pick it up?

From a spot of blood on a piece of blotting-paper sealed in an envelope I have heard Lottie Plaat diagnose a case of cancer and give intimate details of the nature and advance of the disease.

I have been present at Marylebone House when Mrs. Spiers—well-known as psychometrist and clairvoyante, in the world of psychic researchers—gave over thirty readings in an evening from objects

claimed afterwards by their owners with an admission of the accuracy of the descriptions; the most obdurate sceptic in the world can neither deny nor refute the *facts* of such demonstrations—he can only fail to explain them!

Why should the psychologist, or the biologist, or the expert in any branch of science most suited to investigate the matter, refuse to take it up as a serious study? A gift so delicately balanced on the borders of both mental and physical and giving results that can be immediately verified or discredited, lies outside the area of fraudulent activities. The scientist need have no fear of being "let down" as he has been on occasion when he takes the risks of the physical phenomenon in the séance-room; and there are many well-known accredited psychometrists with whom to experiment—Mrs. Spiers, Horace Leaf, Miss Jacqueline, Ruth Vaughan, to mention only a few of their number; and among amateurs Mary Monteith, now Mrs. Humphrey Marten, stands in the front rank.

In the case of the trance medium it is not such plain sailing, in so far as in the eyes of the sceptic the genuineness of the trance may be considered open to question where no confirmatory matter is obtained in the content of the messages. Further, in this branch of super-normal phenomena the scientist *is* beginning to treat the subject seriously and to admit that here is presented a problem which can no longer be brushed aside by the orthodox doctor as a form of epilepsy. The experiments made lately on

psycho-analytical lines by scientific investigators in America and that, it is to be hoped, may before long be given publicity, should lead to the establishment of such phenomena on a firm and indisputable basis.

The scientist is, of course quite rightly, the very embodiment of caution. Whatever may be said to the contrary the dictum of science leads the world in its acceptance and concept of intellectual values in the departments of knowledge. We take its decisions on trust, not because the scientists are never wrong, but because we cannot prove them for ourselves either way. The man in the street would not know how to prove that light travels at 186,000 miles a second, but he believes it because science tells him it is so, and once the seal of scientific approval is set upon the phenomena which psychic researchers know to be true through the empirical argument of observed fact, we shall say a final good-bye to the scoffer and to a certain type of "hard-boiled" sceptic in the séance-room.

Science is long in making up its mind. Sir Richard Gregory, the editor of *Nature*, once said to me in answer to a question about some discovery quoted in the daily papers as likely to "revolutionize science":

"If it's new, it isn't true; and if it's true, it isn't new!" a testimony to the caution exercised by the worker in the laboratories of science.

Orthodox medical opinion has turned a cold shoulder to the trance of the medium, brushing it aside as a variant of epilepsy or hysteria—if not

fraud!—and exhibiting symptoms common enough in the consulting-room; that mediumship in fact is unworthy of special consideration from the doctor's point of view.

The late Professor Waller, however, so far back as 1921, arrived at a different conclusion, and at a lecture at the Royal Institution treated the supernormal sensitivity of the medium in some of its aspects as worthy of serious study, acknowledging certain characteristics as definitely differentiating it from ordinary pathological conditions.

The lecture was entitled *The Electrical Expression of Human Emotion*, and through the movements of a galvanometer the physical reactions to various emotions were demonstrated. A spot of light, fluctuating with the movements of an instrument connected with the palm of the hand and the forearm, registered visibly the passing emotions of the subject of the experiment. And there are no doubt those who will object that there is nothing new in the experiment; very possibly—the novelty lay in its serious treatment in such an environment!

On the details of the process it is not necessary to enlarge; anyone really interested can follow it up and obtain any information required. It is in Professor Waller's conclusions that our chief interest lies.

He classified the results of his studies systematically, describing the reactions of the subject registered through the galvanometrical deflections, to be in three main classes as follows:

The emotive response of

CLASS I: Spiritualistic mediums and others. "Sensitives" giving large responses (ten per cent or more) from both hand and forearm.

CLASS II: "Normals" giving little or no response (two to five per cent) from the hand, but little or no response from the forearm.

CLASS III: "Insensitives" giving little or no response (one per cent) from hand or forearm.

Under the last heading subjects suffering from shell-shock were included.

He referred to three spiritualistic mediums with whom he had had "the privilege of experimenting" and finished the lecture with the remark that this method might be used successfully for distinguishing the true medium from the false, and "that more observations are necessary and more observers."

Unfortunately, Professor Waller's death occurred a short time after the delivery of his lecture at the Royal Institution, and an investigator who might have carried on a most valuable line of research was lost to psychic science.

Since that memorable occasion, passed over at the time, in my opinion, with too little comment, many steps in advance have been made, in spite of the continued and natural reluctance on the part of our foremost thinkers to come out in the open and confess to an interest in the subject. The experiments that have been lately carried on in America with the

co-operation of Mrs. Garrett, the well-known trance medium, should shortly place that aspect of mediumship on a much more stable footing. I am not referring only to the good work of Mr. Hereward Carrington who, as a psychic researcher, is automatically "suspect" by the outside world; but by orthodox experts in psychology and psychiatry, unconnected with *psychic* science, and holding a position in the world of knowledge that will carry weight in itself. We can only hope that the experiments may lead to such indubitable and definite results that the knowledge will not be withheld from a world that is finding the gifts of the materialist but Dead Sea fruit.

The work has been carried on through psycho-analytical tests, leading to the conclusion that the entities controlling the medium when in trance and when not in trance are definitely different personalities. The reactions to the usual psycho-analytical tests, if there be anything in them at all, appear to prove this fact, putting out of court the old cry of "dual personality," meaning different aspects of the same personality—a supposition that,I would suggest, commends itself as a *way out* rather than an explanation.

Those who hold responsible positions in the various psychical societies are not likely to under-value the support of science in the fight still waging between materialism and the spiritual influences of the universe; they know only too well how lightly and how frequently the accusation of fraud is brought

against the trance medium and how difficult it is to refute it. We may *know*, through long experience, the trance state to be genuine in the case of our tried and reputable mediums, and be prepared to stand by them in face of all antagonism.

But when it comes to unsatisfactory sittings, where the newcomer receives no proofs of identity, and the messages are apparently quite unmeaning, it is not an easy matter to persuade the disappointed sitter that the "trance" is not merely histrionic display on the part of the medium; and the inexperienced are so much more ready to give positive opinions than the tried investigator! Many a time have I, when carrying on my work at the British College, after interviewing a dissatisfied sitter been left with the impression that in believing in the bona fides of the trance medium, I must be either a knave or an egregious fool.

On one occasion when my word had been questioned by an antagonist in the public press and I was feeling sore in consequence, I poured out my complaint to the ever-sympathetic ear of Sir Oliver Lodge.

"I don't mind being called a knave," I said, "or a fool. I am used to both—but I do hate being called a liar!"

"No one would wish to do that," Sir Oliver answered. "No one would be so discourteous as to call you that. What they mean is—they don't quite believe what you say!"

I was fortunate enough to get some of my early

experience of trance mediumship through Mrs. Osborn Leonard and her control of world-wide repute, "Feda." At the beginning much of the communication I received was of what the objector calls the trivial type, my friends busying themselves with establishing the fact of their identity beyond all question in order that the delivery of future evidence and information should not be hampered by the continued seeking for "tests" on the part of the sitter, an attitude which if protracted after a sufficiency of "tests" has been received militates considerably against successful results.

A sitting with Hazel Ridley, the "voice" medium, gave me a startling bit of evidence during her last visit to London, in which no loophole was left for the shaft of the sceptic.

To the great loss of investigators on this side of the veil, Miss Ridley passed beyond it some months ago.

Miss Ridley's gift was of an unusual kind; it might almost have been called a blend of voice and trance conditions. The voice appeared to come from the solar plexus, the articulation produced with scarcely any movement of either tongue or lips, the medium being in a condition of deep trance.

My friend, Colonel Johnson, whom I have already mentioned, died a few years ago at the advanced age of eighty-three. During the twenty years and more that I have lived in London our acquaintanceship at the time of my experiences with Mrs. Wriedt had ripened into friendship, and when he died after a long illness, his executor wrote to inform me of the

bare fact of his death—nothing more—knowing I should hear of it with regret.

A few months later, and having received no further information, I had a sitting with Hazel Ridley. A voice purporting to be that of Colonel Johnson came through, giving his name and the initials E. R. very clearly. Miss Ridley had never known him. We had a talk of ten minutes or so and, after sending special messages to friends whom he mentioned by name, he said he must go.

"Good-bye," I said and, thinking only of his visit to me, I added, "and thank you for remembering me."

His answer surprised and a little bewildered me.

"Not at all," he protested, "I am glad to give it to you! You deserve it!" he kindly added.

I was referring only to the time he had given and his kind remembrance of me, and I thought it rather a quaint way of putting it. It was not till afterwards I realized he must have thought I was speaking of something else.

A few weeks later I understood it.

I received a letter from his lawyers informing me that he had left me a sum of money in his will!

Not an easy matter to explain through either telepathy, or the subconscious mind!

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

SO far as I have been able to judge, friends and teachers from the other world, although refusing to solve our riddles in a manner that would save us the trouble of thinking for ourselves, often give a hint that sets the mind adventuring into unexplored fields of speculation that prove to be pastures in which it is well worth while to browse; or a clue that leads, like Eric's golden thread in the story of our childhood, through the tangle of conjecture to a new conception of some difficult problem.

Although our opponents continue to harp on the worn-out string of trivialities in the séance-room in spite of the several thousand books which prove the contrary, I have often been set thinking on serious and quite fresh lines by criticisms or suggestions on the part of communicators. They will not put our doubts at rest on such matters as reincarnation, different forms of sectarian religion, or equally controversial subjects. Even if they *can* do so, why should they?

If there be any order or meaning in evolution we have been set riddles to solve; were they to tell us the answers not only would the divine scheme be frustrated, but the original presentation of the conundrum would be reduced to a meaningless futility. We have to do our own thinking, draw our own

conclusions, and be responsible for our own mistakes.

It is in the wholesale acceptance by the inexperienced of so-called "revelations" from the other side that much harm is often done. Each inquirer on this side, especially if he be new to the subject, is apt to consider his own communications only to bear the hallmark of truth, and they are given to the world as though fresh from the lips of omniscience. But to judge by results, there is as much divergence of opinion among experts in the other world as there is in this, and that prejudices and convictions built into the mentality here, have also to be reckoned with there, and take a great deal of living down.

Therefore I suggest that, just as we have through intellectual development discarded blind acquiescence with the rulings of Authority here, we should be wary of according a too-ready acceptance merely because the information may come from one who, though no longer in the flesh, may still be bound by his old limitations. But the investigator may often find himself able to give a useful push to the door that is still but ajar, by following up speculations set going by some incident in the séance-room. A word may sometimes let in a flood of illumination to a groping mind.

At a sitting with Mrs. Mason just a word once set me thinking on such speculative lines.

She was in deep trance and her control told me a man giving the name of Hooper was standing behind

me. I could remember no one of that name and said so.

"He is someone very near to you," the control assured me.

"I knew someone called Hooker," I suggested, thinking of Sir Joseph Hooker, the Professor of Botany, whom I had met in my youth, "but so slightly that he is not in the least likely to visit me; but I never knew anyone called Hooper."

The medium shook her head emphatically.

"This man is near to you," she repeated, "a relation. He is on your *family vibration.*"

I left it at that—and later on realized I had given another example of how slow and stupid one can be in the séance-room, as I remembered my father's name was *Cooper*!

The error lay in the first letter, not in the fourth as I had supposed. But it was the remark about the "family vibration" that interested me.

The control—"Maisie"—had *sensed* it, and stuck to it in spite of my asseverations to the contrary. She *knew* in spite of my repudiation of all knowledge of the visitor that he was a relative—on the family vibration. And, as my memory assured me later, she was right and I was wrong!

What was it she sensed? Some wave-lengths that synchronized, thrown out by each of us into the aura from some basic dynamic point of energy common to those of the same blood?

Nonsense perhaps? But the medium *did* see something that led her to stick to her point in spite of all

I said to the contrary, and on the physical side we get something analogous—there is a clue there that might lead somewhere.

Human blood is divided into four types. In the case of transfusion of blood that of the giver and of the patient must be of similar type, or the results are disastrous. When it comes to the family it is found that the children follow the type of blood inherent in one of the parents. If the father's differs from that of the mother the children will inherit either one or the other. There will be no fusion, nor modification.

The blood is the life—pulsating with the life force, always in movement, and presumably sending out into the aura some detectable demonstration of the processes going on within. In the admission of science that there is no centre of chemical change without a disturbed area in the ether surrounding it, does not the human aura become a reasonable hypothesis even to those not fortunate enough to be able to see it?

This modern knowledge of the blood characteristics is now utilized, so I have heard, by Scotland Yard as evidence in criminal cases.

Can we carry it tentatively a step further and see something—more perhaps than mere analogy—between this family obedience to a blood type and the "family vibration" sensed by the medium?

This basic vibration or keynote of the individual may be traced through colour—which as indicating a certain rate of vibration would be regarded as a

symptom, not a cause. At the present moment some interesting experiments are being carried on with a view to obtaining more definite light on the matter. Should they lead to even a working hypothesis it opens a vista of future possibilities that may unravel some of the tangles of the séance-room and be of real assistance in stabilizing the conditions of some forms of phenomena.

It may even be possible through colour tests to register the "basic vibration" of the various mediums working in the different organizations for psychic research, and through comparison with that of the proposed sitter be able to bring together the medium and sitter most likely to be in accord with one another. In this way many failures might be averted and a greater stability of results established.

It may be that some law connected with this, the synchronization of wave-lengths—or the want of it—may lie behind the many instances of success and failure obtained by the same medium; one sitter will obtain excellent results and recommend the medium to a friend, who gets nothing at all! We all know of innumerable cases of this sort.

It would be an interesting experiment on *this* plane, to bring together a medium and a sitter whose *blood-type* coincides and see whether better results are obtained than with others where the types of blood are dissimilar.

The same process if applied to the healers and patients in the movement might have valuable results and save time and disappointment.

To accept advice blindly from communicators in the séance-room is obviously inadvisable and often leads to trouble. Common sense and the rules of ethics are as essential in such cases as they are in ordinary life; also a sense of proportion, which as regards affairs of this material world, seems to get sometimes clouded after a long period in a world of very different values. The ultimate decision in most directions must always lie with ourselves, we can never rid ourselves of responsibility, whether in this world or the next. We may accept the advice of a doctor, but it is for us first to decide which doctor it is to be. The same in the world of business; we may decide to take the advice proffered, but we must feel our faith is justified in the man who offers it.

But once identity is established and you are convinced the speaker is worthy of your trust, excellent advice may be gleaned from those who care for you and are watching over you. It was very early in my experience with trance mediums that my father came through to me and gave me an injunction, which although I thought lightly of it at the time, has affected my subsequent actions.

When, a great many years ago, I was very busy thinking and writing on the subject of psychic investigation, I disliked the idea of public speaking so fundamentally that I never contemplated such a form of activity becoming a part of my life, and would have stoutly denied the probability of it so doing.

At the time I was doing a little "hearthrug-speaking," as it might be called, meeting at some

friend's house and addressing a small gathering in an informal way. Even that was against the grain, a real effort, and that I should ever extend the scale of the performance in any further direction never entered my brain.

But my friends on the other side had apparently arranged otherwise, for my father, in communicating with me one day, said earnestly:

"I wish you to remember this. When you are asked to speak in large halls you are not to refuse! Promise me!"

So, in the full conviction that such a contingency was never likely to arise, light-heartedly I promised, thinking I was quite safe!

When the proposition subsequently materialized the promise rose up and confronted me! The fact of the situation having arisen implied a knowledge on my father's part that impressed me, drove me into mastering an inherent reluctance, and eventually urged me into doing my best on the platform, which otherwise I should certainly have evaded.

Since then I have gone from bad to worse, and nowadays when facing an audience running into hundreds or even thousands, and wishing I had never been born, for the tension immediately before speaking never seems to abate, I remember my father's injunction and wonder by what means he was able to lift a corner of the veil and see what was to happen in the future.

I asked my husband on one occasion, through Mrs. Wriedt, whether the act of communicating with

us on the earth they had left was in any way injurious to them. It is continually suggested by the inexperienced that it "drags them down" or—most unsubstantiated fallacy of all—keeps them "earth-bound." Personally I had always felt it was an insult to suggest such a thing—even to hint that they were capable of turning their backs on those they had loved on earth and to whom they were tied perhaps by bonds of gratitude, for the sake of their own "advancement."

My husband was very emphatic on the subject.

"The pull of love never yet dragged anyone down," he said; "nor could it be in any way injurious—so long as it is real love, with no shadow of the self behind it. Love is the most divine, the most ennobling, besides being infinitely the most potent force in the Cosmos. Do you suppose that where true love exists the tie can ever be broken—be it across limitless space or æons of time? So long as there remains on earth one soul we care for, we remain within reach of the earth condition and renew our touch with it—*when we choose.* When the last soul for whom we have any affection comes over here, we may turn our backs on earth if we choose and give it no more attention."

"Then coming 'down' to us does not keep you back?"

He laughed.

"Of course not. To begin with, unless I wish to come, you could not force me to do so. We can always 'tune in' to a lower plane when we choose; to the higher the right of entry has to be earned.

Take a case on the earth plane. Does it injure your mental condition to hold a conversation with, say, an illiterate tramp on the roads? You have to bring yourself down to his level, to enter his world, but he cannot rise to yours, or enter your world until through education he opens the door to it. It does you no harm so long as you do not elect to remain in his world of undeveloped mentality, and so revert to his level for good and all."

"What would you describe as earthbound?"

"Souls become earthbound that have been and remain so wrapped up in material interests, the things of this world, that they continue to linger in the conditions which still give them some satisfaction. Those who are actuated by revenge, lust, jealousy, love of money, desire for personal fame, who made a god of their possessions. These are the souls who become tied to earth, living on a wave-length from which they find it impossible to switch off, until the earnest wish to do so, coming from within themselves, calls to their aid some of the ready helpers always to be found in a world where service to others is the mainspring of action. 'Set your affection on things above' were not empty words!"

In answer to the question: "Why do we hear of so many cases of 'haunting' by priests, monks, nuns and so on, souls who it may be presumed led a good and holy life while in this world? Why should they find themselves 'earthbound' when they leave it?"

He replied: "Because their attention was focused on the trappings of religious worship rather than on

the inner spiritual meaning. The embroidered altar cloth, the golden chalice, the priceless vestments, the genuflexions, they all loomed larger in the ritual of their religion while on earth than the essence of the religion itself. They had persistently tuned in to the material side, to a wave-length that kept them fast bound to the level of the things of earth. You very quickly learn here that we make our own heaven or hell—which although man professes glibly enough to believe, the profession is but skin deep; he fails to realize the inescapable law that lies behind, or he would be at greater pains to avoid the inevitable consequences of its operation. There is no arbitrary punishment—just cause and effect; his fate hereafter is the result of his own actions. A way was opened two thousand years ago through which, by the superimposition of a still greater law those results may be mitigated—but it is in man's own hands to put that law into operation and to study the working of it."

Another light on the future life was given to me by my husband through Miss Francis and her fine control, "Lucio," in the early days of my experiences with trance-mediumship.

When on earth, my husband was a great gardener. Anything he put into the ground seemed to grow without any trouble. So it was not a surprise to me to hear that in the land of results, where our wishes here bear fruit, he should describe the beautiful garden he was preparing for me there. He spoke of flowers of a texture and magnificence that I could not even imagine, and colours beyond all the beauties

our limited spectrum could boast, and that our eyes had not seen nor dreamed of.

He also spoke of other work upon which he was engaged, prompting me to ask what happened to the garden when he was not there to tend and pay attention to it.

"I get someone else to do it for me," he replied.

"Do you pay him for his work as we do here?" I asked.

"I pay him—yes; but not as you do. I give him my gratitude. That makes you smile," he added—and it certainly did! "I am afraid in your business-ridden world it would not count for much! But here it's different. A vibration—if we can call it that—there seems to be no better word—is an asset in this world. Gratitude and love make the currency of the country with us. If on earth you have lived a selfish life, shut yourself away from your fellows, drawing to yourself neither love nor gratitude, you come over here a pauper, bankrupt, insolvent, destitute of any means for exchange. Nothing to give anybody for what they may give you. That love is the ruling force of the Cosmos is not merely a picturesque manner of speech.

"But," he went on, "although we may not have a currency in terms of money let no one imagine he is going to get an easy something for nothing. If he has acquired neither love nor the goodwill of his fellow-creatures on earth, a long term of service for others and remorse for having neglected his opportunities may lie before him before it can be put right."

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

THROUGHOUT the past history of science how many instances have there been, I wonder, of impostors foisting alleged scientific discoveries on the world of learning and "getting away with it?"

Within my memory there remain two outstanding attempts—omitting the case of Louis de Rougemont, whose celebrated effort was aimed not particularly at the scientists but at the world in general—to hoodwink the men of knowledge from the Royal Society downwards, both of which proved futile within a negligible space of time. Men of science are not so easy to deceive as some of our critics would have us believe!

One of these unsuccessful attempts to deceive was made, it will be remembered, when a certain traveller on returning to England claimed to have reached the North Pole. Within a span that could be measured in days his claim was discredited by the scientists; and the world at large that had been ready enough to crown him with laurels, accepted their dictum. The traveller with his tale passed into oblivion. The processes that knocked the bottom out of his claims were of an abstruse nature, and whether his eventual recantation was due to mathe-

matical calculation or to a justifiable third degree interrogation I do not now remember.

To digress for a moment, this episode curiously enough gave me the inspiration for a novel, and led to a little incident that may be worth recording.

It seemed to me when I read of it in the newspapers a good theme on which to build a story—either that a man should profess to have reached the North Pole and subsequently be proved an impostor; or that he should have succeeded in getting there and, in the absence of definite proof, be disbelieved and discredited on his return.

It was in the comparatively early days of my career as a novelist; we were living in the New Forest, out of reach of all ready means of getting information, or any sources of knowledge to which to apply. I was greatly set on this idea, and my fellow writers will understand my reluctance to let this child of my brain die at birth!

But the idea seemed to be unmanageable. To prove anything for or against an alleged visit to the North Pole was possible only through mathematical calculations of times and distances that were quite beyond me, and anyway would have bored my readers.

So I moved the locale of my story elsewhere. My adventurer should visit some little-explored tropical forest in the Amazon country, contract a disease that could be contracted only in that particular region, return to England, have his claims as an explorer discredited, and finally vindicate his

character by dying of the disease he could not possibly have contracted anywhere else!

To push it to its ultimate would be, of course, going too far—but he would have to very nearly die of it!

The trouble was to find the appropriate disease! Out of reach of research doctors and colleges of medicine, it seemed almost an insoluble problem. Needless to say, I confided in no one; there has always been a tradition among writers that to "broadcast" a story still in embryo is asking for possible trouble in a world where walls have ears.

But all my life I have believed that if you wish for anything hard enough and steadily enough, it will come to you; which is a crude presentation of something to be dealt with later on.

By day and in my dreams at night I turned the problem over in my brain, loth to give it up, but hopelessly at sea as to its solution. The idea was good ground I felt sure; all that was required was the suitable seed to sow in it.

Then, from the blue, when I had almost determined to give it up and turn my attention in another direction, I received a note from a neighbour in the Forest, Sir William Mather, to whom I had never mentioned the subject, with an invitation to lunch on the following day.

"Professor Balfour," he wrote, "is staying with us, and I think you would be interested to meet him. He is the Head of the College for the investigation of infectious tropical diseases at Khartoum, and is shortly going back there."

If earnest desire be in itself a prayer, then never had I had more direct or definite answer! Needless to say, I accepted the invitation.

And Professor Balfour—as he was then; afterwards Sir Andrew Balfour, Director of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine—most kindly entered into the spirit of the matter, being himself something of a novelist, and supplied me with all the material I wanted.

It seemed there was an unpleasant hæmogregarine that had been found in rats in the forests of South America, which had in their turn infected a species of mosquito. So far this particular specimen had not been found in human blood, but Professor Balfour said they were expecting this further development to present itself at any moment in the shape of a patient suffering from some hitherto unknown tropical disease. The mosquito would play the part of intermediary host between the rat and humanity.

He gave me treatises on the subject to read, with accounts of exhaustive experiments that had been tried on rats, but to my great discouragement it seemed at first glance that all the rats had died!

That of course was no good to me. The hero of my adventure had to live, and it was with relief that I discovered on further investigation that Rat No. 14 had 'got the better of the hæmogregarine and made a triumphant recovery!

What a rat could do, man could do, and on that basis I wrote my book; not as might be supposed, from the foregoing description, as a comedy, but in

a vein that was seriously treated by the press and my readers, and for some reason that I cannot now recollect, called it "The Valley of Achor." It led to my becoming acquainted with the explorer, Colonel Fawcett. He wrote as a stranger to ask how I had acquired my knowledge of South American forests; I could only imagine from a previous incarnation! He came to see me and spoke of his hopes and aims—of an impregnable city and a white race in the heart of unexplored regions, and I saw him just before he started on the journey from which he has not so far returned.

And now, after a digression showing how really earnest wishes may be brought to pass by those invisible friends who help us with our worldly affairs, and for which I hope I may be forgiven, I will return to the subject matter of the opening remarks of this chapter.

Of the second attempt to hoodwink the scientists I cannot speak with accuracy, but anyone whose interests have run along such lines will remember the occasion; when a so-called inventor came forward with the tale of a discovery of a certain ray—did he call it an F ray?—by the application of which mines and such-like could be exploded from a distance at sea.

Experiments were made somewhere off Toulon—but it was the pretensions of the impostor that exploded, not the mine.

By which I suggest that it is not so easy to take the scientist in as the man in the street seems to suspect.

The consideration of his individual line of study is not of so much importance as the power of perception, of a mind trained to *accurate observation*, as the scientific mind is trained. If a scientist—such as Sir William Crookes, Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir William Barrett and a host of others—be incapable of deciding that a phenomenon is genuine, why should the man in the street be capable of deciding it is a fake?

However, the physical phenomenon of the séance-room, after a strenuous battle of over eighty years, has become an acknowledged fact to those who have really been sufficiently interested to study it seriously; the attitude of the investigator to-day is no longer—are these things true? but, why do they take place? —and how can we sufficiently understand the law that rules them to induce the phenomena at will by producing the necessary conditions?

That we have not advanced more rapidly is, in my opinion, to a great extent our own fault; through the nature of the so-called precautions taken against fraud, half the time we are inhibiting the very phenomenon we wish to induce. The mediums for this form of phenomenon have become more rare, more difficult to find than in the halcyon days of Eusapia Palladino, Mrs. Guppy, Daniel Home, Florrie Cook, Cecil Husk and others; again, greatly our own fault.

During the Middle Ages, under the name of witches, mediumship went near to being exterminated through the ignorance of their persecutors; to-day any ignorant newcomer, inexperienced in

psychic research, can bring charges of fraud in the séance-room and discredit the medium, who is thereupon of necessity discarded by the various societies owing to risk of trouble in the law courts, where the present attitude of the law makes the battle one-sided.

Perhaps it is not always the inexperienced who are to blame. So little headway has been made in the understanding of these phenomena, where even the wise and learned are obliged to acknowledge their ignorance, that mediums for the physical phenomena are continually lost to us through the suspicion of fraud, when with a little more knowledge a legitimate explanation might be forthcoming; not only super-normal law, but answers to such questions as—what is the basic cause of the differences between the medium and the ordinary individual?—what is it that facilitates a ready surrender of superfluous ectoplasm?—and what is the effect likely to be on the medium of that continual surrender? Not only in the case of ectoplasmic demonstrations, but with trance, where the entire machinery of mind and body is given over to a control possibly unfamiliar with or indifferent to the metabolic processes of the body, temporarily divorced from its rightful owner?

Owing to this dearth of physical mediumship, it was some little time after I came to live in London before I was brought into contact with any form of "materialization"—beyond what might be called the half-way house of the direct voice. My first experiences were with Miss Bessinet from America,

when on a visit to the British College of Psychic Science in its old quarters in Holland Park. I was no longer looking for proof of survival, having obtained enough to satisfy me through the direct voice. My interest was centred in the problems presented by the scientific aspect of the subject, and the search for truth along any lines that offered.

Miss Bessinet's form of materialization was of an unusual kind. The séance which I first attended consisted of from ten to twelve persons, seated round a large table with the medium at one end. Mr. Hewat McKenzie, founder and Hon. Principal of the College at the time, sat on the medium's immediate left, and was in control of the gramophone. The séance was conducted in the dark. Sir Arthur and Lady Conan Doyle were present among the sitters.

The manifestation took the form of faces, illuminated by an attendant light which, with the face, remained poised in mid-air in front of the sitter for whom it was intended. The faces faded and reformed, as materialized objects will, a sort of ebb and flow of the power that keeps them in being.

The most interesting, because the most convincing point, from my own point of view, lay in the fact that the "materialized" faces were appreciably under normal size. Judged roughly, they were about three quarters as large as that of the ordinary adult. Miss Bessinet is not a small woman; she has a fine face and distinctive features, nor would it have been possible for her to present it to the sitters either from

her chair, or standing at the end of the table at the particular angle at which each face did confront us. If masks at the end of a stick, as I have heard it suggested, should be the solution, how would they have been imported into the séance-room after the medium had been rigorously searched by expert investigators?

The faces were the colour of plaster, not so white or luminous as alabaster or marble, and beautifully moulded—*if* moulded they were—and in most instances definitely recognizable. The face that was shown to me was undoubtedly that of my mother. Sir Arthur also recognized his mother, pointing out, to Lady Doyle, the striking likeness and tracing the lines on her face in detail.

We were told that each sitter would be drawn to his or her feet for the personal demonstration. When my turn arrived I felt something that might have been the fingers of a hand take me by the collar of my coat, and I was lifted on to my feet by a force as inexorable and impossible to resist as the pull of a steam crane would have been, from directly above my head. It was not in the nature of the upward pull given by a man's arm; there was no *give* in it. The steady, inevitable force of a steam crane in action is the only thing to which I can compare it. To have attributed this phase of the phenomenon to action on the part of the medium would have been an absurdity. Miss Bessinet was seated at least two yards away from me, with two sitters between her and myself. Any upward pull on her part from

such an angle would have had a forward or sideways inclination—if she could have reached me at all. The pull which drew me to my feet was from directly above, and the irresistible power of it inspired me with a lasting respect for the unknown forces with which we so light-heartedly tamper!

Subsequently there were doubts raised as to the genuineness of Miss Bessinet's mediumship, and far be it from me to step in where angels have not feared to tread!

But the doubts were based mainly on the fact that on one occasion after the séance, when the light was turned up, the medium was found to be standing on her feet instead of sitting on her chair. Now I have seen in good red light the throes and contortions into which a medium may be thrown before giving birth to ectoplasm, when it was evident that had she not been securely tied in the chair, she would have been ramping round the room. Therefore, in the case of Miss Bessinet, from my own personal point of view and in the light of my experience, my faith in the genuineness of her mediumship remained unshaken.

"Feda" once complained to me of how greatly we on this side under-estimated the "pull" of ectoplasm. "It will draw a leg or an arm after it as the ectoplasm is extruded from the limb," she explained; "it is always the impulse of the limb to follow. Then if investigation at an unfortunate moment reveals a hand or foot mixed up with the ectoplasm the medium is of course accused of fraud!"—which is

another instance of the subtle difficulties presented by psychic research as compared with its legitimate sister, physical science!

The phenomena produced by Frau Silbert under the guidance of her control "Herr Nell," were less spectacular than the materialized faces of Miss Bessinet, but equally interesting. When I sat with her we were given good examples of telekinesis, or the movement of objects without contact. We sat at a table in the top of which a square aperture had been cut, with a loose cover of dark cloth over it.

Objects were placed on the floor beneath the table, converted into a miniature "dark room" by a surrounding table cover, and with Frau Silbert's hand held by the sitters on either side of her and her feet under equally effective control, these objects would be thrown up on to the table through the aperture in the top of it.

Some of them, such as a penknife or cigarette case, would be found to have the name of the control "Nell" scratched on them after an incredibly short interval of time, and a materialized hand, the means presumably of the operations below, would appear for a moment through the aperture, visible to all the sitters present.

The cruder forms of the purely physical type of phenomenon, such as the throwing about of tables, spinning of tambourines, ringing of bells, do not seem to be helping us much along the road to knowledge. They are negligible so far as proof of survival is concerned. They may testify to the presence of

unseen operators with intelligence at work, but there is no solid ground for the assumption that those operators were ever here in the flesh, unless the demonstration embraces more than telekinesis only.

Here again "Feda" threw a little light on the causes of success or failure in the séance-room.

"The operators who are actually doing the work are what you would call navvies," she said, "nothing but manual workers—only it's done in a different way. They have people directing them, who are directed in their turn by higher intelligences who understand the laws governing the operations; just as operations are carried out here in fact. If the navvies go out on strike—such a noosance!"—(she interpolated)—"and they do sometimes—then nothing happens!"

It sounded simple enough—but, as far as I was concerned, the explanation appeared to be as far away as ever!

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

IN the world of physical phenomena the "Reflectograph" has been to me a most fruitful field for study, with Mr. B. K. Kirkby as director and Mrs. Singleton as medium.

I had the privilege of working with them to a certain extent in the earlier stages of development, and had opportunities for the study of ectoplasm and its ways that has stood me in good stead ever since.

The story of how this particular form of demonstration came into being is a romance in itself, and shows us how plans and resolutions made on this plane may sometimes be carried out subsequently on the next as the result of deliberate intention and preparation.

Mr. B. K. Kirkby tells the story. At a chance trance sitting at which his mother took control, he had his first introduction to spiritualism; as the result of an injunction from her to pass on the knowledge wherever he went and not "to keep it to himself as the rest of the world are doing," he took up the subject in good earnest, and has devoted his life to it ever since.

Shortly after this sitting, he met a man called George Jobson, at that time paralysed and bed-

ridden, but with a brain still alive and working along old lines. George Jobson had brought one of the first telephones into this country; he had travelled the world over in search of knowledge and was one of the early pioneers of photography and wireless.

To cut a long story short, they made a pact that they would try and establish some means of communication after George Jobson had passed into the next life; not only made a pact, which many seemed to have done and then found it impossible to carry out, but set to work to go through a definite preparatory training in the hope of laying some foundation for success in the experiment hereafter.

"I will call you up," he said, "with letters as they do on the wireless. Choose the letters!"

After some deliberation they chose Mr. Kirkby's initials, B.K.K., as the sign between them.

The paralysed man then had these letters written in large size upon a piece of paper and pinned up on the foot of his bed. Morning, noon and night he repeated them, memorized them, impressed them on his brain. Up to the last two or three days of his life those letters stared him in the face; whenever his eyes were open they confronted him for months, his lips continually repeating them, in the hope that they might form the link between the brain of his physical body and that of his astral, proving the continuity of memory which is the corner-stone of personality.

Three months after Jobson's death, Mr. Kirkby, at a seaside place, met a psychometrist who was a stranger to him, but who had been highly recom-

mended as a "seer." Not having the time at the moment to sit with the psychometrist, he gave him an article that had belonged to George Jobson with a request that if he should obtain from it anything of an interesting nature he would let him know. As the medium would be in trance, his sister promised to make a faithful record of anything that transpired.

A few days later Mr. Kirkby re-visited the psychometrist and his sister, and asked if any message had been obtained.

"This is all we have got—and we can't understand it," was the answer. "For nearly a quarter of an hour these letters were impressed: 'B.K.K.—B.K.K.' " then followed: " 'Remember the signal. Now we see through a glass darkly, but later we are going to see one another face to face. It is George—George—George!' "

From that incident sprang the co-operation between the two planes—Mr. Kirkby and Mrs. Singleton working together on this, George Jobson and his "control," a young girl who passed early from earth life, called "Ethel," on the other.

In giving my experience with this group I am merely transcribing to the best of my ability exactly what occurred. I do not say the conditions so far as "test" were concerned, might not have been tightened up in accordance with the best traditions; but to have watched the gradual development of the ectoplasmic rod, and be allowed to take part in the experiment, gave me opportunities which were sufficient to convince me through my physical senses,

plus common sense, of the genuineness of the phenomena. In this belief, Sir Oliver Lodge, later on, was willing to support me.

When I first sat with the Reflectograph group the display of ectoplasm was crude and immature. The medium, Mrs. Singleton, sat in a semi-dark cabinet, the room illuminated by a good red light, and at that early period the medium herself being partially visible from certain angles to the sitters. She was tied to the chair, the back, arms and legs of it, by cords which with Mr. Kirkby's consent I often manipulated myself. The keyboard upon which "Ethel" was to operate was placed at some distance in front of her, well outside the cabinet.

This keyboard consisted of the letters of the alphabet, each painted on a disk so delicately poised that the slightest touch, or even a breath, was sufficient to depress them. Against the wall was placed an indicator also displaying the letters of the alphabet, each of which became luminous as its duplicate on the keyboard was touched, presumably by the ectoplasmic rod manipulated by "Ethel." In this way messages were spelt out, sometimes pertinent and recognizable, sometimes not; but it was on the phenomenal side rather than the content of the messages, that the interest of the sitters focused, especially if their mentality was of the scientific order. I shall always be grateful for the opportunity of watching developments of a super-physical order in circumstances where experiments were so frankly and openly carried on.

At my first sittings with the Reflectograph, a rod of ectoplasm only was visible, starting from the direction of the medium and extending to the disks on the keyboard; a faint line of luminosity, but evidently directed by some intelligence, as its movements with regard to the letters on the keyboard testified. As each letter was depressed the contact was reflected on the indicator against the wall, haltingly at first but gaining in strength and confidence as time went on—passing from individual letters only to the spelling of intelligible words.

With the idea of making assurance doubly sure, experiments were tried with a gauze curtain stretched across the front of the cabinet between the medium and the keyboard.

Although the ectoplasm passed through it, however, the impact appeared to break up the rod, dividing it into rays giving the appearance of a searchlight, no one of them having sufficient force to depress the disks independently. A coarse net was tried with the same result, and the experiment was given up.

It was not long before patient endeavour was rewarded, and a further development took place.

A hand was formed at the end of the rod, with fingers and thumb folded in what is termed the "snake's head" form; followed later by an opening out, the fingers and thumb becoming widespread and perfectly moulded. Faint and misty at first, a wisp of cloud taking the form of a hand, materializing and fading away, and materializing again—that ebb

and flow of the power that I have already mentioned as accompanying all physical phenomena.

Finally the hand, so misty and undefined in its earlier stages, developed into something concrete, solid as flesh and bone, every finger perfectly formed, and I was allowed to touch and handle it, or rather to allow it to touch me.

I found it at that stage *very* cold, lifeless and heavy, as one would imagine a dead hand might be; but later on the temperature of it became normal, more like that of a human hand, of a different type and size from that of the medium, but to sight and touch a normal human hand, in every detail.

When this stage was reached, Sir Oliver Lodge was good enough to come and give an opinion of the phenomenon. He tied the medium in the chair and, visible at first as a filmy outline, the hand materialized as usual; he was able to examine it at close quarters, handling it, touching nails and knuckles, which he pronounced to be perfectly formed in every respect, and finally expressed his conviction that the demonstration was genuine.

It is not easy for the inexperienced sitter to take in the true significance of such a phenomenon at first glance. It exacts a sudden re-orientation of previous conceptions that the understanding is apt to jib at, and it is almost impossible at first to get away from the suspicion of a conjuring trick. Therefore the utmost caution before "turning down" a physical phenomenon at a single sitting, or even more than one, is as essential as in accepting it. The new sitter

may find it difficult to understand his—or her—own limitations through inexperience, not realizing how hard it is for the intelligence to swallow so large a dose at one gulp!

Many a time have I been "up against" this situation in connexion with the materialized hand of the Reflectograph. What sort of "miracle" the newcomer actually expects is difficult to imagine, but if the appearance and the feel of it differ from that of flesh and blood—which was sometimes the case in its earlier stages of development—it is immediately suggested by the sitter that it is a counterfeit made of wax or indiarubber or some other material which *must* have been smuggled into the cabinet by the medium. This suggestion is upheld, no matter how meticulous the preparatory search may have been, and which incidentally reduces all such search to futile waste of time.

But the more minutely the materialized hand resembles the genuine article—as was the case in its final development—the more convinced the tyro becomes that it obviously *is* a human hand—and therefore must be fraud and is the hand of the medium! A vicious circle!

From a single hand "Ethel" advanced to a demonstration of both hands, and from that arrived at the achievement of the full figure; draped forms standing in front of the cabinet with a faint red light illuminating the rest of the room, she herself being one of the first appearances. George Jobson also materialized, fulfilling his early promise that his friend and he

should see one another "face to face." Many other forms recognized by sitters, most of them clad in clinging white drapery that seemed to have a luminosity of its own—something beyond the ordinary appearance of a white object such as a handkerchief, in semi-darkness, and justifying the age-old tradition of "ghosts" and heavenly visions, the "radiantly white" figures spoken of in the Bible.

I passed my hand on one occasion—with permission—through the gossamer-like drapery hanging from the arm of a materialized form; it passed through it as though it were mist not substance, and though I was conscious of a soft touch on my hand, there was no feeling of any sort of obstruction.

Among the various materializations I have seen there a little coloured girl sometimes appears. She is full of life and spirits, shows the whites of her eyes and a little bright red tongue in sharp contrast to her dark skin. Everyone present sees it and hears her childish chatter. If Mrs. Singleton, hands tied to chair, can blacken her face and get it clean again inside the cabinet in the time at her disposal she ought to go on the music-hall stage! That there are no masks and faces hidden under her chair I can testify personally.

I have seen figures at these manifestations dematerialize by sinking through the floor, not merely vanishing by retiring into the cabinet.

With regard to messages received through this channel success has not, within the bounds of my own experience, been so marked. This of course may

depend upon many factors, and be partly owing to a slight impatience on my part—quite unjustifiable—due to what has sometimes seemed a rather tedious process, and not nearly so easy and rapid as the direct voice, or even the channels of trance mediumship. To spell out every word, be it ever so swiftly, is somewhat akin to table-rapping, which must always be a strain on the patience of most temperaments. When I have been present a large proportion of the messages being addressed to others has made it difficult to form a definite opinion, but very many of them have seemed to be unrecognized. My own private opinion has always been that the powers on the other side have been more definitely concerned with and interested in the physical side of the phenomena than in the conveyance of communications, and have dedicated the power, of which there is only a limited supply, to this end. Perhaps I have come to this conclusion because I myself was more interested in the materializations than in the messages and a natural bias was the result!

At the same time it is to be recorded that I have received two outstanding messages through this agency, of a nature sufficiently convincing to prove that whatever the proportion of failures the potentiality for the establishment of direct communication is there and the efforts made entirely genuine.

On the first occasion Sir Arthur Conan Doyle purported to be the communicator, and he reproached me in unmistakable terms for having neglected to act upon a letter he wrote to me some time before his

death suggesting I should adopt a certain line of conduct with regard to a medium. I regret to say I had pushed it into a drawer and forgotten all about it! No one knew of that letter except myself for I had mentioned it to no one. We discussed the contents through the Reflectograph, and finally I acted upon it.

The other incident was even more remarkable.

With the object of showing it to a member of the Council, I had carried a document belonging to the British College of Psychic Science away with me one Saturday afternoon, and on my return home to my flat in Westminster found to my dismay I had lost it. Whether it had been dropped in 'bus, taxi, in the street or in the car of a friend with whom I had driven some little distance I had no idea. I was distracted! The document did not belong to me and should certain circumstances arise it might be of the greatest importance—and I, through some sort of carelessness, had dropped it!

I spent a nearly sleepless night and on the next day, Sunday, inquired in every direction I could think of in the hope of tracing it, with no result. On Monday I made equally vain inquiries at the Scotland Yard Lost Property Office, and then gave up all hope of ever seeing it again.

Late on the Tuesday evening I had an engagement to go to Wimbledon for a sitting with the Reflectograph group. Almost the first message that came through was for me, "Ethel" spelling it out on the keyboard.

"For Mrs. de Crespigny. Don't worry. It will be all right. The missing paper will return."

I could hardly believe my ears, for, with the exception of Mrs. Hankey, the secretary of the College, who was not present, I had mentioned my loss to no one, in the hope my sin would not find me out!

I thanked my informant, and had a good night in the assurance through long experience that messages given spontaneously and not as the result of questions never "let me down"—and on Wednesday morning the document arrived by the first post, from a stranger who had picked it up on the pavement in Victoria Street the previous Saturday; had been in two minds as to whether it was worth while to return it at all, and finally decided to despatch it to the address that was on the opened envelope!

That was one of the best bits of evidence in the way of a message I ever received. It was given before witnesses, Mrs. Hankey could testify to the original loss of the paper, and as no one present at the séance knew anything of the circumstances—not even myself so far as the finding and return of it was concerned—the suspicion of interference on the part of the subconscious mind, or thought-reading could be put out of court. It is some considerable time now since I have had the opportunity to watch further developments with this group so I can offer no opinion on them. I can only speak of and vouch for what occurred within my own knowledge.

The point about the validity of messages given spontaneously is worthy of consideration, and of

careful record on the part of sitters. Personal experience is the field for individual observation, and results may possibly differ; but I have found that in questions asked with a bias in a given direction, or even an earnest desire with regard to the answer—and it is difficult to eliminate all bias on such occasions—an influence of some sort reaches the medium's mind, and the answers obtained cannot be relied upon with certainty. They may afterwards prove to have been inaccurate, especially when prophecies with regard to future events are concerned.

But when information is spontaneously volunteered, without any lead, conscious or unconscious, having been given by the sitter, then in every case I have known, I may almost say without exception, information so given turns out to have been correct.

One of the many handicaps in the investigation of this subject lies in the fact that so many messages received are of a private nature and not to be blazoned abroad. But to select one that is not so, a little story of an incident connected with "Lucio," the control of Miss Nina Francis, may be of interest although the subject of it is entirely personal. Years ago he predicted that a certain novel of mine would eventually be produced on the screen, but he could not give the name of it beyond the fact that the title had something about "Evidence" in it.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

AS it is the ambition of most novelists to see their work produced on the screen I may be forgiven perhaps for the personal element in this brief story. As the years passed and nothing further transpired, the incident drifted to the back of my brain and, although loth to decide the message had played me false, I really ceased to think any more about it.

And then, only last year, I received another.

Mrs. Annie Johnson was giving clairvoyance at one of the Marylebone Society's Sunday evening meetings at the Queen's Hall, and singled me out from the audience. Her reading was very brief; she told me a man was standing before me offering a beautiful purple and silver thistle.

In the secretary's room afterwards I asked for an interpretation.

"Do you know what the thistle means?" she asked.

"I know it's covered with prickles," I laughed, "so it's probably a warning of some sort."

"No, I don't read it like that," was her answer, and went on to say that I should receive an offer from a Scotsman I was to be sure to accept. She had said no more at the time as of course I was personally

known to her and she had not wished to take up the time from the audience in the hall.

Within a few months I received an offer through the agency of Mr. Walter *Maxwell*, whose acquaintance I had only recently made; there was the Scotsman!—and as the result of that offer, after the passing of years, "Lucio's " prophecy is to be fulfilled and my novel "Tangled Evidence" to appear on the screen very shortly.

Moreover, there appeared in the *Sunday Times* shortly afterwards, in answer to an assertion in a previous issue, that the Order of the Thistle had never been bestowed upon a commoner, a letter from a correspondent to say this was incorrect, as upon three occasions in the past the Order of the Thistle had been bestowed upon a member of the family of Maxwell, but that no other commoners had ever received it.

Call it coincidence if you will!—the arm of coincidence seems to be—especially in the hands of critics disposed to stretch it a little beyond what it will bear—very elastic on occasion! But three instances in a single incident—the fulfilment of the original prophecy, the nationality of the man who brought the offer, and the emblem of the Thistle and its significance with regard to the name of Maxwell—seem to ask for a good deal of explaining away!

The path of the psychical investigator is certainly beset with thorns of a sort unknown in the realm of legitimate science. Evidence for super-normal

phenomena is the most elusive quantity possible; it can so easily slip into the rut of the vicious circle.

Give the psychometrist, for instance, an object through which future events are contacted and the objection will be that, unless in the immediate future, the statement cannot be verified. Should the contact made concern the past, remote or otherwise, something perhaps of prehistoric interest which *may* be verified, it is then urged the medium may have read about it in book or newspaper and that it has its source in the subconscious mind; or if anyone present knows the history of the object submitted, thought-reading is brought to the fore. But in spite of the obstacles with which the road is bestrewn, psychometry is becoming acknowledged as an established art.

In full-form materializations the difficulties are greater still, no doubt on account of the strain on the credibility of the newcomer; partly also because of the elusive conditions that must of necessity prevail, but mainly owing to our own abysmal ignorance of the laws dominating a fourth dimensional world—which is merely a way of speaking, as we do not know what sort of world we may be attempting to deal with.

And here I reiterate what I have long suggested—that in many ways we have added to those difficulties with which such investigation bristles, by turning down as fraudulent, mediums and phenomena with the too-ready facility of which our opponents accuse us in our acceptance of them.

By the inhibitions we continually evoke through the traditional precautions against fraud, I believe we prevent the very phenomena we wish to induce. A study of what I may call the "habits" of ectoplasm, within my own experience as well as that recorded by others, seems to justify this conclusion. But tradition is difficult to discredit, and the preconceived idea hard to break down; the processes of the séance strike me at times to be more in the nature of an established *ritual* rather than a likely road to anything really beneficial.

There is also a tendency in sitters to overlook or pass over as negligible, incidents which bear the hallmark of truth in so far as a normal explanation of them seems to be impossible, and to "bank" on some item which is open to suspicion—in other words, they overlook the good and pick out the bad; which as a basis for argument is quite as illogical as the reverse!

On one or two occasions I have sat with the materializing medium, Mrs. Duncan. I am aware of the diversity of opinion that exists with regard to her mediumship and can only "speak of the good as I have found it." I have received through her very good bits of evidence and I know a considerable number of people who would say the same.

The difference in voice and accent between Mrs. Duncan and her control "Albert" appears to me to require a good deal of explaining away, and should certainly give any critic pause before condemning her offhand. Mrs. Duncan speaks unmistakably

with the accent of her country; if her life depended upon it I do not believe she could speak as "Albert" speaks, because she is probably quite unaware of the manner of her diction; nor could she change it even if this were not so.

"Albert" may now and then make grammatical slips, as we know controls using another's mentality are apt to do; but in no circumstances that I have ever heard of has he ever spoken remotely like his medium.

In my own experience I have seen "Albert's" form fully-formed, tall and luminous, standing at the entrance to the cabinet with his medium short and dark by his side. I am able personally to vouch for the thoroughness of the examination beforehand, and that she certainly had no extraneous objects on her person when she went into the cabinet.

The evidence I received myself through Mrs. Duncan's mediumship was of a different order, being technically more on the mental side than the physical, and though it is rather a long story, may be of sufficient interest to record.

During the visit to London of that very fine direct-voice medium, Mrs. Murphy Lydy in 1931, sittings with her were held at the British College two or three days a week for a period of three months, and occasionally I joined the circle without giving previous notice.

On one of these occasions a "voice" was heard, calling out very clearly the name of a famous novelist, who had died a short time previously. No

one claimed him as a friend though all heard the name plainly, so after considerable hesitation I said:

"Well, I knew the speaker when he was here on earth, but so slightly that I don't think he can possibly wish to speak to me."

"Yes!" the voice answered at once, "it is Mrs. de Crespigny I want—" but as is so often the case, in the anxiety to get a message through, the voice trailed off into an unintelligible whisper, the only words we could catch sounding like "kind offices." At that we had to leave it.

I am on the committees of several benevolent societies, and on my next visit to one of them the secretary greeted me with the information that a near relative of the writer who had spoken had applied for a small grant of money. She had been dependent on an allowance from the writer which, owing to circumstances, had ceased at his death, and the request was urgently made as she was in need of help to tide her over a difficult time. The request being justifiable was acceded to, and beyond wondering whether in saying the words "kind offices" the communicator had been trying to right a wrong done here, from the other world, I thought no more about it.

Some weeks later through the Reflectograph group there was a sequel to the episode.

Before starting the séance, Mr. Kirkby placed paper and pencil on the floor of the cabinet in case any spirit communicator might prefer to write a

message. On this occasion, after the sitting, the paper was produced; upon it was written very clearly the Christian name of the novelist who had spoken at the Murphy Lydy sitting, with the first syllable only of his surname. He had apparently been unable to finish it, but so far as it went it was quite clear and unmistakable, and definitely recognized later as being his handwriting by Mr. Hannen Swaffer, who had known him intimately.

This was arresting, as for several reasons I had not spoken of my previous experience, and the Reflectograph group could have known nothing of it. I attributed this second effort on the part of the deceased author to be due to a wish to say a word of gratitude for what had been done through the benevolent society, and again gave the incident no further thought.

And then I sat at a séance with Mrs. Duncan.

It was at the house of Mrs. Hirst, the well-known trance medium, and several figures materialized and spoke to friends, none of whom were for me.

But "Albert," the control, brought me a message.

"There is a man here," he said, and gave the surname of the writer who had spoken at the Murphy Lydy séance and written his name through the Reflectograph group. "He is not able to materialize but he wishes me to give a message to this lady," indicating me. "He wants to thank her for what she did for his relative, and was pleased it went through without any disagreement or disputation."

Though no one else understood it, the message

was of course perfectly intelligible to me, although no one could have been more surprised than myself to receive it, for the whole affair had passed entirely from my mind.

Here we have the same communicator coming through the different mediums, each of them unaware of any previous communication; the last of three messages being delivered through Mrs. Duncan's control "Albert" in a form perfectly intelligible to me, bearing on what had gone before, and audible to everyone present in the room.

Far be it from me to say that, in moments when the power flags, mediums may not fall to the temptation to "fake" in order to produce what is expected of them, but I do maintain that a large percentage of so-called "exposures" are no exposures at all, but brought about by the ignorance of super-physical laws from which *all* of us in a three dimensional world must necessarily suffer; and owing also to this ignorance, I believe some of the conditions imposed at "test" séances in themselves frustrate the very means through which we hope to obtain results.

For instance, we learn two important facts with regard to ectoplasm from a study of Dr. Crawford's experiments with the Goligher circle—that it travels very near the surface of the body, and that for materializing purposes the ectoplasm must be drawn from the neighbourhood of the limb or part which it is expected to reproduce. That the substance we call ectoplasm must in fact be trained, or impressed with certain tendencies.

Professor Dürker made some experiments in Germany that incidentally bear upon this subject. He cut off the tip of the tail of a newt and grafted it on to the shoulder. The section of the tail so grafted throve and grew, but it did not produce another *tail*, but another *fore-limb*, showing that it followed the engrained tendencies and characteristics of the cytoplasm upon which it had fed.

It would seem that ectoplasm follows the same law. Speaking generally, and I am sure investigators of experience will agree, if for a materialization a hand should be required, the necessary ectoplasm will be drawn by the unseen operators from the neighbourhood of the medium's hand; if a foot, from near feet and ankles; if a voice, from the throat and larynx. When sitting with a direct-voice medium, I as a sitter only—and we know the sitters also contribute—am hoarse as a crow afterwards, indicating that to a certain extent my throat has been drawn upon.

Mrs. Etta Wriedt told me she once sat with a circle of deaf-mutes; no voice nor sound was heard, but directly they were joined by a person whose faculties were normal, the voices came through as usual.

I have wondered sometimes whether, following these lines, the materialization of the little negress at the Reflectograph sittings was in any way connected with the presence of a coloured gentleman who was often among the regular sitters.

My introductory sitting, in company with others, with Mr. Kirkby and Mrs. Singleton was not successful, and looking back at the conditions and

following up these suggestions with regard to "exposures" I feel certain the failure should not be laid at their door.

The medium, Mrs. Singleton, was placed in the cabinet, with her hands pushed through holes in each side of it and held respectively by two sitters—the hands—*nota bene*—from which the ectoplasm was presumably to be drawn for the materialization that was to manipulate the keyboard in front of her.

Nothing happened—and the demonstration was turned down by the critics; but I suspect the failure was due to the inhibitive precautions taken against fraud, the rigid control of the hands preventing the very phenomenon we were hoping to produce.

Dr. Crawford tried some experiments with carmine powder, which he placed in the boots of the medium. At the close of the sitting the track of the ectoplasm, which had apparently caught up the powder in its return passage, was plainly visible through the skin of ankles and legs, showing how near the surface it travelled. How often, I wonder, in the rigid tying up of mediums in the séance-room do we interfere with the free passage of this super-delicate substance and spike our own guns?

Other forms of so-called "exposures" may also be founded in misconception, owing to ignorance of psychic law—and probably are. Why should articles found on the floor, as we know sometimes to be the case, at the close of a séance brought to an unexpected close, be necessarily a proof of fraud? If it be so, it would be in the first place a proof of the

unreliability of those who examined the medium beforehand.

There is a general impression, to put it colloquially, that at a materializing séance the figures seen are "made of" ectoplasm, and nothing but ectoplasm. But in its finer forms—I would suggest its *purer* form—ectoplasm is not visible to the physical eye. The very term "materialization" suggests that what the sitters really see and touch is ectoplasm *plus* matter. By the time it comes within the range of our normal physical vision it is no longer pure ectoplasm. The matter for flesh and bone would doubtless be drawn from the body of the medium; the diminution in size and weight recorded in well-known instances would indicate so much; the matter required for draperies would be taken from anything conveniently placed, such as curtain, handkerchief, table-cover and so on of a similar nature to the objects to be reproduced—be it cotton or silk or wool. At the end of the séance, the draperies are dematerialized, the substance of the flesh and bone returning with the ectoplasm to the medium's body.

But should the séance for any reason be brought to an untimely end and not enough time for the final "clean up" or necessary process of de-materialization to be effected, a residuum of physical matter might naturally be found on the floor, and the medium is promptly denounced as a fraud.

A careful study of the story of the mediumship of Madame d'Espérance, one of the finest materializing mediums of the past, can teach us something in this

direction. Her memoirs are written under the title of "Shadow-Land," and as she was a well-educated woman, the record of her work is written with clarity and intelligence. The description given of the de-materialization of her control "Yolande" at the end of a séance is worth quoting.

"The de-materialization of Yolande's body occupies from two to five minutes, while the disappearance of the drapery occupies from a half to two minutes. On one occasion, however, she did not de-materialize this drapery or veil, but left the whole lying on the carpet in a heap, until another spirit came out of the cabinet to look at it as if moralizing on poor Yolande's disappearance. This taller spirit also disappeared and was replaced by the little, brisk, vivacious child-form of Ninia, who likewise came to look at Yolande's remains; and curiously picking up the left-off garments, proceeded to wrap them round her own little body."

Madame d'Espérance's sittings were conducted in daylight, the light being allowed in through the upper part of the windows; at night an arrangement of gas-jets illuminated the room. Inside the curtained cabinet it was dark.

An instance of the failure to de-materialize is given at some length. The materialized object, placed in full view of the sitters, was a tall, white lily about seven feet high, with eleven fine blossoms hanging from the stem, some fully blown, some in bud and damp with dew. The scent of it, the account tells us, was almost overpowering.

"Yolande" being very pleased with her success, said if they wanted to photograph it, it must be done at once as she had promised to return it. The photograph was taken by means of a magnesium flashlight, and shows a very fine specimen of an auratum lily in full bloom.

But unfortunately, at this point, the power was found to be waning, and after a sitting prolonged until midnight, "Yolande" told them despairingly she could do nothing more, and the plant remained.

A message from the unseen operators was then received to the effect that "'Yolande' only got the plant on condition she brought it back. She finds the medium is exhausted and cannot bear any more. You must let the plant remain in darkness till she can come again and fetch it."—Which, after photographing it from several angles, they did, and at a séance a week later, after being placed in the centre of the circle, it "vanished as mysteriously as it had come."

Possibly this should be classified as an "apport" rather than a true example of how physical matter may be left in the séance-room owing to unfavourable conditions, without necessarily being an indication of fraud—a remark I address not to the inexperienced sceptic who in his ignorance would no doubt attribute the whole incident to fraud from beginning to end, but to the experienced and earnest investigator who *knows* that these things can be, and who is seeking with the rest of us for reasonable explanations of some of the baffling problems with which we are from time to time confronted.

In this subject we are always grateful for comic relief—and we certainly get it!

A visitor came into the College one day not long ago and said she wished to get into touch with her husband.

"If I was sure it was him, I'd give him a bit of my mind—it 'ud be well worth the money. But I don't want to throw it away on somebody who isn't."

"Isn't what?" I asked mildly.

"Isn't him," she snapped.

"Perhaps he wouldn't come," I suggested, "he needn't, you know, if he doesn't want to."

"If he don't come when I call him he's changed a bit more than the spiritualists make out," was the grim reply, and not being in a position to offer an opinion I held my tongue.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

BEFORE passing on to the subject of mental mediumship, it might be worth mentioning an incident at a sitting held some time ago at the British College, in its old premises.

Sloan was the medium, already well-known for his work in "direct voice," when Mr. Arthur Findlay in his wonderfully popular book, "On the Edge of the Etheric," brought him into special prominence. Probably no book written on popular lines has had a greater success or sown richer seed over so wide-spreading an area than this work.

At the sitting, which took place in the dark, the medium offered to let me *feel* ectoplasm if I would put out my hand. I did so and immediately was conscious of a most unpleasant sensation. My hand became coated with a cold, slimy substance; cob-webs made of silk came into my mind as a simile, but there was also a slippery quality about the feel of it that I found most disagreeable. Shake and rub my hand as I might there was no result, the stuff stuck fast, and in the end I had to wait patiently until it dissolved and left my fingers free again. I have never wished to renew my acquaintance with ecto-plasm at such close quarters!

To deal in detail with all the physical mediums of

whose work in convincing a doubting humanity of worlds beyond their own I have had personal experience, would be a lengthy task; and in some ways superfluous, as so many of them and the good they have done have been brought before the public in other ways. A series of demonstrations that brought me into contact with the phenomenon of "apports" and furnished wonderful evidence of the operation of super-normal law were obtained through a medium from the north called Lynn. He gave remarkable demonstrations of the passing of matter through matter, and the sudden appearance of objects from a distance, upon a table in full view of us, in a good red light and in such close proximity to the sitters that the most meticulous observation of the phenomenon was possible.

Photographs of these manifestations of "apport" phenomena were made by flashlight by Major Mowbray, research officer at the College at the time; they show the various objects while held in suspension, gripped by the rod of ectoplasm immediately before they were deposited on the table. At the end of the rod, which appears to come from the solar plexus of the medium, something in the nature of a fist is gripping the object before finally releasing it.

As the sitters gather closely round the table in a good red light, the fact that neither the object in suspension nor the ectoplasmic surround is visible, is a good example of the greater sensitivity of the photographic plate to that of the physical eye;

the camera, in fact, can see what we are unable to perceive.

The photographs are very fine, the work of an expert, and are always on view at the College for the benefit of those especially interested.

The door to the "beyond" having been opened to me through the more sensational because more direct agency of the "direct voice," it was some time before I fully appreciated the more delicate varieties of phenomena to be obtained through trance mediumship. But although the value and beauty of mind speaking to mind through the agency of trance mediumship have now become very real to me, the wonder of those first experiences in direct voice will never cease to arouse in my mind an awe and reverence for the marvels worked through God's laws that nothing else can ever quite equal.

The telephone that links us with far countries through the world of sound is marvel enough! But the realization—which *must* come and does to the patient investigator—that the next world and those in it are separated from our own by one throb of the ether to which we have found a means of tuning in, can never fail to thrill any mind to whom science and its miracles are more than a mere word.

At the same time, in trance mediumship we find ourselves in conditions that take us a step farther from earth and the material aspect of the universe; the processes and results being of a mental quality, originating on the mental plane, and due to operations beyond the realm of ectoplasm.

Here, except presumably for the necessary use of the grey matter of the brain as an instrument, those on the other side work through mind rather than matter, the "tuning in" being between mind and mind, and when it is remembered the transfer of a message is made from fourth dimensional conditions to three dimensional, from a fourth dimensional brain to a brain limited to three dimensions, it is not the baffling mistakes and inaccuracies of the messages that sometimes occur that should be emphasized; the marvel is that we get anything at all!

It is natural that the clairvoyant should not always repeat accurately incidents and appearances from the other side. We make similar mistakes in this world with which we are familiar. It is probably more often due to misinterpretation of the things seen and heard that mistakes are made. The average medium knows nothing of the laws appertaining to *this* plane—much less those of any other!

Imagine a denizen of a world fundamentally different from our own suddenly finding himself on earth with no knowledge of the laws of reflection. Believing the story told him by the mirror, he might well carry away the conviction, through the evidence of his sense of sight, of six persons in a room where there had been only three; or not understanding the tricks of refraction, would swear to the bending off at a considerable angle of a stout piece of wood such as an oar, on penetrating the surface of water. In both instances he would be speaking the truth according to his lights; it would be a misinterpretation

of the situation owing to his ignorance of physical law.

The same argument may be applied to the deductions of the clairvoyant. Either the consciousness of the medium goes exploring in countries of whose laws he has no knowledge, returning to pass on conclusions possibly drawn from erroneous premises; or in the passage of the message from the higher dimension into the lower, a certain degree of refraction may ensue, with the result that it arrives with us in not exactly the form in which it started.

One might remark parenthetically that such cases are not unknown in ordinary earth life, but *refraction* is not the term generally applied to them!

This possibility of a twist, or distortion, should be taken into careful consideration when weighing evidence.

In trance mediumship Mrs. Osborn Leonard and her control "Feda" will always stand out as shining lights; they have won a name for themselves that makes any mention of them in these pages superfluous, beyond the expression of my sincere admiration for the work they have done for humanity. I have not personally had a great many sittings with Mrs. Leonard, as, having already obtained the evidence I desired, it seemed wiser to leave an instrument so widely sought after for those who have not. But the few sittings I have enjoyed will always be among my most cherished memories.

The proofs, not only of survival, but of a world of superior intelligences to our own received through

trance mediumship, are so abundant that it is not easy to winnow the grain of what may be of interest to others from the chaff that will not. Friends innumerable have come through to me and established their identity in many ways, for the most part through some little trivial thing that would appear negligible to the outside world, but that goes right home to those who understand. I have heard of a man who, after many vain attempts, became at last convinced of his wife's identity because the medium told him she was holding out half an orange; of another who could only persuade a friend on this side he was the person he claimed to be by reminding her of an occasion upon which he upset a cup of coffee over her dress! It is the small detail that brings conviction rather than the big things in life, and this was borne in on me not long ago when a brother who had lately passed over came to me through the trance mediumship of Mrs. Hirst.

He had never taken any interest in what he irreverently called "spooks"—a favourite appellation by those who do not believe in them, but he had been eminently broad minded, and was evidently ready to change his mind once he was on the other side, for he communicated with me much more quickly than is usual. "Rosie," Mrs. Hirst's control, gave a very accurate description of him as a "man of the sea," of very fine character and likely to be a force in his new conditions; also that he had held some public position, not of the sea, in the later years of his life. He was a Gentleman Usher at

Buckingham Palace for many years before his death.

She then began to spell out what I took to be his initials, letter by letter. His full name was Edmund Moore Cooper Key. "Rosie," with great assurance, said he was giving her a big E and an M, which I acknowledged as the first letters of Edmund Moore. But when she followed them up with a D., expecting C.K., I shook my head. She stuck to it. So did I. I thought of names beginning with D and rejected them all. Finally "Rosie" gave it up and we left it.

It is possible to be indescribably "thick-headed" in the séance-room. The brain at times seems to get set in a certain direction and nothing will deflect it. I had *initials* fixed in mine and initials were all I looked for.

Some time after the sitting on re-reading the notes taken at the time, I found EMD staring me in the face—the unusual abbreviation of Edmund by which my brother had invariably been known to all his relations all his life!

At my next sitting with the same medium he came again and announced his presence with a most characteristic remark.

"I was so relieved," he said, "to find I wasn't an angel! I am still a man with my own individuality!"

There was a further detail at this séance for which the subconscious mind must be held guiltless.

"Rosie" described the house in which my brother lived,

"I see a window with little panes—you know—tiny panes of glass like a pattern."

I negatived this. The windows in the house were of ordinary plate-glass. "Rosie," however, stuck to it.

"I see that," she said.

The next time I saw my sister-in-law, without any preamble I asked her if I was not right in thinking the windows of their house were all of ordinary plate-glass. She immediately answered in the affirmative, and before I had time to wonder what "Rosie" had meant, added: "Except the window in E M D.'s dressing-room, which had little leaded panes across the upper half."

I had never been into his dressing-room and had never seen the window.

It is in trifles such as this, once more, I emphasize, that we find the best evidence, and become weary of the reiterated stricture on the part of the critics that nothing but triviality is obtained through communication with the other world. Every experienced investigator will testify to the contrary, and there are thousands of books in the psychic libraries to the same effect, but the weed still thrives.

I was once waiting in a car outside a house in a street where another car with a woman in it, also waiting, was drawn up to the pavement just beyond.

Presently a man came out of a house, apparently an acquaintance, and crossing the pavement to the occupant of the other car, started a conversation.

"So you have come back!"

She agreed to this self-evident fact, and he went on:

"A lovely day—isn't it?"

"Very fine," she replied, "a much better day than yesterday."

"But it was touch and go this morning. Quite a fog where we are."

"I thought it was going to be foggy too—but the sun came out."

He—sapiently: "Yes—the sun came out and ate up the fog. It often does, I've noticed, this time of year. Well—good morning!"

Would those two, I thought to myself, were they to meet in the séance-room, one on one side of the veil and one on the other, refuse to recognize each other owing to the trivialities of their conversation? Why should people accustomed to such a style of intercourse in this world be expected to talk high philosophy directly they arrive in the next?

But for those who wish to arrive at something more illuminative than personal communication is likely to produce, there are teachers and instructors in abundance ready to help, as can be learnt by anyone sufficiently in earnest to study the literature.

May I also remind such critics that the outstanding aim and goal of spiritualism is to prove *Survival*; and that is *only* to be accomplished through the agency of those who *have survived* and are therefore in a position to speak with certainty. Philosophy, ethics, science can be tapped through other channels; but in the establishment of the survival of man's

personality as a *fact* not a speculation—valuable as emergent side-issues may be and are—is the core of the message of spiritualism to the world.

Mrs. Barkel's control, "White Hawk" is a great personality, and has given me many a message which bore the stamp of truth from my "ship-man," as he calls my husband. His chortling laugh is one of the most infectious things I know, and I have had an "apport" through his agency passed through my tightly clenched fist.

The variety in characteristic and temperament shown by the different controls, each true to nationality and mentality, quite independently of whether the medium be British-born or not, is a point worthy of consideration. "Maisie," the little Zulu girl who is Mrs. Mason's control, answered in Zulu on one occasion when a sitter who was familiar with South Africa said good-bye to her in that language—a language of which, it is almost needless to say, Mrs. Mason is entirely ignorant.

In fact, the list of these wonderful gateways to the world beyond is long and growing longer, and still not nearly long enough to supply the ever-increasing demands of a world waking up to the possibilities within it.

"Lucio," known and beloved by all who know Miss Francis, gave us an account of his early life; of how he had been Prior of a monastery which he named, and from which he had been expelled owing to some attempted reforms which had brought him into disfavour. Every detail was afterwards verified.

I asked him on one occasion why it was ordained that he should remain so near to earth when he had presumably led a holy life.

"When I was in the monastery," he replied, "there were many instances of clairvoyance and clair-audience among the brothers. We welcomed it as a gift from God. But when instances of either gift were brought to us from outside, we said it was from the Devil and would have nothing to do with it.

"Now I have to remain in touch with earth and give back so far as I am able the light I kept from it during my life among men."

The old cry of *service*—of forgetfulness of self in the desire to serve others. Is any plane too low for the application of this divine decree? He that would save his soul shall lose it! Better far to be concerned with the saving of the souls of others.

Sir Oliver Lodge in "My Philosophy," p. 292, touches on this aspect of life hereafter.

"Religious people seem to think that we are transported or transmuted into a totally different kind of existence far beyond mortal ken, from which we can make no sign to survivors. They assume that we have lost interest in one another, that we are absorbed in higher things, and hope that those left behind will not disturb us or make any attempt at interrupting us in our new rôle of continuous religious exercises and constant adoration."

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

IN no other form of mediumship has there been such marked advance during late years as in "platform clairvoyance," the only term that really describes it.

So far as I know there is no indication of the practice of this very remarkable manifestation of psychic power during the last century, nor even in the early years of this. It is noticeable not only as a new development in method, but as a distinct step upward on the ladder between this world and the next.

This would apply equally to any form of normal clairvoyance, that is to say, where the medium does not go into trance, and thereby qualify as a channel only for others to use. The clairvoyance and clair-audience necessary for public demonstrations on the platform, signifies an unfoldment of the medium's inner senses which makes possible a *conscious* functioning on a plane of superior dimension. In other words it is the difference between bringing the denizens of those planes down to our level, and acquiring the power to rise to theirs. According to their own statements, the former process, although doing them no harm from an evolutionary point of view, does us no good; whereas in the development

of our own latent powers for functioning on higher levels, we are ourselves taking a step forward on the path toward final perfection.

I have seen a good deal of clairvoyance given from the platform, in large and small gatherings, and never ceased to be amazed at the magic of it!

To watch the medium select from an audience numbering anything, from a handful up to six or seven thousand, some utter stranger—the selection being frequently of persons with whom I have known collusion to have been impossible—and tell them, in the words of the woman of Samaria, all things that ever they did, with names and surnames, appropriate to their families, and recognized, is an experience that never loses the keen edge of its power to impress.

I have been present at the Albert Hall where Mrs. Estelle Roberts gives such remarkable evidence of her gifts, and at the Queen's Hall and elsewhere, when through clairvoyance, or more often clair-audience from the platform, men or women have been rescued from disaster through some message sent by friend or relative in the nick of time—messages sometimes of so private a nature that the medium refuses to deliver them in public and sees the recipient privately after the meeting is over; the identity of the communicator being established sometimes in a swift flash of recognition, sometimes after long and patient inquiry with the medium as intermediary.

If the devil is at the back of these manifestations as we are so often told, he is either doing his work

very badly, or he is not nearly so black as he's painted!

Mrs. Estelle Roberts has won a world-wide reputation through her platform work, and must have brought the little bit of personal experience that brings conviction home to literally thousands of souls searching for the truth. The exhibition of her gifts in this direction at the Armistice Sunday Service of Reunion held yearly at the Albert Hall under the auspices of the Marylebone Association, shows under what difficult conditions she is able to work. To experience any novelty in the way of a "thrill" seems to be the main object to-day of the rising—and risen—generations; the most wonderful thrill of them all is *there,* under their noses for the seeking, but the majority turn their backs on it. Little or no notice is taken of it by the press, who prefer to concentrate on the overworked thrill of a sensational crime case in the search for a "story" which, at this period of history, reiteration has robbed of any novelty at all!

In Mr. Arthur Ford, who visits us now and again from America, we can study the art of platform clairaudience *in excelsis.* I have seen him give "readings" to members of strange audiences in this country, startling in their accuracy, and revelation of both past and future. He rarely seems to make a mistake, and displays a knowledge of family history and names that, as in the case of Mrs. Roberts, is absolutely bewildering to the newcomer, who finds it difficult to get beyond the idea of a conjuring trick!

There are many others, too numerous to mention, who are working week in and week out including Sundays, often their busiest day, to bring this inestimable message to humanity. They may be paid for it, and should be; I for one, say thank God for paid mediums who may be approached in a business fashion! How far would this knowledge have spread if every sitting had to be begged for as a personal favour? And from the other point of view, why should we expect to get something for nothing—not to mention so great a boon? We have to pay for it if we wish to telephone to Paris. Why not if we wish to telephone to Heaven?

For there is nothing necessarily *spiritual* about communicating with friends; to think so is to confuse the spiritual with the merely psychic. For truly spiritual contacts there is no price—nor could be. Direct intercourse between man and his Maker is his natural heritage, his inalienable right. For neither prayer nor praise is the intervention of any third person necessary. In the silence, in the market-place, in the temple, be the form of it what it may, the spirit of God incarnate in man is free to make contact with the Source whence it came.

But when we take advantage of the gifts of the medium, developed and fostered with care and self-denial, the reward should surely be given ungrudgingly. This knowledge of Survival and the opportunity to talk with those who have gone before is surely the Pearl of great price for which all lesser pearls must be sacrificed if necessary.

I have had personally several messages from the platform, bringing me advice or reassurance, and as I am generally known by sight to the medium there is always some little touch given as introduction to establish the bona fides of the message to follow.

I remember an occasion at the Queen's Hall, when it was evidently desired to get a rather urgent message through to me, my father was first described as standing behind me, in an audience of a thousand people or more. His naval uniform and orders were accurately given, and finally the medium added, "and some funny gold things on his breast which I don't understand," but that I recognized as the gold lace *aiguillettes* he wore as Principal A.D.C. to Queen Victoria, and very distinctive evidence as regards his identity.

There was no pre-knowledge on the part of the medium as she did not know I should be among the audience, and if from among the thousand mentalities surging around me she could disentangle my 'thoughts" and present me with a clear-cut description of something about which I was *not* thinking, Santa Claus coming down the chimney at Christmas would be comparatively easy to swallow!

It is simpler to accept the explanation that she saw, clairvoyantly, a vision of my father.

Trance-address is a form of psychic demonstration that, at its best, should be a channel for good and for the further enlightenment of humanity groping in a fog; on the other hand, at its worst, or even second

best, it appears to be the tiresome self-exploitation of some self-centred, would-be orator in the other world, who, failing to induce anyone to listen to him in that sphere, dumps his pious platitudes and tedious exhortations on long-suffering audiences in this, who are often disposed to receive anything from the next stage of existence as jewels of wisdom and learning, and who do not realize that when it comes to science or philosophy their particular form of education may not have qualified them to judge as to whether they are listening to anything of value or not!

Personally, I have learnt just enough of both subjects to know I know *nothing at all*, and I should hesitate to pass any opinion adverse or the contrary on the alleged science or philosophy given to us from "beyond" without the confirmation of wiser minds than my own.

Something must of course be attributed to the inadequacy of the instrument, not always to a paucity of ideas at the source, and those who have listened to trance-addresses from "Red Cloud," Mrs. Barkel's control "White Hawk," "White Eagle," "Chang," the wise and philosophic guide of Philip Sharplin in his trance-healing—and there are many others of whom if no mention is made here, it is only that I have had no personal experience of their work—know that much that is instructive, illuminating and, above all, suggestive, can be received through such sources. It may be that in some cases the speakers temper the quality of their

subject matter to the mentalities with which they have to deal and, to paraphrase an old saying, it takes all sorts of mentalities to make a world.

The control in trance-speaking of whom I have had the fullest experience and of whom I am therefore in a position to say most, is the famous "Power" who, strictly preserving his anonymity, delivers his addresses through the mediumship of Mrs. Meurig Morris. She is well-known, not only on account of her psychic gifts, but for her brave stand in a libel case that at the time it took place aroused the interest of every country in the civilized world, to judge by the leading articles in the newspapers in every language.

As a tribute worth recording in evidence of the importance of a case which some critics—even those who are sympathetic—at the time averred should never have been brought, I quote at some length from the *Law Journal* of April 23rd, 1932.

"Outlaw," referring to cases in the Royal Courts of Justice in the Strand proceeding at the time, remarked especially on the case in Court IV, as dealing with a "medium":

"It is not so very long since the plaintiff, appearing with full legal rights and recognition of the same, and represented by counsel of such eminent respectability as the Serjeant and Mr. Constantine Gallop, would have incurred grave risk, under the law then in force, of being burned as a witch. Now, because of certain words used of and concerning her and in connexion with her vocation or practice of trans-

mitting messages from the other world, she sued for damages for libel; and received a patient, careful and judicial hearing of her case before Mr. Justice McCardie, and a jury. Beyond all doubt this is a notable event, and, quite irrespective of the verdict marked a tremendous advance, not only in spiritualism but in toleration."

and under the heading of *Spiritualism and Justice* he continues:

"Lest I should offend, let it be said that I pretend not to know whether spiritualism is true or false or whether the belief in it is good or evil: but from the legal point of view that trial was one of remarkable interest; not only by reason of the eminence and respectability of so many of the witnesses called for the plaintiff, but by reason of the admission that a spiritualistic medium might be defamed by words used of her in connexion with her profession and might lawfully claim damages in respect thereof.

"Another curious fact appearing from the trial and in the course of it is that the jury might be expected to find that a 'discarnate spirit' might transmit messages through a medium; or at the least that such a belief might honestly be held by intelligent and reasonable men."

To have afforded an opportunity of impressing upon the legal mind the reasonableness not only of the claims of a medium and of the whole standpoint of spiritualism, but also of enforcing serious attention to the subject all over the globe, is in itself sufficient justification for having carried the fight through the

King's Bench Court to the bitter end in the House of Lords.

The poster proclaiming "Medium found out" was widely exhibited, and it was upon the implication of those words that Mrs. Morris based her claim.

Well might Sir Henry McCardie open proceedings the like of which had never before been held in those precincts with the remark, delivered with much emphasis, that in the ensuing discussion the riddles of life and of death would occupy the attention of the Court; an introduction that immediately raised the whole situation from the sordid suggestion of common fraud to the greater question—was Mrs. Morris justified in her claim to be controlled by a discarnate spirit, or was she not?

No wonder the legal luminaries did not quite know where they were!

There was so much to be explained—so difficult of explanation! Such niceties as the differences between body and consciousness, between physical and mental mediumship—a hopeless snag this to the very end—between the promptings of the subconscious mind and the independent control of a discarnate entity; all fresh food and difficult of assimilation by minds generally concerned with pounds, shillings and pence, disputes over property or other entirely material considerations. To the end there must have been many who when the final dramatic scene took place had little idea of what was actually happening. The bewilderment evident in some of the newspaper reports told us that much.

Even "Power's" final cry when he was forced to resign control: "Do not touch me until I have left this body!" must have fallen on stony ground. The human body viewed as a mere vehicle "run" by an alien consciousness taking temporary control was a situation inconceivable to minds to whom it was presented for the first time, especially in such uninspiring surroundings as the Law Courts; which makes it all the more remarkable that the jury should have decided that Mrs. Morris was what she professed to be.

The story of the "vision" as recounted by the press at the time, gave a false impression of what actually took place.

At one moment while in the witness-box Mrs. Morris appeared to be going under control; so much so that from those present who understood there was a general cry of "Don't touch her!" in which Mr. Justice McCardie himself joined.

But she reached semi-trance only, and as she returned to full consciousness, murmured in a half-dazed manner: "It is Christ!" After a pause, the apology to the Judge for the interruption was given; not all in one flippant sentence, as was indicated by the newspapers.

She said subsequently she had seen a shining figure standing by her side and a voice had said clearly: "Those that are with you are greater than those that are against you!"

Throughout the trial, during which I had the privilege of sitting at the lawyers' table, and was

therefore in full view of the Judge at fairly close quarters, I was continually impressed by a suspicion that Mr. Justice McCardie understood a great deal more of occult matters than he was inclined to admit; not only from the direction in which some of his observations tended, but from personal experience when I was in the witness-box. On one occasion in particular when the defendants' counsel, Mr. Birkett—the most courteous of cross-examiners—asked me if I could tell him anything about the pineal gland, which had been mentioned in the course of one of "Power's" discourses.

I did what I could—told him where it was situated in the skull; that he would find an explanation of it in the dictionary; that some people considered it the vestigial remains of a third eye; and finally, that any doctor could tell him more about it than I could, as it was a physiological fact.

Here I stopped short, although I could have said more, and Mr. Justice McCardie, leaning forward from his seat, said gently:

"—and more than that, Mrs. de Crespigny?—more than that?" and I replied: "Yes, my lord—and more than that!"

He knew, as I knew, of the particular occult significance attached to the pineal gland, and that it would have served no purpose to lay it before the majority of the good souls and true that sat in the jury box.

Since the Judge's death he has spoken to me through the mediumship of Mr. Gerald de Beaure-

paire. He referred to my knowledge throughout the trial that he had not been so ignorant as he professed to be, mentioning it through the medium as a guarantee of his identity.

It has been suggested even by some of his adherents that "Power" was ill-advised in his interruption of the Judge's summing-up.

From this criticism I differ entirely. To begin with, is it not conceivable that with his wider range of vision and greater knowledge he was in a position to know best? The dramatic demonstration was, in my opinion, timed to a nicety, delivered at the *end* of the summing-up—when the effect of it was in no way modified by further antipathetic remarks from the Judge, and the jury retired with the voice of "Power" still reverberating in their ears.

No one present that afternoon could have denied the force of that drama enacted in the Court!

As the Judge approached the final words of his summing-up, I felt Mrs. Morris, who had been sitting by me, leaning against my shoulder, worn out, limp, the tears streaming down her face, suddenly stiffen and become rigid.

The tears ceased. She rose to her feet. There was a moment's pause—a tension in the air.

Then "Power's" voice—if at that moment the controlling force were "Power"—rang out through the Court, the strong clear tones filling the room to the roof:

"Brother Judge—hearken unto my words——!"

There was no doubt about the sensation it caused,

whatever attempts may have been made afterwards to explain it away!

Startled bewilderment, dismay, astonishment, every sort of emotion, showing alarm and perplexity, was portrayed on the faces of all within my view, from the Judge downwards, in the dramatic moment that followed.

But with a face white as the bands at his neck Mr. Justice McCardie ordered the ushers to remove the medium from the Court, and I wonder how many among the lawyers, the press and the jury understood the meaning of that last cry from her "control":

"Do not touch me until I have left this body!"

CHAPTER NINETEEN

THE injunction, however, was disregarded, and for two hours after her removal Mrs. Morris lay unconscious, occasionally under control—sometimes apparently a vagrant, casual control—that filled those of us who understood the danger of a sudden recall from trance, with fear that she might never return. It is sufficiently dangerous to awaken even a sleep-walker!

Had it not been for the cloud of tragedy overhanging the situation, it might well have figured as comedy! Having tried for a fortnight by every sort of device to make the assembled company understand exactly what occurred when "Power" controlled the medium, directly the jury were given the opportunity to judge for themselves she was ordered out of court!

There was a great deal of talk about the "jargon" of which "Power" was accused; anything may be considered jargon by those who do not understand it. We have heard of legal jargon, there may even be some sense in that to those who understand it! The extracts quoted from "Power's" sermons by the defendant's counsel were perfectly intelligible. The meaning of *monism* could have been found in the dictionary; the "grades of ether" so contemptuously

referred to, is no new idea; the Rosicrucians have always postulated four grades of ether, and Sir Oliver Lodge in the witness-box denied that it was nonsense.

But in spite of all the serious testimony to the contrary "Power's" sermons were referred to as "jargon" to the last!

I have perhaps over-emphasized the account of this trial which made so great a sensation when it took place, and made history in the story of Spiritualism. I have quoted to some extent from my own record of it, published in the *Psychic News* at the time, and written while events were fresh in my mind. But in my opinion the importance of this case to Spiritualism, with its verdict, ridiculous in itself, but entirely exonerating Mrs. Meurig Morris from the accusation of fraud, cannot be over-emphasized. It made a definite step in the advance of Spiritualism, and created an interest in the subject that many years of the usual quiet plodding endeavour would have failed to accomplish. For a week, in law circles, little else was talked of; the *Lancet,* in an article headed "Medicine and the Law" testified to the interest aroused among doctors, and should surely have helped to persuade them that trance-mediumship and epilepsy are not synonymous terms!

To me, the entire episode was a never-to-be-forgotten bit of life. I had a much-appreciated opportunity to learn more about the ways of the law and the psychology of law courts that I could ever have hoped for otherwise. It was extraordinarily interest-

ing to watch the faces of the jury, some stolid, unresponsive, determined to give nothing away: some reacting to every fresh suggestion on the part of Judge or witness; all vitally interested in a drama such as had never before been enacted within those walls. I learnt also to admire and respect a man who was subjected to contumely, misrepresentation and, on occasion, to the cheap wit of the disputants, and who, by facing it all courageously and willingly—in his own words—paid in full for much in the past that he regretted, and was honest enough to say so.

The jury were over four hours before delivering their verdict, and when the curious terms of it are taken into consideration the wonder is they arrived at any decision at all! To acquit the medium of fraud and then to say it was "fair comment" to have declared her to have been "found out" is a difficult proposition for the lay mind! The old ordeal of the ducking stool for witches would not have been so long drawn out and perhaps have left less indelible results upon the victim.

From the trial to the human aura may seem something of a jump, but in the course of my evidence in the witness-box Mr. Norman Birkett asked if I believed in auras, and I told him that at the moment I could see his own! In answer to a remark from Serjeant Sullivan, the plaintiff's counsel, Mr. Birkett turned to speak to him and on resuming his cross-examination asked if I could still see his aura.

As his movement had altered the conditions I said "no;" whereupon he upbraided the Serjeant

with: "There—that's *your* fault! If you hadn't interrupted, I should still have got my aura!"—which needless to say entertained me as much as the rest of the Court!

But it was not what is commonly known as the "aura" that I saw; an explanation that in its subtleties would have been thrown away in those surroundings.

It was the etheric or Kilner aura that was visible to me; as it may be visible to anyone with either particularly good physical sight, or the first beginning of clairvoyance. The aura that Dr. Kilner made perceptible through certain screens is not the coloured "astral" aura that varies with the different moods and emotions, nor the mental, that reflects mentality and intellectual effort; it is a radiation of the human frame, having its source in the *etheric* body—that link or "transformer," part physical, part non-physical, that bridges the gulf between physical and astral.

Step by step, as science advances, the claims of the seer are being gradually justified. Even legend or tradition, scoffed at for so long by the disciples of "common sense," is proving that much regarded as mere superstition has been built unconsciously on a basis of fundamental truth.

The human aura or coloured radiance that surrounds the form of man or woman, seen by the clairvoyant and disbelieved in by those who could not see it, can now claim at least consideration in the light of present-day science. There is a school of

philosophers, I believe, on the Continent who have long admitted the existence of this auric emanation; they called it *anthropoflux R.*, which sounds learned but seems to have come to much the same thing.

The particular phenomenon of which I wish to speak is the coloured aura pertaining to the psychic or astral body and subject in appearance to every change of mood and emotion, with a basic colour denoting general temperament: and the mental, so closely associated with the astral that it seems differentiated by the highest type of clairvoyant only, and that registers the working of the mental and intellectual processes.

And to-day science is telling us that there can be no centre of chemical change, no movement of electrons from atom to atom without the creation of a disturbed area in the surrounding ether. Should that ether be vibrating under the influence of light-waves, the waves generated and thrown out by a centre of chemical change must modifty the movement in the ether, and as every length of light-wave in the spectrum has its own colour, a general change and interchange of colour should be the result.

Where there is no reaction from a brain, it may be objected, there is no colour—colour being, of course, an impression only, conveyed by certain wave-lengths to the brain. It may be that the clairvoyant, when functioning on a higher plane, may perceive many colours we are unaware of, but that terms of description lack by which they can be conveyed to our three dimensional understanding; possibly, and

I think probably, the psychic himself cannot bring the perception of them through to the physical plane. But where there are known to be wave-lengths at work, I suppose we may postulate, in certain conditions, colour as a result.

We can observe the process of this change of colour as the result of chemical action for ourselves in the physical world, by throwing salt on the fire, when the result of the chemical changes caused manifest themselves immediately in the colour of the flame.

To carry on the argument, science also tells us that the act of thinking generates heat, which would seem to be following in the grooves of physical law, for light has never yet been generated unaccompanied by heat in greater or lesser degree. When it is realized that the operation of thought actually wastes, eats up the physical matter of the brain tissues, *matter* which it is necessary to replace by food before the exhaustive process of thinking can be continued or resumed, it is presumably not illogical to suggest that the same natural law is at work as in the processes of other parts of the body. The chemical changes presumably ensuing in both cases would cause the inevitable disturbance in the surrounding ether due to the movement of electrons, sending outwards waves varying in length—and therefore in colour could we perceive it—according to the degree of mental or emotional activity exercised.

The chemical disturbances in the brain resulting from acute emotion such as rage, grief and so on, or even the ordinary processes of thought, unceasing

during waking hours, can be imagined to result in the kaleidoscopic changes in the aura—the "disturbed area in the ether" of the scientist—observed and recorded by the clairvoyant of all the ages, each temperament, mood or emotion registering its own particular colour on a plane of more subtle reactions, visible only to that inner sense which either latent or developed lies within every one of us.

And as the "foreign bodies" in glass may mar the perfection of its transparency, so our imperfections, twists, distortions of character, may cause like imperfections in the aura; disharmonies breaking up the perfect ray as though passing through a spectroscope and perceptible in the aura as all the colours of the rainbow; still beautiful but broken up, each, though a part of the perfect ray, incomplete in itself. In that key to many riddles of the universe, the Bible, there are references to this "rainbow" appearance surrounding sometimes a form, sometimes a concourse of people, and the implication given is that the perfect aura is of the ray complete—of pure white light; as in the Transfiguration where "His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light." Always that seems to be the aura ascribed to any representation of the Christ.

In the pure white ray lies the whole octave of colour within the physical plane spectrum—representing in the human aura spirituality, love in its completeness; and gold indicated in the halo of the Saints—and standing for wisdom and all knowledge —the sign manual of intellect in the aura—shines

forth as the beacon of a sublime and divine perfection.

All of which is "extrapolating" *in excelsis*! But as I have already suggested, words may be forgiven to babes and sucklings that would be unjustifiable on the lips of the learned!

There appears to be a good deal of misconception among inquirers with only a surface knowledge of the subject, with regard to "earthbound" spirits. The earthbound soul need not necessarily be either silly nor mischievously disposed. There may be many reasons for the bonds which seem so difficult to break, fetters forged by themselves when in the flesh. It may be perhaps that they cannot understand they are no longer in the flesh, and continue to wander among old scenes, tied to the interests which filled their minds when on earth. It may be the sense of ownership that draws them back to their former possessions, money or jealousy or some ignoble or earthy desire that makes them unable to shake themselves free or to listen to the call of those in the other world who would help them if they could.

The bond of love is a very different matter. The glorious force that inspires the universe, the most potent magnet in God's creation, can never be debasing in its results. Those who return to earth—of which there are many—in obedience to the pull of love are not "earthbound;" they come voluntarily and are obeying the finest urge of which the heart

of man, whether on this plane or the next, is capable. Whether the urge be that of a mutual tie, or the expression of self-sacrifice on the altar of a desire to help those still bound by the limitations of physical matter, they surely do not come within the range of the "earthbound" in any sense at all.

There are several varieties of "hauntings," and although in offering any sort of explanation we, as inquirers, are groping only, these conclusions are built upon experience, and the repetition of the same phenomenon in the same conditions; although so many exceptions seem to be necessary in proving any rule in the methodology of psychic phenomena, that anything like laying down the law is to be carefully avoided. There are, however, a few broad lines which phenomena certainly appear to follow, which would account for the variation in the experience of the percipients.

For instance, there are many cases of a so-called "ghost" who is visible only to one or more members of a family or household; the rest may be entirely unaware of its existence. This would point to special development of the inner senses on the part of the individual who could "see" it. Even should no clairvoyant be present, it would not necessarily mean there was nothing there—as we know from the stories of those "gone over" who so vainly attempt to attract the attention of their friends in this world; it would only mean there was no one present who could see clairvoyantly.

In instances where everyone present, or all the

members of a household, can see or hear the abnormal visitor, it argues a complete or partial manifestation of a sufficiently material nature to cause a reaction on the part of the physical eye, or ear; or in some cases physical sensation of feeling. To produce this phenomenon the assistance of ectoplasm is necessary, and we must presume someone in the immediate neighbourhood with sufficient mediumistic properties to supply it. All "ghosts" sufficiently materialized to be visible to everyone, telekinesis or movement of objects without physical contact, the disturbances caused by *Poltergeist* and so on would fall into this class.

A family may inhabit a house reputed to be haunted for years without the appearance of anything of an abnormal nature; to be succeeded by another family whose lives are made a burden to them by apparitions pleasant or otherwise, due to the presence of one of its members, possibly a child or servant, from whom, unknown to themselves, the "ghost" is able to draw sufficient ectoplasm for physical manifestation.

There is another form of "haunting" that seems to ask for an explanation differing from either of the foregoing, and of which Mr. Frank Hives in his book published by John Lane, "Glimpses into Infinity," gives a good instance.

This appears to be a kind of thought-form or impression thrown off into the ether.

Riding through rough country in New Zealand he saw what he took to be a man, sitting on a fence,

and describes him accurately in his book. He addressed some words to him but got no reply, the figure being apparently concerned with his own thoughts. After a short interval the man got off the fence, walked across to an adjacent pond and threw himself into it. Mr. Hives carefully noted the absence of any splash or disturbance of the water's surface.

All the movements of the figure seem to have been entirely automatic; a mere re-enactment of some incident in the past. There was no sign of any power of initiative, no reaction to any stimulus from outside, nor in fact of consciousness of any sort. There are many stories of a similar nature.

The effect of the action being apparently so completely automatic, tempts one to ask whether such manifestations can be called "ghosts" in the accepted meaning of the term. In these days of television, still in its infancy, it would be premature either to accept or reject speculations of what may or may not be capable of registration on the ether.

May it not be possible that in moments of acute emotion such as would be engendered by murder or suicide, an impression may be projected and registered, and that in the manner of a cinematograph the scene is enacted over and over again until at long last the energy runs down and the image fades away?

That theory may at present be unsatisfactory to the strictly scientific inquirer, although it falls in with those very ancient lines of philosophy which have

long maintained that every act and definite thought projected by the human race are automatically registered in the ether of space for those to read who know how to do so; that we are in fact our own "recording angels." After the modern revelations through scientific discovery and the glimpse we are getting of the possibilities of sound with the ether as recording agent, who is to say such things are not possible?

Of the vagaries of *Poltergeist* I have had one personal experience.

I was staying as a guest, nineteen or twenty years ago, in one of the old Colleges at Oxford. My host was a learned Professor and I should have thought *very* unpromising ground for experiments on the part of mischievous spirits. On arrival my hostess asked me if I objected to sleeping in a "haunted" room, which, as we were strangers to one another until that moment, I thought a rash suggestion—many people I know would have preferred to sleep on the stairs!—especially those who "do not believe in ghosts."

Having agreed to take any risk there might be I asked what particular form of "haunt" was to be expected.

"A noise," was the answer, "sometimes quite deafening. It doesn't happen every night and may be either in the room you are in or in the room above."

"And there isn't a rat on the place," the Professor assured me, "so don't make out it's rats after you've heard it!"

Rats! He need not have warned me!

It was a very low room, so low I could touch the ceiling by reaching up a hand, and panelled in old oak. Quite a good setting for any sort of weird visitor, but apparently nothing was ever seen, only heard. I elicited the further fact that the sounds were not of groaning, nor rattling chains, nor hysterical laughter, but just *noise*, and plenty of it.

So, although not what might be called nervous, I went to bed a little strung up, stayed expectantly awake until three o'clock in the morning, and finally went off to sleep without any sort of manifestation of a disturbing nature having transpired!

The following night I went to bed and to sleep without thinking any more about it.

In the early hours of morning, still pitch-dark, I was crashed into consciousness—I can use no other expression—by the most appalling din it has ever been my fate to experience under any roof!

On bare boards over my head furniture was being pitched and dragged, bumping, tearing across the floor. It was in the room above but owing to the lowness of the ceiling it might have been in the room I was occupying, and at each fresh crash I thought everything must be coming through on top of me. I had forgotten my hostess's warning and only thought how surprisingly inconsiderate of the servants; if they had to get up so early they might at least make less noise about it!

Then a clock outside struck three, an hour at which the most industrious of households would

refuse to rise, and remembering the "haunt" I sat up in bed and took notice.

It went on for about twenty minutes; what might have been boots taken off and flung into every corner of the room, tables overturned, glasses smashed, heavy weights dropped; a never-ceasing, deafening din which stopped as abruptly as though a shutter had suddenly been dropped between myself and it.

In describing it to my hostess I remarked there could not have been a bit of anything left whole in the wreck.

"Would you like to see the room above yours?" she asked, and we went up to an attic room on the floor above.

Bare boards, bare walls, an entirely empty room confronted me; not a trace of any sort of furniture was there. Not so much as a broomstick to be seen!

Whether I heard the sounds clairaudiently, or whether they were conveyed to my physical ears by the atmosphere in the normal manner, I cannot say. I only know I was awakened by them and in full possession of my senses as I sat up and listened to them!

The Professor had told me I was not to say *rats*; but I am not sure that that is not what *he* would have said, if *I* had said, *Poltergeist!*

CHAPTER TWENTY

A. P. Sinnett, the well-known theosophist already mentioned in these pages, was essentially an occultist and very little of a mystic. From him I learnt a good deal of fact and of theory with regard to super-physical law to be rejected or accepted according to the appeal it presented to my own sense of logic and reason; which, although it may sound over self-confident, must be eventually the ultimate appeal for each one of us.

By his critics he was sometimes called credulous. Everyone is accused of credulity sooner or later who believes in what the majority of people do not believe in. But the slow and difficult march of evolution is accomplished in the main through the slow and difficult persistence of minorities, and the pioneers who have had vision concerning matters which cannot be demonstrated in the laboratory or by mathematics, will always be called credulous till the rest of the world finds out there is after all a method in their madness.

Mr. Sinnett was a man of considerable attainment. After relinquishing his position as editor of the *Pioneer* in India he continued to be attached to that paper as scientific correspondent for years after his return to London, which speaks for itself. He told

me of what was stated to be a super-physical law through which ether could be compressed into so solid and invulnerable a consistency—for want of a better word—as to be impenetrable and impervious to all contacts of a physical nature; that in cases of *levitation* this process was called into operation, and that a "sheath" of this description placed round a physical object would form an impenetrable barricade against outside contacts.

Well, that might or might not be. It was interesting and as a theory no more fantastic than many theories I had seen put into practical demonstration in the séance-room would have been accounted by the uninitiated.

The elimination of fear is the first essential in the operating of all super-physical law. "To dare all" and "to be silent" have always figured in the educational course of the would-be initiate from the days of the hierophant of ancient Egypt to the esoteric student of modern times. The vibrations induced by the emotion of fear and conveyed outward through the aura, would tend to break up the "etheric sheath" and destroy the conditions necessary to success. It may be remembered that in the records of the so-called "miracles" of the New Testament there are certain districts mentioned in which Christ was unable to perform them owing to the subjects' want of faith.

Peter was sustained by the water until, through fear, he destroyed the conditions established by the Master of knowledge and of the laws of the universe,

when immediately he began to sink. Fear, in any form, of the future, of disease, of material conditions, is the most destructive element of all the ills that escaped from Pandora's box to plague humanity. It lies behind most of our failures, and brings with it the very shadow from which we would flee.

With the keen interest that every phase of the working of natural law has always aroused within me I readily accepted an invitation which came to me a good many years ago now, to attend a séance with a "fire-medium." She was a Mrs. Annie Hunter, who, under the control of an ancient fire-worshipper, was said to handle fire and live coals with her bare hands as Daniel Home had done some years previously. The circle had been organized by Mr. Gambier Bolton and naturally I jumped at the opportunity.

We met in a large, empty house in St. John's Wood in broad daylight. The circle consisted of ten or twelve persons, some of whom I knew, some were strangers. A newspaper correspondent from a well-known daily was among them, and we sat in a semi-circle before a large grate in which a red-hot fire of coal and coke was glowing.

After a short interval the reporter from the daily paper was invited to go down into the cellar and select a log of wood from the stack he would find there.

He did so, bringing back a log of a size usually burned in ordinary grates; it was placed on the fire and turned about until it was red-hot. Mrs. Hunter,

whose hands had been thoroughly examined by a doctor present and pronounced to be in a perfectly normal state—they had been washed just previously with soap and hot water—then went into trance.

When she rose to her feet she was to all appearance a totally different personality—gave an impression of age, became very excited, gesticulating and repeating a word that to me sounded like "Maseta" over and over again. It has since been suggested it might have been "Mazda," the name of ancient Persia's fire-god!

After a few minutes of energetic declamation she walked to the fire and with her bare hands removed the glowing log, passing it from hand to hand while she walked round the circle. Finally, she stopped opposite the reporter and in spite of a certain amount of natural alarm that made him shrink away, brought the log so close to his rather heavy crop of hair that we could hear it sizzle!—a fact he commented on in his own account of the sitting next morning.

Then for some reason known, I suppose, to the "control," certainly not to me, she singled me out and offered me the log, still red-hot, as it had been several times re-heated in the fire.

While the medium had been walking about with the log I had been busy reasoning in my own mind to the effect that every phenomenon connected with physical law, great or small, must be obedient to cause and effect. If there were any apparent variation from this rule it must be attributed, in the

absence of other explanation, to the superimposing of a super-physical law—some still more potent law that could abrogate the other.

According to the laws of matter, human flesh, when placed in contact with a red-hot log, must *burn*; whether the subject be in trance or asleep or dead, that law would operate.

But here was a case where it was not operating!

Therefore it was to be presumed some superior law had been called into action, and I remembered the "etheric sheath" which so far I had only known in theory.

It looked as though that process might be the key to the situation. How, I could not say; certainly through no power of mine. But my knowledge of it, first theoretically and now being, as it seemed, put into practice before my eyes, gave me the *faith* to conclude that as the medium's hand was not burned, neither would mine be; the law in operation would equally protect me.

So without a qualm I put out my bare hand and she laid the radiantly glowing log upon it and left it there while she walked round the circle; not for long but quite long enough, as the newspaper correspondent put in his report next day, for my hand to have been burnt to the bone in ordinary circumstances.

When she removed it there was not so much as a red mark!

Logic, common sense and the slight knowledge of occult law had prevented me from feeling any fear. I

did nothing. I do not know how to operate the law; it was due to no effort of will on my part. I was merely the means through which the operator was able to achieve the desired end—and unless such a medium were present, wild horses would not persuade me to take any red-hot log off any fire!

But it was a wonderful experience. As I looked down on the log lying on my open palm in defiance of all the laws of physics as we knew them, I *knew* that every word of the records of the marvels worked by Christ was *true*; not to be explained away as the Church itself seems inclined to do to-day, as fairy tales, distorted tradition, the accretions of the centuries' inaccuracies. But the bald truth; the record of One who said He came to work through the law and not to destroy it.

I should not presume to offer an experience so difficult for the inexperienced to accept, on the testimony of my word alone. I append here the testimony of two eye-witnesses, members of the circle; both letters I quote from the newspapers in which they appeared.

The first is from Lieut.-Colonel E. R. Johnson, under the heading of "More about the red-hot log":

"SIR,

"I was at the séance referred to by Mrs. Champion de Crespigny in the *Daily News* of December 13th. The medium came first of all to me holding the burning log dropping red-hot fragments of wood which fell on the floor.

"She intimated, though not in words, that it should be placed on my head. I naturally hesitated because nature has left me quite unprotected on that part of my body, and I remembered too that I was wearing a new suit of clothes which might suffer even if my head escaped injury.

"Mrs. de Crespigny gallantly held out her hand and held the burning log for some time.

E. R. JOHNSON, I.M.S.
(Retired)"

Windham Club,
St. James's Square.

The second letter is from Mr. James Coates, Ph.D. The letter is too long to quote in full; the following extract will be sufficient:

"I should not refer to the extraordinary incident mentioned by Mrs. de Crespigny had I not been present and witnessed the fact."

Mr. Coates referred to an address given by me in Brighton at which he had been present.

"At the conclusion I asked if she would tell us of her experience with a fire-medium in St. John's Wood. . . . Mrs. de Crespigny then told us of her experiences, but added that she had less hesitation in stating the facts as the writer of this was an eye-witness.

"The occurrence is in direct opposition to our

conception of physical law, and it indicates the operation of some super-physical powers which are beyond our present knowledge, but within the knowledge of super-physical beings. By the damage which the *fearing* journalist sustained, and the immunity which the *passive* Mrs. de Crespigny obtained, we at least learn that part of the control of those powers is due to the *mental psychic* part of the sitters; and this suggests some explanation of the difference in results experienced by sitters of varying temperaments and this in physical phenomena too."

The account which appeared in the *Daily Express* the following morning and which I still have, is a corroboration of what I have already given. I will merely quote the sentence in which my part in the incident is mentioned:

"Again the log was put back in the fire. It was then carried by the medium and placed on the open palm of another woman." (The reporter did not know my name.) "It was not there long, but quite long enough to have burned it under normal conditions. She felt no pain. . . . Later the *Daily Express* representative attempted to pick the log off the fire. It was impossible to hold it for even a fractional part of a second. . . . The performance is perplexing. There was no cabinet, no darkness, none of the usual dubious appanages of spiritualism. It all took place within a twelve-foot circle in full light."

This experience, although a wonderful and dramatic incident in my own life, proving the truth of many of the Biblical records of wonders worked by the initiated, I make no claim to have been in any way unique. It is well-known that Daniel Home was able to handle live coals with impunity, and the following account, sent by a reliable eye-witness, of "walking through fire" in India, appears to have been worked through a law similar to that in operation at the house in St. John's Wood. I give it more or less in his own words.

He describes having been present on three occasions when, by virtue of the power over fire possessed by Syed Husein Atashi, many persons were able to walk uninjured through glowing embers and through flames.

In each instance a large number of spectators, including well-known British and Indian ladies and gentlemen, witnessed the spectacle. The acting Police Commissioner presided on the first occasion, which took place on the 17th of November, 1927.

A trench twelve feet long, four feet wide, by one foot deep, had been filled with glowing embers of about half a ton of burning firewood. On the arrival of the Police Commissioner, Syed Husein Atashi, calling aloud repeatedly the word "Gulzar," invited those present to walk through the trench without fear.

Two Mohammedans then entered the trench.

Taking courage from this example, several people, among whom were a few Parsee ladies, followed

bare-footed from one end of the trench to the other.

No one complained of hurt.

The writer also took off his shoes and walked in his socks through the glowing embers, feeling only the sensation of treading on a slightly warm rough surface.

Syed Husein Atashi then had pieces of matting thrown on to the embers, and when these were burning, again asked anyone who desired to pass through the flames. Several spectators did so without injury.

Lastly, pieces of matting were saturated with paraffin and flung into the trench. Again people walked unharmed through the flames that reached their knees.

A little Mohammedan girl about eight and her brother about ten passed through the fire; and the loin-cloth of a young Hindu who inadvertently placed his foot *outside the limits of the trench* (the italics are mine) caught fire but his skin was not scorched. A doctor who noticed the incident stated that in the ordinary course of events the youth would have been burned seriously enough to necessitate his immediate removal to hospital.

This statement is endorsed by the British Resident of Gwalior State.

The Biblical story of the casting of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego into the fiery furnace may possibly be an example of the same super-physical law in operation. We are told that the three men were bound in their coats and other garments and

thrown into a furnace so hot that the men who threw them in were slain themselves.

After a short interval Nebuchadnezzar, unable to believe his own eyes, rose up and asked: "Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?" and when told this was so, protested: "Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." Finally it is recorded that the great assembly present "saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them."

Arguing from the circumstances of the fire-walkers' demonstration in India, and by my own experience in St. John's Wood, we may presume the fourth man seen by King Nebuchadnezzar was the medium—or occultist—through whom the necessary laws were put into operation. It was of old, just as it is to-day, a natural human impulse to attribute any vision of a "heavenly visitant" to the most exalted source. We need hardly accept the statement in its literal sense, that "God walked in the Garden of Eden in the cool of the day."

Were the claims often made by well-meaning persons of having interviewed the Christ Himself, or even of being directly associated with guides from the highest spheres, the claimants would probably not be here to make them; for the rate and power of the attendant vibrations would be absolutely disintegrating to any physical body on so low a level as

the earth. At best we must suppose them to be messengers or delegates of some sort.

In the light of persistent tradition from the past, well-attested confirmation from India and all parts of the world, added to the experience of many persons in modern times, the facts can hardly be denied; facts not only in connection with fire-phenomena, but with a wider range of physical manifestations. The accepted marvels of scientific discovery surely prove that almost all things are possible; why should it appear to be so insuperably difficult for the average mind to accept the further possibilities of super-physical law—so difficult that the Church, finding itself unable to explain, is attempting to deny?

The scientist shrinks from an investigation where the facts appear to be on so unstable a basis as to make reliable evidence hard to come by. Once again, I remind, "fools step in where angels fear to tread." The time may come, is, I think, coming, when the world, so far as psychical research is concerned, will be grateful to the fools for having braved public opinion and, in spite of it, torn aside the veil between the two worlds!

A certain bishop not so many years ago wrote a book in which he discredited all the New Testament "miracles" except those of healing—though why those should have been exempt it seemed hard to say.

Having been given so wonderful an experience myself I considered it "up to me" to go and tell him

of it—the learned sometimes get so wedged in among the higher branches of their particular tree that they find it almost impossible to climb down.

I have always considered it one of the bravest acts of my life when—though I had little hope of the result—I bearded him in his den.

He was kindness and courtesy itself and we had an interesting talk on reincarnation.

But when it came to the burning log I am quite sure he did not believe a word I said!

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

ONE of the many arguments advanced against spiritualism, meaning communication with those upon a higher plane through a medium, is that it interferes with the personal development of the individual. That is the main root of the hostility to the subject so long shown by so many theosophists; an attitude on their part that is becoming greatly modified as the uses of psychic research, as a foundation stone for many forms of structure, are becoming more and more evident.

But to a certain extent the objection is valid.

To take the easier road through an intermediary, instead of developing the powers that lie latent within each one of us, has been called the lazy man's route to the goal in view.

The trouble is that in the strenuous and exacting world of physical matter in which we live to-day the training and study requisite for such development present an almost impossible proposition to men and women leading ordinarily busy lives. The time and energy demanded are out of reach, and the suggestion that all members of the human race should develop along psychic lines would be more or less a counsel of perfection.

But the fact remains. It would be better assuredly,

from the point of their own evolvement, for them to learn to rise to the level of those who communicate, instead of asking them to descend to ours. In the latter case it does *us* no good from the point of view of self-development; even though on the other hand it may do *them* no harm—and in speaking of development I mean the highest form of it, not a flooding of the community with second-class clairvoyance and clairaudience, of which there is already more than enough.

The first step toward the unfoldment of the inner senses, clairvoyance, clairaudience, psychometrical readings and so on, is the practice of that most difficult exercise in the world—concentration. Not the concentration, let it be noted, that comes from interest in the subject in hand. To be absorbed in the occupation of the moment is very necessary to success concerning that subject, but for the time being, as regards the mind, it is allowing it to run along the line of least resistance. The concentration that counts as a preliminary to any form of mental or psychic development lies in the power to fix the mind upon something that in itself is *not* interesting, something from which the mind wishes to stray and has to be recalled by the disciplinary action of the will; a deliberate focusing of the attention upon some object or, better still, some abstract quality, and refusing to allow it to wander, for a definite period, in spite of any attempt on its part to do so.

Real "one-point" concentration, although only a first step on the road, is exceedingly difficult of

accomplishment. It may be years before sufficient control over the mind is established to keep the attention immovably fixed on anything, either concrete or abstract, for more than ten minutes—if as much. I know an advanced psychic who practised it for five years before he could say the power was his to any noticeable degree. The mind *will* wander; consequently it is often said that we cannot control our thoughts. But we *can*, if we go the right way to work and moreover in the doing of it we incidentally become more valuable members of the community in that through command of the mind we can control the body, learn to think clearly and lucidly, and in the more advanced stages of the practice become an influence in our immediate surroundings that has to be reckoned with.

This power of concentration, developed and amplified until complete control of the mind is attained, and the attention can be focused upon a given point at will for an indefinite time, is the first step in occult growth. It cannot be evaded. Often, would-be students complain that in their particular circumstances it is impossible to give the time, that the effort produces headache, that the necessary conditions of silence and detachment are out of reach. There is but one answer to such complaints—that their training in occultism must be deferred until such time as the fulfilment of the conditions should become possible; there will be no abrogation of law to suit anyone's convenience or particular circumstances. If the conditions cannot be fulfilled,

training in occultism will have to be postponed. But my experience in life has been that for the most part where there is a will there is a way.

The importance of this practice of concentration is emphasized in all the religions of civilizations, ancient and modern, although comparatively few of their votaries understand the inner working of the forms they may be practising. It is enjoined throughout the philosophies of the East; in the Hermetic Doctrines of ancient Egypt, where the paramount importance of the absolute control of the mind was the very essence of the teaching; it is the basis of Indian Yoga and the preliminary to the meditation that gradually enabled the saints, Christian and otherwise, old and new, to see visions and to hear voices. The occultist and the mystic must indeed travel by the same path to reach an identical goal, but while the former takes notice of the signposts and understands the meaning of the obstacles he has surmounted on the journey, and can be therefore perhaps of more assistance to those who would follow in his footsteps, the mystic keeps his eyes fixed upon the Star in the East, walks blindly along the road of which he takes no notice and arrives, not knowing how he got there perhaps, nor anything of God's wonderful laws which have been put into operation, more or less unconsciously, for the attainment of his end.

Who is to say which is the better part? It must be each one to his taste! But the *law* in each case must be fulfilled, and the secret lying behind the practice

of concentration has been explained along lines that are at the least plausible.

The mill which is the brain is for ever grinding; during our waking hours inexorably, ceaselessly transmuting the physical tissues into the more subtle form of thought. In modern-day philosophy the thought as a *thing* is coming into its own. Those interested in psychic research know that *thought* can be not only seen, and transmitted, but on occasion photographed, which, as the physical matter of the brain becomes exhausted in the process of its generation, should not be impossible to accept as at least a working hypothesis.

As a result of these processes of the brain, myriads of vibrations so rapid as to be hardly more definite than a sustained quiver are discharged into the aura —again an admissible hypothesis in the light of the area of disturbed ether granted by the scientists as necessarily surrounding any centre of chemical change.

Professor d'Orsay, and no doubt others, maintain that thought-processes generate heat as a result of the definite chemical changes that take place in the brain.

Through this envelope of constant motion it is almost impossible, so our "communicators" tell us, for vibrations of a still more subtle nature to penetrate; take as an analogy the fact that wireless-waves travel more easily at night, owing to the absence of disturbance in the ether of light-waves, than by day.

Arrest this rapid movement in the aura by stilling the processes going on in the brain, thought succeeding thought in restless procession, through focusing the mind steadily upon one point and refusing to allow it to wander, and the influences and suggestions from higher planes can then be conveyed to the consciousness without distortion or deflection; just as perfect reflections can be obtained from the surface of still water, but not if it be broken up into ripples.

The power of concentration is also a means of leaving the physical body at will.

Different teachers have different methods. Lord Tennyson tells us he left the body through the constant repetition of his name. The Rosicrucian method is a favourite with some students, and incidentally it is also a pleasant exercise of the imagination, a visualization of the growth of a flower from seed to blossom. First, picture to yourself a seed in the earth, darkness all around it, sending out the succulent white roots from beneath to grope among the particles of brown soil for stability and sustenance. Then see the strong white shoot above, starting on adventure, deterred by no obstacle on its journey to the light; twisting in between the little hard clods that hinder and eventually piercing the surface and getting its first glimpse of the world.

As it is touched by the light of heaven, it turns from white to palest green, or perhaps a rosy red, and gathers strength and solidity before starting on the next stage of the journey.

Watch it with the eyes of your mind as it mounts higher into the air from which it now draws half its strength and vitality. You can see it swell as it drinks in the raindrops and the leaves begin to push out from each side; have a clean mental vision of the form and characteristics of them, large or small, simple shapes with a midrib, or serrated and delicate as lace-work. If the form of them should be left hazy and indeterminate, there will always be a disturbing sense of incompleteness, want of definiteness when you subsequently build up the picture.

Finally the buds appear, singly or in clusters, according to your own conception; enfolded tightly in the closed green calyx, they swell slowly, until under the warm rays of the sun the climax arrives and the treasure within, pink, blue, yellow or of glistening white, as created by your mind, appears in full perfection, and if you have truly concentrated on its growth and fulfilment you may even be conscious of the sweetness of its scented aura.

Three times I have achieved conscious absence from the body through this process; on the first occasion, standing by my bed and looking down on my body lying inert—and I was so astonished that I snapped back into it without further adventure! But at the end of the mental visualization I once found myself standing on a wide lawn of vivid green grass, in an atmosphere that I can only describe as of a radiant sort of gold dust—exquisite, with shadows cast by high trees that fell across the grass as blots of iridescent colour. In the distance, my husband was

sitting reading. He looked up and his face lit on seeing me standing there, and I—in the moment of recognition—back I flashed into my body—with a memory I shall never forget so long as I live!

A dream?

Have I lived all these years without being able to distinguish between that and a dream?

Let others who have had the same experience answer.

Not in a day nor a month, not possibly even a year, but at long last, when all effort in the performance has ceased, patience and pertinacity will have its reward. But real concentration that is going to count is a very slow process.

The "secrets" of the inner knowledge, the development of man's higher powers have been kept and guarded until as a race he was ready for initiation. The Angel with the flaming sword has stood at the door and, as ever, saved him from himself. The knowledge has been handed down through past ages by certain sects and individuals; the Gnostics, the Freemasons, Quakers, Rosicrucians, and certainly, in some degree, the Roman Catholic Church. Psychic research is unveiling some of them, but the deepest and by far the most important concern the powers that lie within the man himself, the realization and contacting of the God within.

This "inner knowledge" to which the alluring word "secret" is often applied, is no fairy tale, but so far from being as sensational as the word might imply, the tyro is tempted to protest, as Naaman pro-

tested, against the simplicity of the prophet's exhortation to bathe in the River Jordan as a cure for his ills, at the prosaic nature of the foundations from which the main structure is to spring. As concentration is one of the first essentials, so is the development of the will through the conservation and transmutation of energy.

The scientist will tell you that as regards physical matter nothing can give out more energy than it possesses. That sounds trite, but it is sometimes necessary to emphasize known facts through repetition.

Energy in some of its forms can not only be given out but can also be conserved for years and used when desired; as a result of every chemical change a certain amount of energy is freed. We are continually performing this process in the physical world of "bottling up" energy in ways both great and small. We do it when winding up a watch or any mechanical toy; it is stored in the spring, and the energy remains latent until gradually released.

On a large scale, energy is stored in the vast coalfields of the world. The energy that was poured into the earth from radio-active sources has lain there, stored and inactive; neither destroyed nor lost, but latent, waiting until through the development of his intellectual faculties man has been able to release it and use it for his own ends. Even then it is not destroyed, only re-distributed, obtaining its reactions in a different form.

The story of the schoolboy who, when asked what

electricity was and having sought vainly for inspiration, answered desperately: "God knows!" might equally well be told of energy, for, to paraphrase the Biblical aphorism, only by its works do we know it.

But the laws governing its relation to physical matter seem to be equally applicable, with certain modifications, to the higher levels, both mental and spiritual—planes upon which mind and will apparently function through direct contacts without the intervention necessary in physical conditions, such as manipulation or the use of appropriate instruments; *will* being always the guiding principle without which energy is useless on any plane, a premise not altogether absurd in these days when science is beginning to believe that all is mind, and that mind is everywhere.

To develop a will worth the name, something that counts, that has behind it sufficient dynamic force to ensure the desired reactions, definite laws must be obeyed. In support of this we should marshal the evidence emphasizing the supreme importance and efficacy of man's will rightly directed, to be found in our own Scriptures and other ancient writings.

Not only are Christ's teachings rich in exhortations to this end, but in the Old Testament continual reference is made to the advantages, even from a worldly point of view, to him "that overcometh." This is another of the basic "occult secrets," prosaic and familiar as it may sound, that had it been as generally appreciated as it is now becoming among those who "understand" at an earlier stage in man's

evolution, he might easily in the wielding of it have wrought his own destruction. Again the Angel with the flaming sword has stood guard to save him from himself.

It would almost seem that the primary object of the descent of spirit into matter was the development of will-power, on the rough and sometimes cruel grindstone of life on earth. Why—it is beyond our power to conjecture. It might be imagined that an Almighty Will could have accomplished all its ends without pursuing what appears to be so laborious a method in the doing of it. It may be that, as Professor Bergson and other philosophers have suggested, the Deity Himself is evolving and has not yet reached the pinnacle of a final perfection? That we human beings should be put through so drastic an ordeal as life in physical conditions, suggests that human consciousness as part of His own consciousness is acquiring through the experience of pain and endeavour something that is to be added to the sum-total of the eventual whole. If indeed this is not so, the skein of evolution appears to be a greater tangle than ever, and all we go through here a sort of wanton sport on the part of the Creator—and no sane mind can believe that!

So, not understanding, we must leave it and do the best we can with what we *can* understand, and by a careful consideration of the lights available, we gather that man's will has in it all the power, all the magic, all the potentialities of the Divine Will of which it is a part.

The maxim "He that ruleth his spirit is greater than he that taketh a city" is so familiar to all of us that it has become a platitude that does not even go in at one ear, much less travels so far as to go out at the other!—which is the way of platitudes, however true they may be. But it is no platitude to the occultist, who knows and understands the bald truth lying at the back of it. No mere poetical figure of speech, but a vital fact.

He that has mastered the weaknesses of the flesh that is his body, that has subdued the physical particles of it and controlled their natural reactions to stimuli either from without or from within, has drawn to himself a power to be reckoned with; has become the focus of a force *actually* more potent in its influence over men and matter, than the forcefulness essential to the generalship that can take a city.

The messages in Revelation to the Churches, strike the same note. To Ephesus: "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the Tree of Life."—To Smyrna: "And he that overcometh and keepeth my works until the end (fulfils the *law*) to him will I give power over the nations."—"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame."—"To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the *hidden manna*," and, in the XXIst Chapter of the same Book: "He that overcometh shall inherit all things."

Initiation into the mysteries of Isis included many ordeals and trials by which the will-power of the

hierophant would be strengthened and developed. Ordeal by fire, by water, by air, all had to be faced, and the fears of the flesh brought into subjection by the will. An exacting priesthood, having themselves been subjected to like trials, saw to it that none following in their footsteps should evade payment of the uttermost farthing.

According to Hermetic Doctrines, special reward was promised to those who had strong wills—not "self-will" to be imposed upon others, but the will that masters the self, that rules the mind and through the mind the body. The same thread runs through the fibre of the *Yoga* of the East; will-power deliberately developed, according to our ideas perhaps misapplied in the majority of instances, but pointing to a knowledge of the power that lies behind. Faith reinforced by such well-directed energy can in truth remove mountains.

Rudyard Kipling touches the fringe of the inner knowledge in "If," the poem that, having outlined almost every channel for self-discipline, epitomizes the result of such exercise in the line:

"The world is yours and all that there is in it."

No mere figure of speech, but hard fact.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

NOT only can this power of the will—potentially as mighty a force as the Divine Will of which it is a part—be developed, it can be conserved, as can energy, of which it would seem to be a manifestation, through the exercise of a fundamental law analogous to the physical.

The processes necessary to this end were known to and appreciated by the initiates and hierophants of old and are also to be found in terms that all who run may read, in our own Scriptures and the sacred writings of other religions. The means are at hand for all. The will can be deliberately developed and reinforced through the reactions to be found in daily life. There is no life high or low, great or small, lacking in the straw for the making of the bricks so essential to building up of character.

The opportunities to capture and store the power that will definitely influence the material as well as the mental conditions of circumstance, are within the grasp of each and all; the same means through which the "magicians" of Egypt, the fakirs of the East, the initiate wherever he is to be found, has acquired control over certain generally accepted "laws of nature."

To treat so vast a subject briefly, the end is

achieved by capturing and storing the force that lies behind all desires and every form of temptation, whether of the material plane or the mental. Desire in any form is a stimulation exercised by some influence possibly unseen but apprehensible, with driving power behind it; such power that it can persuade us into actions that may be contrary to every instinct and even to common sense. It makes us do things "against our will"—an admission of its superior strength—goading the flesh or the mentality into actions that may be called wrong or may only be called foolish. But under whatever heading it may be ranged, and whatever its source, it is the manifestation of a force that can bend the will to its own purposes. It is a demonstration of *energy*.

If, through giving in to it, it obtain its reaction, the energy is dissipated, wasted; you have had your opportunity and lost it.

If, on the contrary, you refuse to succumb, you can deliberately *store* it—"bottle" it, just as the energy of the coal-fields is "bottled"—and reserve it deliberately for future use. The power lying behind the temptation may be transmuted; not permitted to exhaust itself in a useless reaction, but reserved and directed into a different channel as desired.

It can be done!

Every time, even in the little trifles of life, when you are conscious of the current of temptation assailing you in any form—to say perhaps what would be better left unsaid—to indulge in small bad habits—

to yield to the allure of fame, praise, self-indulgence of any sort—instead of weakly giving way, take a long breath, think to yourself: "I take this power; it is mine; I store it for future use," and gradually you will become aware of it in your nerves, your brain, you will be conscious of something definite *acquired* —and you will see the results. You will become to a great extent master of your fate.

Each act of self-indulgence squanders the precious force that might be yours.

What was Christ's ordeal in the wilderness but a development and storing of the power through which, according to *law*, as He said Himself, His wonders were subsequently performed? What would have been the sense of fasting for "forty days" unless by it some end was to be achieved? Mastery of the flesh that He had taken on—flesh that was subject to the weaknesses of the material body, was surely the end in view? And finally having, through fulfilment of the law, drawn to Himself force in abundance, the consciousness of the energy stored within Him prompted the subsequent "temptation" through the knowledge that all the cities of the world were literally at His feet.

Answer to prayer is promised "if ye keep the Commandments," and *fasting* is coupled with the exhortation to pray; the self-discipline that will mean dynamic force behind the prayer. Man becomes a battery that can command reactions. If this were more fully understood we should not hear so much about "miraculous answer to prayer,"

with nobody more surprised at getting any result than the supplicant!

This power to acquire and conserve a store of dynamic energy is again one of the "occult secrets," one of the ways in which God made man in His own likeness, endowing him with God-like potentialities. The force so acquired must not be directed to selfish ends, but is legitimate enough if applied for the honest furtherance of work in this life, or for the good of others; one of the means given to us for accomplishing life's task with all our might.

Tradition has it that the lost continent of Atlantis came to grief owing to the advanced knowledge of occultism possessed by the Atlanteans, who used it for personal aggrandizement. Be that as it may, no truer word according to occult law was ever spoken than by the Roman soldiers at the Crucifixion when they cried: "He saved others; Himself He cannot save!"—who could have summoned legions of angels to His help at will.

To those who find hypotheses such as the above unconvincing and are inclined to scoff, I would only say—Try it!

This development is obviously on the positive side of evolution and is not to be recommended to anyone desirous of purely mediumistic powers. The occultist and the medium are of opposite polarity. Christ was not a medium in the sense in which we use the word. The wonders He performed were not achieved by an extraneous force making use of Him as a mere channel, but by His innate knowledge and power to work

through laws of which He was a supreme Master. When man has achieved concentration, which is master of the mind, and self-denial, which is mastery of the body, he will have made a long step forward on the journey upward, toward the God in whose image he was made.

Reference to the positive and negative aspects of human development drifts naturally into another field of speculation as regards mediumship.

I have before me a list of seventy-eight well-known accredited mediums, of both sexes. Doubtless there are many more who do not happen to be on this list. But of those seventy-eight, sixty-one are women. Why should this be?

Allowing that men's work in the world would of necessity preclude some who might have a natural gift for mediumship from following it up, the proportion of men to women still remains unaccounted for; moreover, the same objection would hold as regards the latter no less than the former. The work that falls ordinarily to the lot of women would be a hopeless bar to the practice of really good mediumship and would stand in the way of finished development quite as much as in the case of the other sex. Most of us know from experience without further argument, that, of trance and other forms of mental mediumship, far more exponents are to be found among women than men.

I suggest the clue to it is to be found in the story of the Creation—the age-old story with the thread of truth running through it; broken here, perhaps,

and tangled there, but still discernible, and science with its discoveries of modern miracles is helping to straighten it out, to bridge the gaps and opening our eyes to the possibility that after all the Bible may have known all the time, and in spite of its critics, what it was talking about.

Man's body was made of the dust of the earth; of matter without modification, and it was found to be inadequate as an instrument through which spirit could function. To put it crudely in terms of to-day, the gap between the wave-lengths was too wide to make any form of synchronization possible between spirit in its higher forms, and matter.

A helpmeet, or go-between—I have always thought the former word arbitrarily and erroneously interpreted—was necessary; something that perhaps might be called a "transformer."

So God created woman. He gave her a body, not of the dust of the earth, not of matter unmodified, but matter already inspired with spirit; a body in the allegorical language of the text, made from Adam's rib, and with that much advantage at the start capable of contacting a shorter and more spiritual wave-length than the more material body of the male.

Now let this be not for a moment interpreted as a claim for superior sanctity on the part of woman! It is not! The assumption is merely a suggestion that in the more delicate fibre of the female body may lie a possibility of making finer contacts by the mind of which it is the instrument; that the reactions pro-

duced may be of a quality not so capable of endurance or achievement on the material plane as those of the other sex, but able to make closer contacts with the more spiritual side of nature.

This might account for what is called—and it is a real thing—feminine intuition, the fact that matter talks to man more eloquently than to woman, and the impulse that has led him to put her on a pedestal —of a sort!—and to consider a fall from grace on her part a greater descent than in his own case?

All of which is not to imply any kind of superiority; only that where the man may have an advantage on the infra-red end of the spectrum, the woman may gain something on the ultra-violet.

Which is an allegory!—built perhaps of the stuff of which dreams are made. But what would life be without its dreams?

The theory of the special functions of the *etheric* body held by theosophists and others who have founded it on the ancient writings and the results of clairvoyance, differs from the views of most spiritualists. But in my opinion and without any wish to dogmatize, the theosophical reading appears to be on the side of logic, and to throw some light on the idiosyncrasies of sex.

I will put it as briefly as possible. The physical body is built up of physical matter; the astral body, in which we function on the astral plane, consists of astral or super-physical substance. Like East and West, "never the two can meet" without an intermediary—a medium of some sort to bridge the gap.

We know this to be the case in the séance-room, where ectoplasm plays the part of intermediary.

In the constitution of man himself the etheric body is the link between the other two; again a sort of "transformer"; and is the body, the aura of which Dr. Kilner was able to make visible through his arrangement of screens; a very different matter from the *astral* aura, which registers in varying colours the moods and emotions, and is only perceived through clairvoyant vision. The etheric aura is discernible to very good normal sight or to the beginning of clairvoyance.

The etheric body, in its office of link, keeps the physical and astral bodies together; but it is never the vehicle of the *consciousness*. Through certain processes it is projected in sleep, releasing the astral body to function on other planes while it remains in the near neighbourhood of the physical vehicle to which it belongs and is attached, in a condition which has been described by clairvoyants as absolute passivity.

It can be artificially released or projected through the action of an anæsthetic, and leaves the physical body finally at death, when the umbilical cord is severed—"the silver cord be broken" in Biblical language—and the astral body is freed never to return.

The etheric body is said to disintegrate *pari passu* with the physical, in the neighbourhood of which it remains, and is supposed to be the basis of many a story of graveyard "ghosts"; a shadow-body that,

when it has played its part, is re-absorbed eventually by the ether whence it had its source.

Many people can see the etheric aura, myself among them, who are not sufficiently clairvoyant to see the astral. My own powers of clairvoyance are very slight, and the result of deliberate training; but I have to a certain extent "etheric" sight. I can see the atmosphere, the currents of air in a room, and on two or three occasions on waking I have seen the whole of space before my eyes entirely filled with tiny geometrical shapes—triangles, oblongs, diamonds, circles, squares—and watched them till they faded out. It is said to be a sign of having just returned from the mental plane, but I have no evidence to sustain the assertion! I only know it was a curious phenomenon which must have some cause behind it.

The etheric aura is visible as a blue-grey mist, projecting for a distance of about six inches round every living form. I have seen the "shadow" of my hand outside the hand when the latter has on occasion gone "dead." It is interesting to try the experiment of placing the tips of the fingers of both hands within two inches of each other in a good light against a dark background and you will quite possibly see the "mist" between them, and even its formation of threads, much finer than hairs, streaming from the finger-tips. If you move your hands the "mist" will move with them.

No doubt it will be remarked: "A natural emanation from the body!" Possibly—whatever it may be

we may be sure it is "natural," though it may not be entirely physical.

The aura of fresh flowers can be very apparent—not in colour; only as rapid movement of the atmosphere, much the same as can be seen rising from the earth on a very hot day. As the flower withers the aura fades away.

According to the theory with which I am dealing, the physical and etheric bodies are of opposite polarity. They consequently hang together. The waste of tissue caused by the usual activities during the day, transforms the polarity of the physical into its opposite, and as two bodies of similar polarity are bound to part, the etheric leaves the physical, the astral is freed, and sleep ensues.

During the hours of rest and recuperation the process is reversed; a re-adjustment of polarization takes place automatically, the bodies re-unite, and the sleeper awakes.

It is said that the polarization of the bodies is opposite in man and in woman; in the former the physical body is positive; in the latter negative. This would perhaps confirm the implications of the story in Genesis, and might account for the male being in closer touch with the things of earth. It is often referred to as "a man's world," which up to the present time it certainly has been. His to deal with and to conquer, to subdue matter, the thorns and thistles that were his inheritance outside the Garden of Eden, and to wrest a livelihood from the soil, since the days of the Stone Age. He gets more

out of the world than does woman, who has in consequence been more inclined to keep one eye on the other world—and hope for the best!

But heredity has been doing its work; confusing the issues, and by now there must be so much of the woman in man and of the man in woman that generalization becomes a stumbling-block and should be treated cautiously.

That intuition at least, has become the heritage of both sexes was apparently the opinion of a certain judge when offering the following advice to a newly joined colleague on the Bench. "Give your verdict with confidence, for it is sure to be right; but don't give your reasons because they are sure to be wrong!"

Is it in this difference of polarity that we must look for a clue to the undue proportion of women as mediums? Has the instrument through which man must make his contacts with dense matter a "bias" in the direction of the material, while woman with a physical body of negative polarity faces toward the spiritual?

The last century was pre-eminently a period of physical achievement. Youth to-day, suffering from the deplorable reactions of the War, attributes present ills to the errors of its forbears, is inclined to blame science for the ingenious instruments of destruction, and its immediate predecessors for having landed the world in the most prodigious mess it has ever known.

But, putting aside the fact that every generation

has to pay for the sins of its predecessors, and that the War was the culmination for which all the generations of all time were responsible, the young people of to-day should bear in mind the benefits accruing to themselves at the present time from the labour and effort of those fathers and grandfathers.

It was presumably the "job" of the past century to concern itself mainly with the fuller development of matter; men's minds turned naturally toward discovery, invention, the perfecting of things to do with the physical plane, and a mechanistic outlook leading to materialism was a natural corollary. And in this connexion the words of Professor Millikan the American physicist should not be forgotten—that for one destructive use to which a scientific discovery can be put, such as poisons, high explosives, gases and so on, at least six beneficent uses will be found.

In such conditions, influencing and influenced by the current trend of thought, it was only natural that phenomena of a physical nature should be in the ascendant rather than those of higher levels.

It is however in the field of *mental* mediumship that I believe the future of spiritualism to lie. As a communicator of some note said to me not long ago: "The mental plane is of most importance, where mind contacts mind. The only real bridge we can make is through mind." If carefully tended, weeded of tares, kept within the sober bounds of reason, in the hands of spiritualism will lie the salvation of the world. It *is* saving the world. It is permeating the Churches, the world of science, the vast army of the

world's thinkers. It is bringing comfort to millions who had lost their faith; the knowledge of survival is bringing renewed energy to those who had lost all hope.

There is a vastly greater volume of well-organized, lucid thought being given out to-day by the brains of the world than was the case even a few hundred years ago. Man's intellect, thanks to education and other factors, can get a grasp on many abstruse problems that not so long ago had no meaning for him. An understanding of the properties of the ether, of the nature of matter, of laws of nature that have to be dealt with as abstractions, his mind can now handle as established facts. It was at one time supposed that any conception of the "fourth dimension" was and for ever would be, beyond the comprehension of the three dimensional brain.

But this "thinking in space," as it was described by Sir William Bragg, has enabled the brain of man to contact higher pinnacles in thought than ever before. Time-space is no longer an empty word to the ordinary thinker. The conception of other dimensions than those in which we live here is within the mental grasp of the many to-day. As we have grown and expanded until the hitherto unattainable has come within reach, so in the near future we should be able to make more lofty contacts, and touch still greater heights.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

THE discovery of that modern marvel, the wireless wave, has thrown a floodlight of illumination over much of the teachings of the Great Master, and over Biblical allusions obscure and incomprehensible in the absence of a key.

Not only has it decoded much of the divine message to be found in physical science in all its forms, no less than in psychic demonstrations, but it has opened a door into the *spiritual* world, which is so widely removed from either.

If it be possible to "tune-in" to certain wavelengths on this physical plane, a process now familiar to the man in the street of every civilized country, why should it be considered unreasonable to suppose a law somewhat analogous to be operating on the mental?

The methods of evolution, so far as we can judge, are so gradual, each step taken in advance apparently so infinitesimal, this octave of existence separated from the rest by an almost imperceptible throb of ether, that the dividing line between physical matter and thought-stuff—the material plane and the mental—becomes almost impossible to define; an assumption finding confirmation in the new

attitude of science toward mind, and the experiments of psychologists.

Whenever we turn our attention from one subject to another in daily life, we go through a process of "switching-off" the consciousness—or the *awareness*—from one wave-length by a definite act of volition, and "tuning-in" to another; an almost automatic, but none the less real, readjustment of the channels of thought.

To carry the suggestion still further, regarded from this point of view, life itself may be considered a process of "tuning-in" for the next condition of existence. As we tune-in here so we are making our own heaven or hell; to which each individual soul will go automatically, finding the level to which he responds—to "his own place."

When I was young and was told that as I sow so shall I reap, I wanted to know *why*. Everything must be according to law, cause and effect, and why should a certain line of conduct land me in a certain locality hereafter? What *was* the law that lay behind—the foundation for the statement?

The laws of spiritual dynamics, if such a term may be coined, must surely be as inevitable and inexorable as those of the physical in a cosmos of law and order?

And the only answer I could ever extract from Authority was that, being in the Bible, it must be true—and that ought to be good enough for me! But unfortunately it was not!

Why *should* I love my enemy? Why was to *think*

murder as damaging to oneself as to commit it? Why was the death upon the Cross necessary to appease God's anger with the world?—which He had Himself created. To a child with any sense of logic, and most children have an inborn sense of logic and justice, life was full of *whys*, which if I did not try to answer myself, it seemed unlikely would be answered at all.

If Christ came to fulfil the law, there was surely the shadow of it behind every word He spoke. If we *think* murder—tune-in to murderous desire, like drawing to like, we should find ourselves on the appropriate level—with murderers, should we pass over so thinking. It is not necessary to have done murder, Christ told us that. It is the attitude of mind that counts.

If we should tune-in to thoughts of hate, an enemy likewise attuned, if we have one, and sending out like vibrations, will attain his reactions and *vice versa*. But if the consciousness be keyed to a non-synchronizing wave-length, he can no more affect us by evil thought than Paris can be contacted by tuning-in to Berlin. I am speaking, of course, of the mental level; on the physical, there are other means of self-defence in accord with physical conditions. But those New Testament exhortations were spoken by One familiar with the fundamental laws of nature from lowest to highest.

And along these lines in the present conception of matter, as ether in varying rates of rapid vibration, may we not find a clue to an explanation of the death

upon the Cross which is the keynote of Christian belief, that will appeal to the reasoning side of man's faculties no less than to the devotional. To throw it aside as spectacular fiction, without historical justification, to deny it or attempt to explain it away, which seems to be the tendency of the Church at the moment, is to beg the question; the last resort of the great majority who are content to take the line of least resistance. Surely it would be wiser to explore every possible channel of a possible explanation before deciding to reject it altogether?

The prelude to the final sacrifice as foreshadowed in the story of the Scapegoat given in Leviticus is at least arresting. There is nothing in it to justify the inference that it was merely typical, and in the nature of an allegory.

With much ceremony, intended to prepare minds at that stage of the world's evolution easily impressed by outward ritual, with the priest as medium, suggestion as the means, the "sins" of the flesh—the carnal, material impulses—were transferred from the people to the victim. The goat, having become the focus of the ever-slowing vibrations that lead to destruction—inertia—was then to be driven forth into the wilderness, led by the hand of a "fit man" for the purpose; one may suppose this insistence on a "fit man" indicated one whose own spiritual development and knowledge were sufficiently advanced to ensure immunity from contamination by contact with the more carnal conditions. It is also specified that the destination of the animal was to be a "land

not inhabited," as though the victim had become a source of danger to society at large, and was to be isolated from all possible contacts.

The priest who had been the medium of the transference and whose hands had been laid upon the goat, and the "fit man" selected for the purpose of conducting it into the wilderness, were commanded to go through elaborate processes of purification before resuming intercourse with their fellow creatures.

Were these meticulous instructions mere empty words?—play-acting to fool the onlookers? The reference to the incident in the epistle to the Hebrews does not give this impression. A "shadow of things to come" in so much as it was only to a degree efficacious, and had to be continually repeated; this partial deflection of evil results was all that could be achieved by the ceremony.

But Christ, a *willing* victim, making the supreme sacrifice, never made before or since by any of Heaven's Messengers, with perfect knowledge and the power that springs from it, was able to contact a wave-length beyond anything that humanity unaided would have been able to reach, and by so doing "saved the world," bringing into operation all the great motive power of love and will. In a universe wherein every manifestation is but a variant of vibratory action, He opened once for all the way through which the retarding vibrations of a material world could be deflected into the line of least resistance, to rebound and react no longer upon the

conditions of physical matter that had engendered them; to transmute the energy for evil into an energy for good. In minor degree, a like transmutation of energy through the triumph of man's will is going on around us in everyday life.

The Force that rules the universe of both matter and spirit is Love; and its supreme manifestation appears to be self-sacrifice. We do not know what Love *is*, we know it only by its works. Nor do we know what electricity is, nor chemical affinity; we can only recognize them by their results, and it need not be considered any more fantastic to acknowledge love as a *force* than these others of equally enigmatical origin.

To "tune-in" the spirit within Him to the conditions—and the vilest conditions—of densely material planes, was to court separation from all that is spiritual, to sever Himself from the Heavenly world that was His own. As the focus of all that was evil He was hedged round by a barrier of ether obedient to its law in establishing conditions through which no finer, no spiritual vibrations could be contacted. He was placing Himself voluntarily for the time being out of reach of all holy influences.

For the moment He was contacting, through the operation of eternal law, the lowest Hell—and the lowest Hell only.

That surely was the sacrifice! Not the physical death upon the Cross suffered by many before and since, but the transcendent manifestation of the power of Love that willingly and for man's sake

endured temporary exile from Heavenly places, and that prompted the last despairing cry: "My God! My God! Why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

God had in very truth forsaken Him, in touch as He was with earth and Hell alone; and tuned-in to that wave-length, He was carried, in obedience to law, to the "spirits in prison" to whom He ministered for three days.

And since this great sacrifice that, in the intensified power of its reaction, made contact with the higher levels of the spirit and mankind, we are told the way lies open. The law which Christ came to fulfil must in the ultimate be obeyed, for no one can work against it without working his own destruction. To understand the law would be to fulfil it. Once understood, we keep the physical laws in self-defence; but in the spiritual kingdom we appear to imagine any law can be broken with impunity and hope for luck at the end!

To direct into the channel thus opened, the impulses of the lower self, the temptations of the flesh, leaving the spiritual in man to rise unimpeded in ever-subtler vibrations to the Highest of all, requires more than a passive faith; *will* is as potent and necessary a factor and, greatest of all, love—the love that, acting in the more subtle conditions of higher levels, as we believe gravitation to act in the physical, can by the law of attraction bind souls together for all eternity; the love that forgets itself, that will sacrifice itself for others, that obtains complete mastery of the flesh; the love for God and your neighbour—

to do good, not in obedience to legislation, not because it seems advisable, not to appease a pricking conscience, but because from your heart your chief *desire* is to better the condition of those about you; this being the foundation stone of cosmic evolution upon which hang "all the Law and the Prophets."

Ever since the restless days of my early twenties, that reading of the inner meaning of Christ's sacrifice has been working in my mind. I held fast to an intuition—and still do so—that a great basic truth, never expounded by the Church, underlay what has been called the "vicarious punishment." That it was not a punishment, nor an expiation in the accepted meaning of the term, but a fulfilment of *law*, necessary to the salvation of the world of matter, and only possible to the divine knowledge and moral perfection of the incarnate Christ.

To the expression of this theory and belief, the result of the thought of a lifetime, there is now a sequel in which some of my readers may be interested.

During the writing of the preceding pages I was invited to dine with some friends—Sir Wilfrid Laurie and his sister, Mrs. Anderson; after dinner, conversation drifted on to this much vexed question of the so-called "Atonement."

After some discussion, during which I put forward some of the foregoing ideas, Sir Wilfrid said that through Miss Nina Francis, at the British College of Psychic Science, he had lately been in communication with "Imperator," a name familiar

to all who have read "Spirit Teachings" by Stainton Moses, and Mr. Trethewy's analytical work in connexion with it.

Sir Wilfrid most kindly suggested I should be present at his next sitting, and should ask "Imperator" for his opinion on this subject—an offer which I accepted with enthusiasm.

The report of the sitting, which was taken down by a stenographer, present with Sir Wilfrid and myself, and which proved to be of great interest—in spite of the oft-repeated statement that nothing but trivialities is ever obtained from the next plane!—I give as concisely as possible.

"Imperator" took direct control of the medium almost immediately and Sir Wilfrid having introduced me, put the following question to him:

"In your book, when asked about the 'Atonement,' you have said in a sense it is true. Then you go on to deny the vicarious sacrifice theory. I want to know in what sense His death could be an atonement for sin. Mrs. de Crespigny also has a question on this theory."

Imperator: Let me get that very clearly. You desire to know in what way the death, or shall we say the sacrifice of the Great Master influenced humanity?

Sir Wilfrid: What good it did to humanity!

Imperator: I find a little difficulty in expressing myself this morning (this was afterwards explained on the score of mixed vibrations). If it had not been for this apparent sacrifice, the Christian religion, as

it is called, would not be as it is to-day. I wonder if you follow me?

Sir Wilfrid: Of course it was a great advertisement for the Christian religion. It drew attention to it.

Imperator: I would not call it advertisement.

Sir Wilfrid: I am putting it plainly. I understand the effect it would have on posterity—that His death would draw attention; that He sacrificed His life as any other martyr might, for His faith?

Imperator: Do you not think that those perhaps who understood Him a little better, would realize the greatness behind it all—a man who could apparently have saved Himself—because you know He could! You do realize that, don't you?

Mrs. de C.: I will, if I may, say what my idea is. The death on the Cross, although not an atonement nor a vicarious expiation, saved the world in this way. We are in human bodies and each one is a focus for good or evil.

Imperator: That is right.

Mrs. de C.: And surely that story of the Scapegoat in Leviticus was not merely an ornamental way of talking? It was true. In Christ's final sacrifice he tuned-in to the low and carnal vibrations generated all through the world's evolution, and that were gradually acquiring such momentum that they were carrying the world down to inertia which is destruction so far as matter is concerned, Christ made Himself into a transmuting station.

(*I here gave as concise a review as possible of what I*

have written in the earlier part of this Chapter, finishing on the note that Christ made contact with certain wave-lengths which humanity would never have been able to contact through their own unaided efforts.)

Imperator: Only He could have done it. Yes, yes. You have given me food for thought. But I would like to think it over a little before I say whether I truly believe it in your way or not; because that has not been exactly my point of view, but there is a great deal in what you say. Of course, only He in His divinity, His greatness could——

Mrs. de C.: Could make the necessary contact.

Imperator: Would you come and see me again, because it is a new point of view.

Mrs. de C.: Indeed I will.

Imperator: You have certainly put it in a way which I had not considered before. Hence my Book. You know it is not quite the same idea.

Sir Wilfrid: No, you do not express that idea in your book.

Imperator: But we are always ready to learn, you know.

Mrs. de C.: I think it is wonderful of you to say that.

Imperator: No, oh no! (A pause.) It would give a very different construction to the whole thing. On the other hand, is there not really the fear that humanity may dwell too much on the fact that there is One who can take their sins upon His shoulders and so relieve them of the responsibility?

Mrs. de C.: But may I say that I don't think they

can? He made Himself into a transmuting station and said, "Cast your sins upon my shoulders." We have to "tune-in" voluntarily to the wave-length He has contacted; it is for us to do the casting—no easy task!

Imperator: Of course that is so. That would illumine that. Yes. I think, you know, that you have given me something which I would like to work upon, and I would like to alter a little of what I have said perhaps. But let me think it over because, to me, it is rather new. You will think it strange that one should not change all these thousands of years!

Mrs. de C.: I don't know enough about it. I don't know enough about the conditions or——

Imperator: If one has been quite certain of one's own ideas, outlook—it remains with one, and they become shall we say, more definite.

Mrs. de C.: The preconceived idea is a terrible obstacle sometimes.

Imperator: It is. That is why I want time to think this out. But I am grateful, because maybe you are right. But I would not say yet. You will forgive me —yes? I am sorry—I want to think it out first. Now you will come and see me again and I will tell you then, because I want to speak also to others on the subject, to see what they think.

Mrs. de C.: Thank you very much indeed.

Imperator: I may even be able to get into nearer contact with the Jesus of Nazareth Himself; that I cannot say, but I may. We have means, and we are allowed, if it is really for a good and necessary pur-

pose, and I think I may be allowed in this case. If I can I will surely let you know. If I find I agree with you, then I want the correction to be made public, please. Ah yes—I do not want error to go to the world. None of us, you know. And if I find I have made an error I want it put right before the world, and you will help me to do so.

Mrs. de C.: Of course I will. I am putting this theory into a book because it has been so near my heart all my life and it is so difficult to get people to listen.

Imperator: Perhaps if you will allow me, when you are writing your book, also to look at it through your eyes; then maybe I shall understand it better. I will stand by you while you write.

Mrs. de C.: Indeed I do thank you very much, and my friend, Sir Wilfrid, for having introduced me to you.

Sir Wilfrid: I felt it would be very interesting to hear what you two could have to say on the subject, because it has always puzzled me very much.

Imperator: And shall we say, too, that this is probably the moment in which we had to meet for greater purposes than we realize?

Mrs. de C.: I would like to think so indeed.

Sir Wilfrid: You mean that the meeting was what we call providential?

Imperator: There is nothing left to chance, as Mrs. de Crespigny knows (he called me by another name). There is no chance. This was to be. And I am going to give it, I assure you, my most earnest attention,

and will also try to get into contact with those that might help me—and when we meet again I will be able to give you an answer.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

THAT sitting took place on January 25th, 1934, and on February 23rd, Colonel N. P. Clarke, who is a member of the British College of Psychic Science, brought me the following message, which had been given to him at a sitting with Miss Francis.

The communicator purported to be J. Hewat McKenzie, who said he was the bearer of a message to me—mentioning me by name—from "Imperator." Colonel Clarke was told to write the name down, which he did.

The message was to the effect that "Imperator" wished to speak to me alone. He wished to talk about the book I was writing. He explained that I had previously been at a séance with two other people and the mixture of vibrations caused a clash. So he wished me to come alone in order to talk about the book I was engaged on at the moment. Therefore on March 2nd I arranged to have a sitting with Miss Francis. "Imperator" took control—in a manner quite different from "Lucio," her usual control—and greeted me with a text from Malachi, which unfortunately I did not take down at the time.

He explained that the clash of vibrations had interfered with his flow of thought and speech on

the previous occasion, but that with himself and me alone it would be much easier.

I was prepared to be told my theories were all wrong, and to be "let down" as gently as possible! So my surprise and pleasure was the greater at his opening words.

Imperator: "Your outlook on this subject is right—and always has been. I have been talking to many who can judge. There are two great powers, Light and Darkness, Good and Evil, and the former must prevail eventually. It is true that Lucifer fights on the side of Evil. The great Lord of Hosts—the Christ—became incarnate in order to contact Himself the powers of Evil; for all effort, all dominance must come through the *physical* to the spiritual. Jesus of Nazareth was truly the divine Son of the divine Father. He knew He was the Messenger. He took on Himself deliberately the flesh to prepare the way, in order to contact the carnal and material vibrations of earth that enabled Him to penetrate into the bowels of Hell, and in the reaction to contact still higher vibrations—to put the world in touch with more spiritual levels than man of himself would have been able to achieve. You have there the true light—and I agree! You may put my name to it. I have talked about it with many over here.

"Children of the Lord are apt to make no effort—to sit and wait. But true salvation can only be had by following in the path He opened—you speak in wave-lengths—that is true—all has Law behind it.

He prepared the way—contacted vibrations that are a link between God and His children. In this meaning He is the only way—the law He preached and died to put into operation is the only way—there is but the one law. Self-sacrifice is the expression of it—love to God and your neighbour—it is *the Law*. Many others helped—the great Teachers—but none but Christ died to save the world. That was why preparation was required. He took on the physical to make the true contact. God has never been tangible—never more than what must be called a *myth*. Christ was a demonstration of the Godhead here on earth.

"Christ is with you now—on this physical earth—in your midst. Much will be swept away—but Christ will remain."

And so ended—to me—a most wonderful experience. It is known that "Imperator" is alleged to be the Prophet Malachi. He confirmed it, and gave me permission to say so. With regard to the matters we had been talking about he made an interesting remark.

"You must remember," he said, "you are living in a more enlightened age than I did. You can look back—we could not; there was so little behind us. You have history and tradition to build on."

And there, as I thought, the episode closed.

But while lately visiting the Edinburgh College of Psychic Science, there was a sequel, putting as it were the final touches to as good a piece of evidence

as I ever hope to obtain, quite apart from the value of the content of the message. Considering the nature of the subject matter and its quality, it came through the most unlikely of mediums—Mrs. Duncan, for psychical phenomena do not as a rule stray into the realm of the mental.

She announced before the sitting that her control "Albert" had been arranging something specially for my benefit, but had said nothing of the line in which it was to run. I therefore imagined something evidential in the shape of a materialized figure which might be recognizable—which subsequently did take place—a half-brother of mine showed himself fully materialized outside the cabinet, gave his name and the manner of his death at the age of nineteen; but as it was not the point of interest that evening I will not dwell upon it further.

Having gone through the usual preliminaries, a personal examination and search of the cabinet, we sat in a semi-circle of eight persons, in a really good red light, in the séance-room at the Edinburgh Psychic College, at the top of the house.

"Albert's" voice, pleasantly modulated in good English, was heard almost immediately, and several materialized figures, including the one already mentioned, succeeded one another, coming out of the cabinet into the centre of the circle. "Peggy" was among them, and she sent a special message to Mr. Barbanell of the *Psychic News*, the context of which I did not understand, but faithfully delivered.

But the "evidence" which had been pre-arranged

and concerned myself, lay in the appearance of a slim and graceful form who walked out of the cabinet and across the circle in full view of us all. She claimed to be the sister of one of the sitters, Mr. Scott, who acknowledged the claim.

I was writing the last chapters of this book at the time, and had shortly before finished the account of my discussion with "Imperator," which I had not mentioned to *anyone*. I give the following account as I wrote it down at the time, and which was signed by six of the persons present as correct. The other two were not available.

Mr. Scott put a question to the materialized form of his sister concerning the Holy Communion. After she had answered it, she turned directly in my direction, to my great surprise, and asked for my opinion. She then, to my still greater surprise, broached the subject of the "Atonement" and proceeded to discuss the subject with me on the lines I had so recently been engaged on in writing this book. No one present knew I was writing about it, nor could have had any understanding of the references made. I may add that, so far as the medium is concerned, the whole tenor of the conversation would have been "Greek" to her.

I asked the materialized form how she knew about my interest in the subject.

She said she had stood by my table while I was writing, in my house in London (meaning the British College in Queen's Gate), and proceeded to describe accurately the position of my table as

standing across the corner of my room; that there was a window opening like a door close to it, with some plants in the window. She also described a *green* carpet, which I denied—until I remembered that the present carpet had replaced a wide strip of bright green which had been there until quite lately. I asked if she knew "Imperator."

She answered "yes"—she had seen him standing beside my table while I was writing.

Signed JENNY T. ROUGHEAD
C. SLATER
E. GORDON SCOTT
WM. SCOTT
E. MILLER

Mrs. Duncan has never been in my room at the College. Of "Imperator" I had spoken to no one, nor of his promise "to stand by me as I wrote;" yet the answer to my question was that she had seen him standing by my table while I was writing.

If such evidence can be explained away, then indeed not only Heaven but earth itself can be explained away! The subconscious mind, hallucination, self-deception, telepathy, are little more than words, and if they were would not fill the bill in such instances. Hypnotism, individual and collective, can be quoted light-heartedly as an answer to the riddle, but what is hypnotism? The action of mind on mind, and through mind on matter—but how is it *done*? It is no more than a word when applied to some of the wonders of the séance-room and outside it.

The weapons in the sceptic's armoury are showing signs of wear, due possibly to over-use in directions for which they are not really fitted. Some of them are worn out, all require looking to. The handbooks of the scientist come and go, and will continue to come and go, but the Bible stands, with truth as its foundation stone, waiting its time throughout the ages, always ready to unlock the doors of its treasure house to those who knock, to all who are not content to take the world at its face value, or to drift along in the ruts carved by tradition and authority without question or desire for further knowledge.

Why should it be so hard in this day of marvels to believe in this other world to the existence of which there is so great a cloud of witnesses. Why should the evidence, increasing daily, be so difficult to accept—at the least by minds already professing to believe in survival? Have they *really* believed in a world of winged angels, of harps and never-ceasing hymns of praise? If they could believe in that world, so far beyond their understanding, surely it should be easier to believe in a world *within* it?

Every fresh advance in scientific knowledge of late years has driven a nail into the coffin of materialism, for those who have eyes to see or ears to hear. To deny an Intelligence behind the universe is no longer common sense—it is scarcely sane!

Apart from the wonder of the stars in their courses, of the planets that hang like lamps in space on a clear night, which we have always had with us, what of

this universe, of systems, of forces, that have been brought within our knowledge to-day? Of worlds governed by law and order on a scale so vast, so minute in its detail that it arouses in man's mind awe rather than comprehension.

Worlds regulated by apportioned "wave-lengths," governed by forces held in leash, to each of which has gone forth the command: "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther!"

Many worlds there are—of sound, of light, of electricity, of radio-activity, to mention some of them, each working on its own wave-length, bounded by its apportioned limitations—a wave-length, secure from promiscuous interference from without, carrying with it inherent inhibitions for the prevention of unauthorized excursions from within. Worlds of which we are unaware until with the appropriate key we are able to open the door; so faithfully guarded by the Angel with the flaming sword until man was fitted to come into his heritage.

Picture the confusion, beyond the brain of man to imagine, of nature's forces running riot!

Could so magnificent and ordered a scheme have been the child of chaos?

It may be that in the future stages of evolution, spiritualism will have an important part to play; that within it lie potentialities but little dreamed of, resulting in a permeating of matter by spirit through the constant linking up of the two planes, involving processes of far greater import than the sifting of creeds or philosophies.

The opening chapter of Genesis records how the first contacts between matter and spirit—or consciousness—were made. From that initial movement of the ether caused by energy which resulted in physical matter as we know it to-day, land and water had evolved but not *life* at the moment we read that "the spirit of God moved over the face of the waters." With the help of modern science the imagination can conjure a picture of the spirit of God waiting, watching for the moment when the gulf would be bridged, when a contact could be made, and spirit—the higher aspect of the Deity—could "tune-in" to the vibration of the lower aspect—matter, and obtain a reaction.

Then and then only, when such contact became possible, the one-celled prolist came into existence; *life* appeared on earth, no germ bred of surrounding conditions, no vagrant seed dropped by plant or meteor; but a sudden impulse due to contact made with some wave-length, some electrical stimulus until then out of reach. And with the contact the descent of spirit into matter became an accomplished fact.

Long ages had to run before matter was ready for the next great contact—*self*-consciousness, and the further step which was to transform man from a mere puppet into a responsible creature endowed with a small degree of free-will and the potentiality to win it in full measure—with an intellect and a brain that would enable him to carry on the task of the spiritualization of matter—if it may be so

termed—through the processes of thought and will-power.

It may be that the brain, working as a transformer, will eventually raise matter, the lower aspect of spirit, into the higher, through these mental processes, permeating the physical globe with the higher vibrations of the thought plane, and thereby fulfil the main aim of evolution to the full; and that this transmutation will continue until the material particles of this planet become spiritualized—the present "Jerusalem" merged in the New; then indeed will the Holy City be within sight and sound of all.

At a later sitting with a direct-voice medium, this idea was referred to by a communicator interested in the subject, who said: "The two worlds will merge by a bridging of wave-lengths. We are working at that now. It will bring peace. The two worlds will merge into one, and sorrow and pain will cease."

And in this process of the "spiritualization" of matter, what is called Spiritualism is surely playing its part. In demonstrating the truth of survival and opening up communication with those on higher levels of consciousness, it will have been an all-important factor in establishing the final contact with the planes above; for with the opportunities it affords for guidance from those who are more far-seeing than ourselves, it should lead the world, not only to think but to think *rightly*, permeating and influencing the thoughts and actions of statesmen, the Church and men of Science. As ever, this great

contact which has opened to us the door of the other world, could not have been made in full measure until mankind was ready to receive it—keyed up through the slow processes of evolution to the necessary pitch.

But, once established, the continual interchange of vibratory forces, back and forth between ourselves and the higher levels of consciousness, must surely have its effect in lifting the physical to something nearer to the spiritual until eventually the whole becomes leavened, and finally when man, through the action of his will and his brain, has completed the transmutation of matter, this physical plane merged in the next, there will be "a new Heaven and a new Earth," for the first Heaven and the first Earth will have passed away, and man will have made one more step toward that higher world of spirituality to which the psychic planes are but the ante-room.

For true spiritual contacts are dependent upon neither medium nor séance-room.

They lie between man and his Maker, without bar or intermediary—spirit calling to the Source whence it came—in the silence, in the market-place, in the temple, will rise unhindered on the wings of its own earnest desire and find expression in prayer or praise.

But to make conscious contact, of mind with the spirit that is *you*, like all else worth while, does not come easily, but as the result of years of effort.

A *realization* of the spirit present within the body

through which it functions, is a different matter from an intellectual belief. The contact of your own *awareness*, must be preceded by years of concentration, of holding the idea of the inner self—in the silence. To touch the knowledge—fleetingly—that the very *awareness* that you are you—*is* you, is to understand the mind of Socrates, threatened with untold ills at the hand of his enemies, when he said: "they have to catch me first!"

You can contact the *you* within—hold it for a fleeting moment—lose it;—but once touched, once *realized*, you know for ever that the spirit within that is *you*—is of God—a part of His consciousness—indestructible, immortal, and one with the consciousness of every other living soul.

In *Cogito ergo sum* Descartes epitomized this realization of the awareness that is the self.

Words in such contexts are unavailing; nor will they ring convincingly to other minds. Each of us must probe and experience for himself; each of us may, if he will, weave a thread into the pattern of the universe that may help to make the whole more intelligible.

Of the meaning of the suffering, the partings, the tears so unavailing, we shall some day perhaps understand more of the scheme in which each of us willingly or unwillingly has played a part. Does the key to the secret lie in the fourteenth Chapter of Revelation in the words:

"And I heard a voice from Heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder:

and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps.

"And they sung as it were a new song before the throne . . . and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth."

No one can learn that song—can "tune-in" to the wave-length—except those who have gone through the grief and suffering of life on earth, and the repressions of self-control.

And surely the keynote of its melody must be—that *there is no death!* That the grave has an empty victory, and that we should grasp this blessed knowledge of survival with both hands—the great Truth that has come to us in part through Science, in part through Religion—but for the most part through the divine Force that inspires the worlds that are, and are to come—Love.

THE END

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