

The Case of Lester Coltman

By *LILIAN WALBROOK*

Inspired by, the spirit of the late
LT. R. LESTER COLTMAN, *Coldstream Guards*

With Introduction by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

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INTRODUCTION

These messages were received by automatic writing through the hand of Miss Lilian Walbrook, who is the aunt of the young officer concerned. They came at the latter end of 1922, just five years after his death.

Lester Coltman, the officer in question, seems to have had a very remarkable personality which impressed itself upon all who met him. He was educated in South Africa and made his mark at his school at Johannesburg and afterwards at the Agricultural College at Potchefstroom. There he won a scholarship which enabled him to go to Emmanuel College, Cambridge. Whilst he was there the war broke out. He joined up and, after several intermediate stages, found himself in the machine-gun company of the 2nd Brigade of Guards. With his battalion he was engaged in the desperate fighting at Cambrai, in December, 1917, and there it was that he met his glorious death at the age of 22.

He was singularly gifted, for he was of splendid physique, with a remarkable intellect and with spiritual intuitions which are rare indeed at such an age. These did not run in any conventional channels, but reached out into the unknown and caused him to take a deep though critical interest in all modern psychic developments. This knowledge of the subject, combined with the great energy of his character, mark him as one who would naturally give us psychic help from the other side.

It is interesting and indeed vital to compare the general style and character of Lester Coltman's writings when on earth with those which now come back in his name. He was clearly a very thoughtful man, in spite of his youth, with a turn for mental analysis and speculation. Here, for example, is the description of a friend at Cambridge taken from a letter to his aunt:—"He is a fine fellow and quite clever, but of that persistent thorough type of clockwork ability which combines competence chiefly with industry and admits not so much of imagination, which makes clever people so interesting and gives so much greater scope for

their ability. He will confine himself in discussion chiefly to actual facts and decline to devote thought to anything not completely proven. He refrains from actually hoping, as prompted by imagination and a romantic tinge which science sometimes has, and should have, that certain phenomena are true, and it would give him no more joy to will a mountain to collapse than actually to blow it up with dynamite. He lacks the romantic phase of the logician and scientist."

Here is a record specimen of his style taken from a letter written to his aunt after his arrival in France:—"I have wandered over the whole of the battlefield round this camp, and all aspects of it offer ample food for the growing emotions of admiration and contempt, enthusiasm and lassitude, sorrow and joy, in *fact act, all and every possible emotion, corroborative and contradictory. But however terrible and regrettable many of its features, they have grandeur in their terror and dignity in their guilt, and have a complete power of sanitation to the mind, freeing it from every particle of pettiness. Those qualities of war exemplified on these blood-sodden areas are both good and evil, but chiefly evil, but all grand and none petty. This refers, of course, to war itself, not the motives of any participant.

"It is difficult to give such a description of the sights out here as will attune your mind to the same pitch as that beholding them. One can describe everything so that the hearer can realize visible outlines, but the grim and ghastly spectre of realization crawls straight from the fetid scenes to the mind of the beholder, where he lurks fearfully, and desperately, resisting the efforts of the most powerful narrative to banish him to any other.

"To describe the visual sensation of the region here, I had better describe what can be realized was originally the condition of the country, and then the nature of obliteration it has undergone.

"This particular part was originally undulating country, with some beautiful copses and woods, and interspersed hills and valleys. If you can imagine such a region deprived of every leaf and blade of grass without exception, for miles, the beauty of every single tree in immense woods desecrated to grotesque and splintered stumps, and every square inch to which the eyes has access torn by the malicious

talons of war into grimly leering shell-holes, in which, and around which, sprawl the lifeless hulks of men, or parts of men, you have an idea of a metamorphosis as great and as terrible as Death wreaks on the human forms themselves. Over all this area are dusted all existing means of agony and war, intact or shattered into parts of all conceivable sizes—immense shells, large fragments of shells, small fragments of shells, rifles, shattered rifles, rifles in large and small pieces, all intermingled in ludicrous promiscuity, with innumerable articles of utterly different nature. A bomb fragment leers jaggedly in conscious triumph at an adjacent bandage, while the corpse for which the two have waged, and the latter lost, scowls with distorted gaze upon its champion, its fingers resting as in caress upon the stifler of its life. Such paradox and irony are rampant. And in the dominions of ravage and slaughter the harmony of features is wrought by their very incongruity.

"But pathos is there, and whispers to one of bleeding hearts, whom grief can wound more deeply than the wounds beneath a rough rude cross their eyes will never see, but always weep for. A small mound, surmounted sometimes by a rough cross, at others by a steel helmet, the make of which proclaims the nationality of the buried, sometimes a shattered fragment of a rifle or shell, sometimes a haversack, anything to indicate its identity as a grave, is all that remains of the hopes and plans valued in life above all existing things. And time will nibble at these scanty relics, demolishing their semblance, while Death creeps closer and closer to those in whom that semblance lives as memories, till the only relies of a fleeting life is the death that has replaced it, for death can only come to what has lived."

How many of us have ever written literature of that calibre to our aunts?

If you compare the qualities of mind and the precision of statement here displayed, with the script, I think that a great analogy will be perceived. In any case, with every respect for the mental and literary abilities of Miss Lilian Walbrook, which are each of a good average height, she would be the first to admit that she could not possibly have risen to the height of thought which is characteristic of both the living and the dead communication. But if not, then who produced the latter?

I would particularly call attention to Lester's account of his own death as given through Miss Walbrook's hand on page 31 of the script. Admitting that Miss Walbrook knew that her nephew was killed at Cambrai, that he was a machine-gun officer in the Guards, and that some general account of the death had reached her, whence came all these precise and realistic details which were entirely beyond her knowledge? I have taken the trouble to write to everyone who could furnish corroboration in any way, and their stories all tally very well with that in the script, though some allowance must be made for the fact that several of the witnesses had themselves been wounded, and all had a more or less confused impression of these exciting events. The hour, the place, the circumstances, are all very correct. The only technical mistake which I could find was that he talked of falling across the wheel of the gun, whereas a machine-gun has, of course only a tripod. It was merely an attempt to describe the relative position of his body to the gun and is not of serious importance. The various accounts which I have read, from his company commander and the men who fought beside him, are all in accord with what he has said.

I have not been so fortunate in corroborating the names mentioned, though I have expended some time and trouble over it. These names are Burke, Peel, Wilson, and T. G. Names are always a difficulty in such communications

which has been explained by the fact that a name is a purely artificial thing and differs entirely from an idea. We are conscious ourselves of how names evade us in life, especially as we grow older, though we may retain the clearest recollection of the individual. Another cause of confusion, in my opinion, is that such communications are often really clairaudient, even when the medium is not aware of the fact. The first impulse is an inward dictation and the second the actual writing. In such dictation it would be much easier to mistake an unfamiliar name than to mistake an idea. I have frequently observed in seances how the names come out nearly but not quite right.

At first I had thought that Burke might stand for Park, who was one of Coltman's closest friends, but the subsequent messages would not have it, but insisted that Burke be spelt with an "e". T. G. they said was a nickname and associated

it with Sergeant Bowen, whom I was unable to trace, though I did run down a Sergeant Bowes. Peel was the name of a Grenadier officer who knew Lester Coltman and was with the battalion, but not at Cambrai. He is still alive. There were several Wilsons, Altogether it must be admitted that the names have proved unsatisfactory up to now, but men were coming and going all the time and the difficulty of identification is great. It is just possible that this publication may bring fuller corroboration. Mr. Park says: "The men in the guns were so often being changed that naturally men and officers did not know one another's names."

A most interesting and convincing evidence of Lester Coltman's continued spirit activities is to be found in the experience of his mother in South Africa which throws a sidelight upon the European evidence. I would beg any sceptic to lay his preconceptions aside for the moment and do read this carefully, especially the part about the nickname. Mrs. Coltman had heard that some friends of an acquaintance of hers, the Johnstones, were in touch with spiritual things. She was invited to one of their sittings, but she expressly says in the report which lies before me, "When I went to the Johnstones' sitting, they knew nothing about me or my life. I had merely said that Lester was wounded and missing—nothing else." The messages were taken on a ouija board, Mrs. Coltman's hands not being upon it.

The two young Johnstones who had died in the war first sent messages and announced that they had brought a boy for Mrs. Coltman. The report goes on, "I asked if he could give me a nickname, and he said: 'Curley' (I thought it would be 'Susie'). I asked, 'Why Curley?' 'Because he was Curley. Curley is very appropriate!' Then Lester asked, 'Do you ever remember me being called "Curley Locks"?' (His father used often to call him that.) Lester then said, 'Curley is the name that stuck to me to the end, and though it does seem effeminate, don't you think it sounds more manly than "Susie"?' Then he said, 'I want you to realize that I am alive! I am here ready as I have always been to talk to you, to take you out, to enjoy a joke with you, and to sympathise where sympathy is necessary. What does it matter about my old suit?' (Meaning his

body.) 'I have not changed one atom.' When I asked if he was happy, he said, 'So happy, that were I permitted I should take you with me now, but each soul has a certain work to do. I have to do this side what I did not do on earth. I am young in earthly experience. I have had my eyes opened here and, Oh, mother! It's the grandest place imaginable.' He said he had a wonderful library and everything he wanted, and *even little children to Play hide-and-seek with.* (The explanation to the last-named is this: When we went for our holiday to Umkomass the children all worshipped him, and were always around him. It was a law of the Medes and Persians that Lester and I never set out on any expedition until the children had had their game of hide-and-seek with him round the rocks, and he enjoyed it almost as much as they.) He also said: 'I hope some day to invent a wireless to your earth, but at present my ideas are in their infancy. I don't really know yet what I wish to do.'

"When asked about his friends, he said: 'We collect together in the spirit as we did of old, in the flesh. Sometimes I have brought as many as ten to tea with you, and we sit and chat with your *thoughts* as you call them. I have so often cheered you when tired and sad, and sent you to sleep by kissing your eyes.' I asked if he was ever a prisoner, and he replied, 'A prisoner? Oh, no, darling! It was as sudden as turning out this light. I felt nothing, only a nasty knock, and turned to look for the fellow who had struck me. I knew no more. I fell asleep. Then I saw lots of my friends, all smiling at me; a brother officer stretched out his hand, saying, "Come along, old chap." I took his hand, and knew that I had passed to where war is no more. I was pleased to see so many friends who were kind enough to bring me home! Strange to say, I knew I had made the great change, and things seemed familiar. Many places I had often visited in my dreams, so I was not strange. I love this place.' I asked, 'Don't you wish to be with me?' 'With you always, little mother, but I don't want to be on your earth.' I asked when, I could go to him. 'You must not be in a hurry, darling mother 'I want to use your hand.' I said I had given it up, I got impatient. 'So did I. Try again. Ten minutes a day is quite enough. I have to stop now, but hope to write to you every day. It

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INTRODUCTION

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never to follow them without question, but always to be the ultimate judges ourselves of the value of any communication.

Now I have said what I would. Let each read and form his own opinion. If you think this is not the young man who writes, then you have much to explain. If you think it is the young man, then this and other similar scripts become at once the most important documents in the world. Each must judge for himself, but it is worth while to take trouble in the judgement.

ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

Crowborough,
December, 1923.

FOREWORD

BY THE AUTOMATIC WRITER

These pages are inscribed by an unprofessional medium, Miss Lilian Walbrook, inspired by her nephew, the late Richard Lester Coltman, Lieut., Coldstream Guards (Machine Guns), who was missing at Cambrai, 27th November, 1917, aged 22 years.

Born in London, of English parents, with a strong strain of Irish blood on his mother's side, R. Lester Coltman at eight years of age went to South Africa, where he was educated at Johannesburg College and, gaining scholarships, passed onto the famous Agricultural College at Potch stroom, Transvaal. Here he showed marked ability in Science, graduating with high honours in every subject and being acclaimed "the finest student the College had ever produced". Mr. F. B. Smith, the then Secretary for Agriculture for South Africa, foretold a brilliant future for him, and even went so far as to name him one of the coming men of South Africa.

A South African Government scholarship took him to Cambridge University, where he entered Emmanuel College in 1914. A few months later the Great War broke out, and when he eventually obtained permission from the South African Government to join up he was granted a commission in the Coldstream Guards. He was wounded in August, 1917, and returned to the firing-line in November of that year, but alas, four days after he reached French soil he was "missing" in the terrific hell round Cambrai. Thus a life so full of wonderful promise was cut short in the first vigour of manhood.

To all who knew him in the Army, as at College, his exceptional ability and fine character were apparent. No doubt the world would have heard much of him, for his intention was seriously to pursue a scientific career, for

which he was eminently fitted, his great gifts of mind and worthy ambitions assuring him an honourable place in the ranks of great men devoted to Science. In addition to a splendid intellect he possessed a most attractive and compelling personality, endearing him alike to fellow-students and comrades in arms, whilst to those who knew him intimately the extreme sweetness of his disposition, allied as it was to extraordinary strength of character and keen insight into human nature, made a unique appeal most uncommon in one so young. Student, athlete, wit—in diverse capacities he excelled. He was passionately fond of music, possessing a wonderfully true ear, and would often sit down to the piano and improvise most charmingly, and indeed, since his passing over, has frequently improvised through the medium, Miss Walbrook, who, though musically gifted, had never previously been able to compose.

This dear handsome boy had leanings towards "Spiritualism", and once or twice sat with the writer of this book, and he it was who discovered her gift of mediumship. She and her sister (who was also present when this book was written), who knew and loved him well, are both convinced of the authorship of the following treatise, the form of expression, the turn of thought, and the at times slightly caustic phrases, are to them sure evidence of his personality. They both felt his ego was with them all through these sittings, and that it was his desire that his message should be given to the world.

Maida Vale,
26th November, 1922.

The Case of Lester Coltman

CONDITIONS OF LIFE IN THE BEYOND

Question. Please tell us what you can of the Pleasures of the world in which you find yourself.

Our pleasures here are varied in the extreme. No one could imagine the diversified forms Of recreations which we are enabled to indulge in. The joy they give us far outweighs that experienced in physical games practised when on earth. You see, our ethereal bodies being perfect in their Way, or at any rate not requiring the conscious cultivation necessary to the earth body, we are able to enjoy mental forms of amusement wonderfully exciting in their execution. Take, for instance, our mode of motion. *We* move by *thought*. We can have races as you can, but our movements are not physical, for we have no physical bodies: according to the amount of *mental* faculty we use, so are we first, second, or third, in the race. It is truly exciting, truly exhilarating. We also can, by using our will-power on animals, birds and fishes, etc., make them run races, too. When I say run I mean fly, swim, run, according to their natural capacity. Do not, oh mortals, imagine that here the flaccid fish takes unto itself pedal appendages, or the light-winged lark loses its powers of airy progression. No; according to their propensities when on earth, so are these powers not changed.

There are wonderful meetings or convocations here where spirits compete in these entrancing recreations. I can assure

you it is as enthralling to us to watch these contests as it was for many of us when on earth to visit the Epsom Downs, Newmarket or Ascot. With this difference, the baneful influence of mercenary motive is now non-existent. True, we enjoy the spirit of competition, of "going one better" than our neighbour; but this is not evil it is only a natural impulse, and supine and insipid indeed would any life be without this necessary attribute. It is extraordinary how the absence of the necessity to grapple for gold banishes from the individual various accompanying evil passions. Do not think I am idiotically denouncing all frequenters of race-courses, betting-houses and so forth existing on earth. I only wish to point out that too often such persons allow these diversions to become all-important, and gradually a nature that had many graceful and virtuous attributes, by the perpetration of these amusements becomes sordid, gross, and selfish. Here, fortunately, we are enabled to pursue our love of games of hazard without detriment to our souls, to enjoy the sporting instinct, if we possess it, just as we enjoyed it on earth. No, it is not tame, it is not puerile, I can assure you!

Another diversion is guessing vibrations, or rather the identity of spirits by vibrations. This is difficult beyond measure when first we essay the task, but as we become versed in it—given a certain aptitude—the pastime grows extremely fascinating and interesting. Together with vibrations are associated, of necessity, ray-prisms, for colour governs everything—or, can I put it more clearly, colour is life, life is colour, and everything revolves around that essential fact. Enough: this book is not meant to be a scientific discourse, but to make appeal, I hope, to all and sundry. Vibration-guessing is seldom indulged in save by those spirits endowed with marked intelligence: it only attracts such, as for the indolent or the impatient it entails too minute a study of detail. This detail has to be registered and deductions ultimately made from these registrations. It is no easy task, and these mental calisthenics are too tedious for the majority I have met here. Of course, as we progress it becomes a natural study and more and more facile of accomplishment.

Cards can be enjoyed here as on earth. Is this astonishing? No, certainly not. Card games of skill require a certain

mental quality the gift of which is not for all; so it is here, and many are the happy meetings that assemble for this pursuit.

Various games of all sorts are played here—not quite the earth mode, as I must again impress you that we *move* by *thought*. If you can realize we are able to practise the same games, you will understand the mental side is introduced in the essaying of any action more prominently than on earth, the physical factor being absent. Nevertheless, the same thrill, the same sense of satisfaction in accomplishment is experienced, the same fun, the same merriment and amusement ensue. We do not lose one tithe of our joyous nature or sense of humour, should we be the lucky possessors of this when in the flesh. Oh, dear no! Else how have we kept our personality? It is true that evil propensities come over with our egos to these spheres; happily also is it true that our graces, our gifts of expression and, maybe, amusing little traits and idiosyncrasies come too. The change there is consists mainly in a more just estimate of ourselves and the gifts and talents, faults and lackings, of others. Let us take, for example, the talent for music. Most earth beings who *have* real musical taste have suffered much at the hands of poor, deluded, would-be singers. Such an one essays to give us pleasure (or is it perhaps himself?) by his most unmusical voice or inartistic rendering of certain songs. The perpetration of such a deed has oftentimes made us furious, or, Worse still, induced untimely mirth, the suppression of which is indeed difficult in the presence of the adoring relatives of the "perpetrator". Here these little contretemps do not occur—the ill-timed merriment is absent, but there is ample compensation in listening to only endowed exponents. You see, the vision of one's possibilities, so to speak, become clearer, and, lacking the superficial and insincere compliments of worldly beings, we are able to put things on their proper level. Courteous and sincere approval is, however, always accorded and encouragement given all those possessing talent, in music as in all the arts.

I may here remark that as on earth we meet for entertainment and pass our time with dance, song, and music of every kind. The drama, too, holds its place, histrionic ability in every form is indulged in and we have our comedians as

our tragedians. This, I know, will cheer many a soul who kindly deigns to read the words emanating from a "departed Spirit". I fear me some who *have* acknowledged the survival of their egos are apt to think that all joyousness, all humour, all fun, is left behind on earth. No, no, it is *not* so—"Cheerio!" is the password of many here as it was on earth.

I have previously mentioned the joy to be derived from the wonderfully increased scope of sounds—music in every shape and form is one of the greatest attractions here. So, too, have I referred to the enlarged scale of colours for the artist. This brings me to a fact I should like to state, our happy journeyings to places of great scenic beauty. These synchronise with the happy earth-jaunts, only we move by thought and not, *as a rule*, by car, or vehicle of sorts. On great occasions or convocations I *have*, seen spirits arrive seated upon choice and favourite animals, but these are *very* progressed beings.

The joys experienced by many women who on earth had been fond of beautiful needlework are continued in a *spiritual* sense over here. The blending of exquisite colours and the welding of intricate designs they are able to pursue in a more advanced and less laborious manner. I am finding it somewhat difficult to explain our amusements to you, as I fear many will be unable to grasp cerebrally the sense of the spirituality of these occupations, and even if they can do so may at the same time almost suffer a feeling of repulsion at what they may imagine to be barren and tasteless pleasures.

It is hard to impress the truth of the solidity of these joys and the satisfaction they give us, because the infinitely different state of being and mental attitude with which we become imbued cannot be conveyed to you whilst in the flesh. This will account for the lack of detail in some matters imparted in script by those "passed over" to mediums or sensitives. Human beings note this omission and are always asking for fuller particulars, but if they will think over what I have tried to describe they may perhaps view our difficulties with a seeing and understanding eye

Q. You say that according to the amount of mental faculty

exercised in playing games are you first, second, or third, in the race. Then is it trite that some beings who on earth excelled in athletic feats are perhaps but poor performers when in spirit form?

A. Yes, often it is so, but of necessity the type of person who excelled in the flesh in these games will endeavour to excel in their counterparts when here. That which appeals to him in the game as played on earth will also appeal to him on this side, and so incite him to use his will-power to the full extent.

Q. Have you ever essayed the difficult diversion of guessing vibrations?"

A. Yes, and found it delightful, but certainly *most* difficult. It requires much leisure to be given to its cultivation.

Q. Is the diversion of guessing vibrations applied only to discarnates?

A. As a game, yes; but when trying to help our loved ones on earth it is often necessary to take vibrations of them and all those with whom they have dealings.

Q. Is it easier to guess the vibrations of earth beings than those of spirits?

A. No—actually it is equally hard, but when visiting earth external difficulties have to be coped with and so we have not our mentalities so free for action.

Q. Talking of fun, would the same jokes amuse you as when with us?

A. Yes, to a certain extent, but, we being free of the flesh, jokes dependent for their meaning on physical application naturally do not come so much within our ken.

Q. Have you colleges for music and for the pursuance of other arts, as here?

A. Yes, decidedly, and wonderful institutions they are.

Q. Would a Grock, a Robey, or a Connie Ediss, for instance, find vocations the same as those followed when on earth?

A. Much would depend upon the state of their mentalities, their dispositions, etc. It is quite possible that one of these might be by Nature (despite having excelled, through perseverance, in the profession he or she now adorns on earth) better fitted to be, say, a painter or a scientist.

According to the general conduct of his life would the individual be given the chance or not, to develop his heart's desire.

Q. As killing (and crime generally) plays so great a part in tragedy on the earth stage, where do YOUR tragedians find their material?

A. It is in cerebral remembrance of earth dramas, and once real art has been accomplished in portrayal it cannot become extinct, and thus personifications can be rendered here artistically and enjoyed as we enjoyed them on earth. These histrionic representations have become part and parcel of the true artist and so must for ever be of him.

Question. Tell us of Your Actual Death.

It will interest many, I am sure, to know a little of the conditions of my passing-over on 27th November, 1917. At the risk of appearing egotistical, therefore, I will give a few details and, if possible, a test—though this is *very* hard, and may prove unproductive, as is so often the case when striven for.

That morning was very dark and lowering when at 7 p.m. we were assembled for action in the Fontaine-Notre-Dame (Cambrai) area. From the moment my men had set the gun a fusillade was opened upon us the like of which, it seemed to me in that volcanic hour, could hardly be intensified. Unfortunately there was a mistake in the map made by one who, at the time, was suffering from the effect of a previous shell-shock (I have since learnt this fact) which absolutely subverted our wonderfully-laid plans (truly so termed indeed, as at our head was one of the finest commanding officers, with a brain of such excellent strategic aptitude as it would be hard to better) and precipitated us into the line of vision of one of the hottest possible gun-emplacements of the Boches.

Five of our guns were in excellent positions, and mine, were it not for the mistake already alluded to, would have occupied also a good point of vantage. But the deplorable mistake was fated to alter the whole course of affairs, and instead of the success we, under our splendid leadership,

had confidently anticipated, havoc and failure were vouchsafed. Twenty men I saw dead around me before I, too, was laid unconscious on the gun-wheel. After this I knew no more till I awoke in most wonderful peaceful surroundings, with beings most exquisite ministering to me and impregnating me with their most palpitating vitality. Since coming over I have ascertained the shrapnel that laid me across the gun did *not* kill me, but I was carried by one of my men (Heaven bless him for his courage and devotion!) to a spot where eventually a shell annihilated me completely. Well, it is over now, and those dear souls whose grief was so intense at my loss, through time and through an all-embracing Goodness have become reconciled but never forgetful, bless their dear hearts! The agony on both sides of the "Veil" has been tempered, and now, by means of what is becoming with practice a wonderfully facile and flowing mediumship, I am able to "get through" as easily as do earth-dwellers on the earth "phone".

I should like to thank those dear comrades still sojourning in the flesh for their goodness, for their patience and their fortitude in that devastating fire round our beloved gun. Where is T. G. now? I trust these words may meet his eye. He was indeed great! But it were hard to differentiate where all were so loyal, so plucky I and so full of hope and cheer. I look forward to the time when all those good souls will be with me—we will "celebrate", we will reminisce, and we will *not* repine! Many are here and have now found great happiness. Peel, Wilson, Burke, and others, I have met often, and we have reconstructed the field of battle and fought that Cambrai hell over again! Alas well I it was to be, and regrets, besides being futile, only make one less and less removed from a philosophical state of mind which is ever necessary to progress. There is no truth more forceful than that sorrow (pain of body as well as pain of mind) is one of the greatest educators in the scheme of life. How hard in the experiencing indeed it seems! But even on earth many live to realize and to acknowledge that their greatest suffering has begotten, been the parent of, their present-day joy.

We are seeing now on all sides, when we visit our earth loved ones, substantial, solid, *mental* happiness borne of sorrow and despair caused by the great and fearful War.

We are seeing everywhere an uplifting of each particular ego that suffered supreme agony in loss—an uplifting out of its narrow confined cell of egotism to a broader and a wider sympathy and a juster estimate of the *true brotherhood of man*.

To us, behind the scenes so to speak, this is visible: to you, seeing only collectively many social evils, it is not so yet, being sensed only by the few. Nevertheless, it is there, shining as a light, and all this progress (visible to you on earth at a not very distant date) is the outcome of pain, of intense grief. So in individual cases. Mediumship, undreamt of by many, has been discovered or developed, which had it not been for sorrow and bereavement, would have remained dormant all through life. Many are the mothers, sisters and others who, during long watches of the night, have brooded over, have longed for, their loved ones gone in the Great War. They have pondered over and thought of "death" and its sequel, as never would they have, without these losses. And, gradually, it has been borne in upon them through the efforts of invisible loved ones, ever attendant, that their souls still live and are vital. This in itself constitutes an uplifting of the ego and gives a wider scope to the mind. Thus is it with the sensitive now writing: developments of her mediumship, I may safely prognosticate, will gain for her many mental and many concrete joys unthought of by her a while ago—healing will be one of the manifestations by which she will benefit many.

The true "Spiritualist" brings peace and happiness, passing them on, each individual being a link in the chain which, sooner or later, must encompass the whole world.

Q. Do you feel that the Great Way was necessary for the regeneration of mankind?

A. Yes, decidedly. As I have remarked before, the good ensuing has yet to be unfolded to you.

Question. Please tell us more as to Your Actual Surroundings.

The interest evinced by earth beings as to the character

of our homes and the establishments where our work is carried on is natural, of course, but description is not too easy to convey in earth terms. My state of being will serve as an example from which you may deduce others modes of life, according to temperament and type of mind.

My work is continued here as it began on earth, in scientific channels, and, in order to pursue my studies, I visit frequently a laboratory possessing extraordinarily complete facilities for the carrying on of experiments. I have a home of my own, delightful in the extreme, complete with library filled with books of reference—historical, scientific, medical—and, in fact, with every type of literature. To us these books are as substantial as those used on earth are to you. I have a music-room containing every mode of sound-expression. I have pictures of rare beauty and furnishings of exquisite design. I am living here alone at present, but friends frequently visit me as I do them in their homes, and if a faint sadness at times takes possession of me I visit those I loved most on earth.

From my windows undulating country of great beauty is seen, and at a short distance away a house of community exists, where many good souls working in my laboratory live in happy concord. One, Wu Chu Chang, a dear old Chinaman, my chief assistant, of great help in chemical analysis, is director, as it were, of this community. He is an admirable soul, of huge sympathy and endowed with a great philosophy. I might here mention that the Chinese have certainly not yet on earth "come into their own". They are not appreciated at their full worth, and many people, alas, are apt to look down upon and scorn this yellow race, which, in truth, possesses very fine, and in many cases distinctly noble, attributes of character. The "Chink" is, if *treated understandingly*, a most humane and faithful entity from whom much can be learnt, and who, when working with whites who will take the trouble to understand him, can, and does I prove a most devoted friend or servitor, as the case may be. He has a heart capable of wonderful love as also a brain capable of extreme subtlety which, according to environment and circumstances, can beget great sacrifice or great cruelty. It is up to Britain to make a good friend of China.

To return to my dear old henchman, Wu. He is a happy

soul who passed over about seventeen years ago, and, having suffered much in his own lands, came to Paris twenty years before his "death". Here he fraternised with the Westerner, and became imbued with his best qualities. Catholic in his tastes as he grew, he is now able to work with all nationalities with impunity, and his cheery personality and boundless kind-heartedness are endearing him to many, carnate and discarnate. He has lately become a "control" of the inscriber, and in many ways is most helpful to her and her friends. He diagnoses cases of ailments, and, sometimes, is able to give excellent advice; if, however, the case is beyond him, he fetches a spirit-doctor passed over fifty years ago, who has certainly succeeded, speaking through the medium, in giving valuable assistance. Wu, though following an official career on earth, was deeply interested in medicine, and is often to be seen pursuing his hobby in this sphere. He has found he can benefit mortals by his investigations, and this has added another interest to his already busy and useful life.

The laboratory over which I have control is primarily concerned with the study of the vapours and fluids forming the barrier which, we feel, by dint of profound study and experiments we may be able to pierce. The outcome of this research, we believe, will prove the "open sesame" to the door of communing between earth and these spheres.

I have many fine workers here, and not the least amongst them some Kaffirs, whose peculiarly deeply-rooted sensitiveness (this I found was a noteworthy characteristic of theirs when I so often visited their kraals in South Africa) gives them a supremacy when feeling the way with experiments—a divine intuition, it would almost seem. As on earth, these embryo scientists work in happy concord, ever joyful when one or other falls upon a hint or discovery of some phenomenon unsensed previously. Mortals will be pleased, I feel sure, to gather from this that our labour loved on earth can be continued in after-life, but as a rule amongst more propitious surroundings.

Q. Are there any women working in your laboratory?

A. Yes, several, and they are most fitted for painstaking, minute detail work, which requires infinite patience

and which certain workers are unable to cope with whilst engaged on big brain effort.

Q. I see—they do the drudgery, as so often on earth?

A. Yes, as by their sweet natures are they sufficiently self-sacrificing to take this upon themselves.

Q. Have you, yourself, acquired mastery over any instruments save the piano, the banjo and that Penny whistle out of which you somehow managed to get pretty little tunes when on earth?

A. Rather! I have devoted much energy to becoming a more adequate performer than I ever was on earth. Orchestration is my great hobby here.

Q. Do the differentiating qualities of race and colour persist in the spheres?

A. Yes, in *these* spheres, but eventually, one is led to suppose (aeons and aeons ahead, indeed), there is but one race, one colour, one language, one Soul.

Q. Does the Prejudice of white against colour hold with you?

A. Here a distinction is not necessary, as in some countries and under some conditions it is on earth, but some still carry with them this racial antagonism, which all enlightened spirits seek to dispel when they observe it dominant.

Q. When you were on earth you once expressed the wish that circumstances could have permitted you to devote your life to physical research. I take it that this having been a supreme desire, you are now, because of this, taking up the study of spirit communication in your laboratory?

A. Yes, that is so. For some time after I had "passed over" I was undecided as to whether music or science should be my *work*. After much serious thought I determined that music should be my *hobby* and my more earnest intent should be directed upon science in every form.

Question. Tell us of Your Intercourse with Earth.

Travelling through the aerial zones with all rapidity, in fact with a rapidity that practically obviates time, we are exposed to many and diverse conditions and elements, mental and physical, emanating from all sorts and descriptions

of earth beings. They may soothe, they may unfortunately have quite the opposite effect, but whichever influence it is that obtains, it is bound to leave a part of itself with *our* egos—to become incorporated with our auras. This may serve to prove that once we have realized this truth it at times requires a certain amount of pluck and initiative to "brave the elements", so to speak, and leave a haven of peace (for this fourth sphere is certainly that) and go forth, liable to encounter at any turn violent and unfriendly forces. Forsooth there are occasions when no such undesirable circumstances transpire, and we may return from our earth visit refreshed and invigorated from contact with our loved ones or any other genial entities that we may be fated to meet. All then is well; but we have to face the possibilities of the reverse and arm ourselves accordingly—not with pistol or gun, be it said, but with a vaporistic plasm which moulds our forms, and in response to the amount of will-power in us that we utilize so will it proportionately protect us.

So you will see that if well equipped we can come with immunity and often with wonderful pleasure to ourselves and you. It is a crass error to say, as many do, "Poor spirits, it is unkind to them to ask them to come!" It most certainly is *not*, so long as they, as you, will take care to guard against harmful elements and get the proper conditions for manifesting.

Imagine you yourselves wish to visit a friend. To get to that friend's abode you have a tedious unpleasant journey on foot, or by train or car, as the case may be. The weather is forbidding, and you do not anticipate much comfort in the going, possibly. However, you set out, provided with suitable raiment for the journey, and thus equipped, even if the expedition has been a bit irksome surely it is amply compensated for when you reach your destination and experience the joy of communing and being with your friend. This is a simple analogy, but it serves to typify our state of being.

We do so welcome earth intercourse, and yet very often it is denied us on the score of its being "of the devil", "leading to the lunatic asylum". etc., or, again, because the majority feel it to be an utter impossibility, a delusion and a self-deception. But these strangulating ideas of

the many are being dissipated, and soon the order of things will be inverted and the majority will be the happy believers, the minority the reverse.

Q. Do you have on your side schools for instruction in the methods of visiting the earth?

A. Yes, we have such; but more generally is it undertaken by spirits already initiated who are friends of the "departed" now wishing to visit the earth.

Q. Did you go direct to Sphere Three and then Four (where you say you now dwell), or did you first Pass through Spheres One and Two?

A. I did not pass through One and Two—all are not required to.

Q. Are Spheres One and Two very superior to earth?

A. Slightly so. Bodily pain is absent. Many uninformed minds are here, slow to grasp the reality of their surroundings and also of their "death". Many individuals of *neutral* composition sojourn here, sometimes for very lengthy periods.

Q. Does Practice make Perfect, so to speak, the ease with which you Journey to earth?

A. It does, as in any other difficult task essayed, but one has always to be prepared for certain contingencies, and it is never wise to attempt a visit without due precautions.

Q. If will-power is so necessary as a protection in these expeditions, do amiable people not of Particularly strong will find it very difficult to come to earth?

A. Yes, but if guarded and guided by friendly spirits of strong character they are enabled to do so, and in time are fitted to make the journey alone. It is like the potential swimmer—indeed faltering and fearful at first, but when imbued with confidence by his instructor ready to strike out "on his own".

Q. When mediumship is undertaken by persons of unsuitable type does it sometimes lead to lunacy?

A. Yes, unfortunately this is so. The persons most affected in this way when taking up "Spiritualism" are those of a too credulous nature, those of a nervous system not in perfect order, and those who have not taken the precaution of always well nourishing the body after and during sittings. More often than not all these defects are

to be found in the one individual, and it is such persons that it drives to cerebral derangement.

Q. What have you to say, in answer to those who really imagine that spirit communication is "of the devil"?

A. People who make these statements are generally members of some religious sect of bigoted principles, and therefore often narrow and antagonistic and unwilling to examine closely anything that they fancy may overthrow their scheme of thought. Again, some quite willing to be "converts" may have got into touch with some low type of spirit. Spirits should always be challenged and their identity proved as far as possible. If they are undesirable you are no more forced to suffer their company than you are that of individuals on earth not to your liking.

Question. Tell us more of Other-World Careers and Possibilities.

You must realize, oh mortals, that upon your inclinations much depends when choosing what manner of life you take up here. As the grasping, the mercenary, are allocated a sphere of action in sympathy with their proclivities so those who on earth are always longing to pursue some calf, some art, by their desires obtain the requisite conditions here.

I was happy to witness the case of a poor starved an who came over some little while back. On earth he had been a musician, talented but timid and retiring. His wife, who had a nature good and true, but yet, in many ways, the direct antithesis of his, managed to spur him on whilst she lived—urging him to acquit himself as his abilities warranted and for ever encouraging him to assert his individuality. She it was who endeavoured to influence this shy and faltering genius to take his true place, which was rightly above the pushful entities in his environment who lacked even a tithe of his artistic capacity. Daring her life they were able to lead an existence not luxurious, certainly, but devoid of penury. One day he found himself alone, his dear companion wafted to another sphere. Desolate and grief-stricken, devoid of his prop and stay, he gradually fell into lines of abject poverty, and of this poverty he

"died", weary and solitary. Imagine that dear comrade "passed over" and for some time viewing his sorrow and despair—imagine her delight when able to meet him, radiant as she had then become, and take him to a home of joy and beauty, where all his time, if he would, could be devoted to the art his soul so fondly cherished, for which his poor body had literally starved! This reunion, at which I happily was present (I had something to do with the band of helpers told off to meet him), was one of the most joyous and glorious episodes it has been my privilege to assist at here.

On earth one is always pondering over the inequalities of life, the misery and poverty endured by some, the ease and luxury the lot of others; and one questions the possibility of there being any just Power controlling fair arbitration. But once one has seen here these glad and wondrous reunions, the sublime joy after abject despair, one begins to perceive a right proportion in things and to catch hold of and unravel the skein of the scheme of creation, which, previously, appeared but as a tangled and chaotic mass.

Another blessed "passing-over" I viewed was that of a little girl on earth crippled by an accident in which she was run over by a heavy dray, and which necessitated the amputation of her leg. Her mother had "died" shortly before this accident, and she was left in the charge of people who had no kindness, were hard and callous, her one sympathetic companion a little spaniel pup. Without this dear dumb brute, existence would have been well-nigh unbearable. A neglected chill resulting in pneumonia happily finished off this poor little human fragment and relegated her to a sphere where love and happiness awaited her. The mother, attended by a band, of which I was a member, watched at the "death"-bed of this sweet little creature, and when the last breath of life had been drawn in that frail body, helped the luminous soul to ascend to a fairer setting. No words can describe the mother's or the child's intense delight, but it can be imagined by the understanding. The little dog still sadly mourns, and, I am sure, will soon pass to his former small mistress, the ties of love being so strong that they will draw him to her.

Q. Are you cognisant long beforehand of the approaching death of those you are interested in?

A. Yes, for some weeks as you would count it. Especially are we made aware if we happen to form a part of a band of spirit-helpers attending souls departing from their earth casings. I am one of these, being particularly interested in "passing over" as relative to Science.

Q. When a spirit was brought to a friend a while back, he declared himself to be an ancestor of that medium, and said the reason of his coming was because of the approaching death of his granddaughter. Is it a fact that ancestors from far back generally assemble near to await the arrival on the other side of their descendants?

A. Yes, it is of common occurrence. They, naturally, are most interested and only too ready to help, if need be, and increase the band of guides ever prepared to conduct the soul on its journey into the unknown.

Q. By the time one has reached the Fourth Sphere, I take it, the spirit has realized that things work out fairly and justly, and has grasped the truth of the Pervading Goodness you allude to from time to time?

A. Yes. Many do realize it on earth, but some take very long in doing so even here. However, it is not possible to have passed to this (Fourth) Sphere without having become thoroughly aware of it through the many experiences one has undergone and the many life-histories it has been one's lot to become intimate with.

Question. Can you tell us anything about Judgment?

Jurisdiction bears a very different aspect when presenting to each individual his own particular case for judgment once the ego is freed from earth trammels. The worldly miasmatic envelopment is now missing, and we view ourselves, our capacities, and our limitations, our virtues—and our faults, from a vastly different angle than formerly. That is why you will find spirits communing persistently, endeavour to inculcate in those they are most interested in a proper conception of their duty, not only to themselves but to humanity *in general*. Here our greatest asset is co-operation—it almost seems to be the fundamental A.B.C. of progress

and achievement. It could and should be so with you, and, if only it were realized more widely, would present a wonderful solution of many problems and would honestly *materially* benefit everyone. Needless to say, I do not for one moment mean that individuality should be ousted—no, far from it: in every way and on every occasion possible should it be cultivated and encouraged—but each different entity, however advanced, however unique, however complete in its inner personality, should for ever be serving and assisting others to the height of its powers.

Here, having grasped the necessity of this principle, most of us at some time or another make it our business to visit realms where are enchained (through their own mental environment carried over with them from earth) diverse spirits in various states of unhappiness, some, alas, in supreme misery. We can do a great deal for them if we are willing to give up temporarily some of ourselves, some of our vitality and electric force. It is *not* pleasant to inhale the hostile and evil thoughts and desires which hang almost like a concrete fog (I cannot describe it in better earth terms than this) around some of these unhappy souls; but once one has visited them and appreciated their agony (which many are slow to perceive is only self-created) it is difficult not to be for ever anxious, when opportunity arises, to try and give succour to them.

Those most in need of this succour are those whose greed and avarice have made them on earth neglectful of others, who have stooped to every artifice, every hypocrisy, in order to satisfy that craving for *acquiring* in every shape and form. Men and women are in this unpleasant sphere—many who occupied positions where, by the unseeing, the unknowing, they were accorded much respect and many privileges. I know of one soul who, on earth, was a woman of repute. She had climbed in the social scale by dint of a remarkable amount of pertinacity (an admirable quality when directed to a more worthy attainment). Her mode of procedure was to imbue everyone with a sense of her (spurious) philanthropy. She certainly possessed the power of hypnotism in a marked degree, so much so that she was able to impress many prominent men whose hard-headedness, one would have imagined, should have been invulnerable. By this means she obtained huge sums of money

and an unlimited amount of kudos. As no one questioned her integrity she found all plain-sailing. She was clever enough to allocate quite large sums to the charities enumerated, but the donations given her being most generous she was able also to put very considerable surpluses into her own pocket. She "died" rich in material wealth but poor indeed in kindly attributes, her nature having become so vitiated that she had even *stolen from her own kith and kin!* Now, poor wretch, she is having to face that culpable past and reflect upon her hypocritical career. Having done so few kind and benevolent acts she is left solitary and alone, for no vibrations of love had emanated from her, so no sympathetic entity is drawn to her through love. Only through pity, when journeying to lower spheres were we attracted to her and obliged to try and help her She Will rise in time, but progress will be very slow. She is in a worse state than many who have committed the crime of taking life. The latter act is oftentimes the result of the impulse of a moment: her life was one long calculated scheme for self-enrichment which had effaced any better tendencies she might have originally possessed. The excuse of bad environment could not be pleaded on her behalf, for she was a woman of education and honourable parentage. This made her thefts doubly guilty. All the while she regrets her past luxuries and the adulation meted out to her when in the flesh. When, at length, capable of regretting her humbug and deceit she will start to ascend the ladder which leads to a happier state of being.

In a less awful, yet far from delightful, condition are those of a small, petty-minded spitefulness, who on earth delighted in always descrying the worst traits in humanity. All are familiar with types of men and women—on earth this quality is often associated with the plain female of an acrid visage induced by this very state of mind—who make themselves felt adversely in any community as killjoys or mischief-makers. They cause dissension and strife and take away from life much that is beautiful by their baneful and uncharitable influence. Here they see how they have erred, but at the same time it takes much benignity of thought to eradicate this incalculable sourness, and their narrow outlook upon life and the miserable lack of tolerance with which they view any but their own opinion

drives beneficent egos away from them to conditions savouring more of sympathy and joyfulness. They are surrounded by beings of similar tendencies, so you can imagine the atmosphere is exceptionally repulsive to many spirits. Personally I would sooner visit a den of murderers, for there it is sometimes possible to find vibrations of great intelligence, great love—sacrifice even—and thus be able to give help and advice; whereas the former entities are on a dead-level, difficult to raise to the heights, and too cautious, too fearful, to sink to the depths. Kindly female ministering spirits are the best fitted to undertake their “conversion”, spirits too sensitive ever to visit the foulest criminals.

Let us now leave the description of these uncomfortable regions. So many have given to the world (through mediums) accounts of their wretchedness and despair—I find it quite unhappy enough to visit them, as I often do, and try and alleviate and help. It is not that I *cannot* give you a correct picture of the condition which is the outcome of greed, uncharitableness and intense hatred and cruelty, but that I feel it is not advisable in this book, which should be a cheerful message of hope, to paint the gruesome and the unlovely. It is sufficient to try and urge mortals to realization of the responsibilities their very existence entails; if the book prove successful in this aim readers will not have reason to dread a sojourn in a less happy sphere than the earth plane.

Terrestrial spheres are certainly delightful after visiting the dark planes, but a too frequent journeying to the latter is not suitable to some natures, altruistic and wishful to succour though they of course are. An antidote to the depression which inevitably attends one is often to be found in a Visit to congenial souls on earth. Here, sunning ourselves in their sweet and desirable vibrations, we are able to throw off this temporary gloom, and the pictures of dear ones kindly and generous-hearted brings to our minds the thought of the tranquillising joy to be theirs when they, after having showered happiness around them on earth, discard the fleshly body and meet us on this side in spirit form.

Q. Do beings "Passed over" immediately realize the whole Vista of their earth life?

A. Yes, in a measure. They become cognisant of all the depths and all the heights of their achievements. Actual episodes are brought to their minds from time to time (things they have forgotten): the good and the evil in these they see in various results.

Q. Would one supreme act of evil in an otherwise decent life merit sojourn in very undesirable regions?

A. Not necessarily. All things would be taken into consideration. As I wrote at the beginning of this book, every being is ultimately his own judge and he is aware of the amount of temptation encountered by him and the amount of resistance put forth by his will-power. Having done much good, even if temporarily relegated to such realms he would very soon rise above them, being helped by many whom he had befriended. Here, again, steps in the irresistible law of co-operation.

Q. Do you require a formidable "coat of armour" when going to the unhappy "Punitive" regions?

A. We do require strong determination and a specially vitalised aura for these sojournings.

Question. Tell us about Mediumship.

It is such a joy to us when we find a truly congenial medium. Touch the spring, and the secret drawer will open! Hey presto! What unsuspected wealth is here hidden? What wonderful discovery and treasure of thought can be conveyed and given to the world, if this should prove desirable? How completely satisfying at times to earth being and discarnate spirit is a delightful hour spent in sympathy! To the initiated it is then almost as if both were still of the same calibre. The uninitiated, the unenlightened, smile incredulously at this, but it is so.

There was once a young boy who came over here in dire distress. He had lost his memory, and it took some time to gather his faculties together when "passed over". He happened to get in touch, through a friend who had "died" at the same time as he, with a most sympathetic entity, on earth known to this friend as a reliable medium. Through her he almost immediately was brought in contact with

his mother, who, it transpired, was also a sensitive (unaware of it till then, and never previously having taken any interest in "Spiritualism"). Thus conversations ensued daily between the mother and this son, mourned as gone for ever. A most remarkable thing was that the boy was a signaller, and, when "on leave", had instructed his mother (who had always been an exceptional pal to him) in the Morse Code. The messages came through in this manner, and her delight and his knew no bounds, her conviction was complete.

I have been thinking lately a good deal about this code, and that, if used more frequently, it might prove less exacting to many sensitives not capable of writing, who are often forced to fly to "Ouija" boards and "Planchette", etc., etc. The more *natural* the methods the better pleased are we, for divers reasons, especially as unbelievers are inclined to place little credence in messages received through paraphernalia often associated with parlour games or toys.

I was once at a private seance where an artist took complete possession of a medium thoroughly unversed in the use of pen or Crayons, and there and then drew a portrait so absolutely faultless as to appear the work of a genius. The original was the other side of the world at the moment, but had been a most intimate friend of medium and spirit alike. The latter when on earth had certainly excelled in work of this kind, but the lady whose hands he employed possessed less aptitude than most people for painting or drawing of any description. Notwithstanding this fact, the sympathy existing between them was intense—hence her pliability.

Terpsichorean movements *have* been conveyed from one "passed over" to a practising exponent of the art of dancing by sympathy allied to will-power, but such powers of mediumship are most uncommon, and the body receiving must be capable of a vast amount of grace and suppleness in the first place.

Q. Is it desirable to cultivate mediumship if it does not come easily?

A. No, not as a rule. Of course, there are many strong sensitives who, through always mixing with the material or, at any rate, not coming into contact with anyone who

has realized the truth of "Spiritualism", have never been discovered, so to speak. Unless, when the gift is recognized, mediumship comes fluently and intelligently after a certain amount of concentration, then it is not strong enough for the individual to spend the time necessary to its complete development.

Q. Do you think TRANCE mediumship is more reliable than the fully conscious?

A. No. I prefer the latter—it is less liable to produce harmful physical and mental effects upon the sensitive, and it is every bit as likely to be coherent, intelligent and correct in the delivery of its messages.

Question. Can you suggest improvements in our methods of intercourse?

Doggedly and pertinaciously as so many on the earth plane, as here, are working to make one great transcendent discovery, their labours, we believe, will soon be crowned with success. We have recently touched a wire, so to speak, which we feel confident is the beginning of the great ultimate end we have been seeking for. There are five big observatories, there are many wireless stations—knowledge is coming to and through them. I make no more pronouncements with regard to this new light, time will show if I am right in my prognostications.

What a pity so many still turn away from the shade and restful peace of this beautiful, wide-spreading tree, the comforting fact of soul-continuity and of intercourse with their "departed"—the research work would progress even more rapidly but for this! However, I must not bemoan. In truth, we are really most cheered by the recent "conversions" of so many highly intelligent minds. There are two or three whose work is viewed from here with great approval, and who are being tended and encouraged by large bands of inspirers on this side. It were invidious to mention names, though my pencil would fain do so. But those to whom I refer we *know* feel our presence, sense our help, and, through this, are not to be gainsaid, not to be thwarted or disheartened by ridicule or opprobrium.

England, though not possessing so many scientific or intellectual brains in favour of "Spiritualism" as some countries, nevertheless owns in her select few a very fine

nucleus. Her womenfolk being really More truly temperamental and sympathetic than those of France or any, of the Latin countries are more open to the idea and make the better sensitives, containing in their being, when the perfect medium is found, the qualities of intuition and deep affection allied to a well-balanced, judicial mind. The Latin is too often apt to be over-prejudiced and altogether too volatile to make such a reliable "go-between". The *men* in France take the subject up more widely than Englishmen, and some excellent Work is now being done by them. It were well if great intellects of *every* nationality should form a society for the collective study of this great truth. With good organization so much more could be thereby achieved, as, having at disposal every type of mentality, the various elements proper to the several nationalities could be utilised to the fullest extent. More progress could thus be made'

I would suggest that the best intellectual entities of high repute begin to organize at once. Whichever country is the pioneer in this movement (and I cannot but think my own countrymen would be well fitted to start the enterprise) should then get in touch with individuals of fine intelligence and of good renown in every other country possible (do not exclude the black and yellow races). They should form in their cities unions, with one common base at the capital. Here fraternal societies should rise up for comprehensive study and investigation—not, as now, constructed on almost sectarian lines (despite what may be said to the contrary this is the case), but embracing all and sundry in *real* sympathy with the movement. The directors of this institution should be men of the highest integrity, possessing above all things qualities of universal charity and generosity of mind. Here, apart from extraordinary experiments in phenomena of materialization, etc., could be tried and tested, and possibly trained, mediums of every description. This mediumship should be studied minutely, in order that these sensitives should be able to practise without deleterious result to their physical bodies. Little is known at present of the cause and effect of certain attributes peculiar to mediums, and more serious enquiry through physicians, carnate and discarnate, should be undertaken.

I would suggest that no monetary gain should be effected through this society. Do not think I would imply it should be carried on in an unbusiness-like manner or promulgated by means of charity. I mean it should pay its way, but without being a commercial or money-making organization. This does not preclude payment of mediums and officials connected with the establishment, many of these being often in circumstances by no means affluent.

There seems to me to be no reason why this world-spreading happy co-operative brotherhood should not be made a gigantic affair, productive of infinite benefit to mankind.

In conjunction with this suggested international college of psychic research it would be a splendid idea to run a college of music—each could and would be of enormous help to the other. The vibrations always issuing from this centre would attract, without doubt, really desirable spirits. At the same time the spirits drawn to this psychic spot would often be enabled to bring others with them to aid and inspire the musicians. Trained and perfected choirs and orchestras, as well as individual effort, would constitute a most pleasing and efficient influence and a setting worthy of the reception of the vast multitudes ever eager to come to earth when conditions prove favourable

Too often an out-of-tune musical-box or a grating and unmelodious gramophone is supposed to form an, irresistible invitation. Sitters who have been present at such seances may here remark, "It *does* bring the spirits". The answer to this is that they would come in any case if their friends were there and deeply concentrating; but unlovely sound is often jarring to the extremely sensitive, and better results could be obtained without music, failing that of the right kind. I must here impress Upon readers that I am not seeking to depreciate homely efforts, however humble, if likely to appeal to some "dead" friend, such as a known song or piece of music, but I wish to let them know that where possible the best and the really beautiful should be given.

Q. Do you insist that Englishwomen make better mediums generally than Latins? Is it because so many racial strains enter into their composition?

A. Yes—it is from this mixture that the suitable temperament is evolved: notably the Celtic strain is prominently evident in the best sensitives.

Q. You say many spiritualistic societies are sectarian: do you think they bring too much orthodox religion into their interpretation of "Spiritualism"?

A. Decidedly, and with such methods employed no *wide-spreading* progress can be accomplished. Without being didactic, each individual could preserve his form of religion, if desired, but it is incumbent on him not to prohibit the right of others "to be right". Perhaps all are a *little* right. Amiable discussion should be encouraged, and then much might be learnt of each and every belief.

Q. Would students at the college of music be necessarily required to belong to the Psychic department of the dual college?

A. Yes: in joining the one they would join the other, but take up the course of psychic Or musical instruction according to their talents or abilities.

Q. Should anyone becoming a member of the musical college be of necessity psychic?

A. No, so long as he is in real sympathy, anxious for enlightenment, and not antagonistic.

Question. What about spirit-healing?

Neurotics of every description could be cured from this side if only they would believe—and get in touch with us through some reliable and suitable medium. Nervous disorders were formerly practically confined to the female sex, but since the Great War they have been unfortunately bequeathed to many a stout-hearted and able-bodied man who, previous to that welter of tumultuous, nerve-splitting sights and sounds, had a perfect nervous system, impervious to much that had to be encountered in the affairs of a normal life.

We can give enormous help by concentrating on the sufferer's actual nervous system and willing a complete reunion of the jagged and frayed nerve-threads. It requires a medium of distinctly sympathetic calibre to be the vehicle of our will and, in addition, extreme compatibility between him (or her) and the patient. The spirit assisting must be

of pronounced strength and personality and owning the quality of determination in a markedly high degree.

This is one of the reasons (to utilise spirit communion as a remedy for many illnesses) that it is so essential a *universal* college for the study of all branches of psychic science should be formed. To this end, many men of medicine, as well as members of other professions, could be enrolled and give of their knowledge for humanity's sake. It is because of their psychic mentalities that the Indian and others of the East prove such efficient and masterly physicians. Probably, too, the "second-sight" possessed by the Scotch and Irish accounts for the pre-eminence of these Celtic strains in medicine. Germans, though extraordinarily advanced in science, lack the aptitude to apply it to the full as physicians, as the bulk of them are not *psychologists* and the power to see other view-points is not highly developed with them—the quality of over-abundant sympathy is missing. It must be realized that sympathy is the fundamental basis of so much power in any and every direction.

Q. In this college which you are anxious should be inaugurated, would you suggest mediums should be tested to see if they would prove efficient conductors of spirit-healing powers?

A. Yes—by this means so many ills could be cured and eliminated from humanity's book of diseases.

Q. Are NERVOUS disorders more capable of spirit treatment than other maladies?

A. Yes, for these are ills where we can get to work directly upon the nervous system by means of will-power.

It is difficult to explain to you, but you must take it as a fact that we can proceed more quickly by using like upon like (in this case, will upon will) than in any other way.

Q. Does love hold the same place in your sphere as on earth?

A. It does hold an even greater place, but it is purged of much that was gross and made even more compelling than on earth.

Q. If a man and woman have great love for each other on earth, does that love become paramount when both have passed over, or may the first one Passing have formed a closer spirit tie?

A. If the love was supreme on earth and the earth-being left forms no greater tie, then shall the love of the two when united have its grand transfiguration.

Q. If a man or woman has not found true sympathy in earth love, is it found in the next sphere?

A. Decidedly, and there are many who have gone unloved on earth who find when here mates whose vibrations are in perfect accord with theirs. These entities become mated in a spiritual sense and can, if they so desire, dwell together in harmony.

Q. If married people have been unsuited here, do they meet together in the next plane?

A. They may *meet*, but certainly are not *fated* to be constantly with one another, and more likely than not each will find a congenial spirit (male or female, as the case may be) with whom to dwell, or at any rate meet often in joyous sympathy.

Question. Have you anything to say about Automatic Writings?

Maudlin and meandering are oftentimes communications effected through some spirits to some mediums. In these cases, as a rule, the qualifications which are necessary to form such puerile statements are indicated by the natures of the discarnate entity communicating and the carnate receiving. These idiotic "revelations" should be treated with the scorn they deserve and both spirit and medium should be ignored by sensible men and women. Of necessity there will always be a public for such inanity, as there is always for certain books and papers inspired by mortals, even if these works sadly lack invigorating information or original thought.

The pity is that these documents are seized upon by antagonistic minds. It appears far easier for the latter to discover and denounce such, than it is for them to hold up to the light and applaud intelligent and truthful communications, of which there are many, the trouble being that these do not always fall into the right hands. Sympathetic people already half-convinced are eager to devour every form of psychic literature available, heedless of its worth.

They are convinced it comes from "beyond the Veil", and therefore feel it must be good. This is a ridiculous hypothesis, and if these anxious converts would but stop to think and use their intellects, they should in time come to discriminate between valuable and valueless pronouncements. Until a proper library has been formed on a large scale by men and women of intelligence, who will eliminate all but the best and most desirable, "Spiritualism" will suffer. It is often hard to adjudge truly the works of mortals—how much more so, then, that of the invisible spirit, to so many but a myth and a phantasy!

In this connection and for the healthy growth of this great Truth, I cannot urge too strongly a plea for the immediate forming of a huge, wide-spreading, cosmopolitan society for the earnest furtherance of the linking up of the Two Worlds. Man is standing on the threshold—all his powers and ours on this side must be requisitioned to ope the portal to complete understanding, which must bring in its train a grand, an overwhelming, conviction!*

* The severe and somewhat intolerant terms in which the script refers to automatic writings of which the Communicator does not approve is very characteristic of the alleged writer. I have read a note from him about amateur war critics written when he was at the front, which is in exactly the same key.

A. C. DOYLE

PART II

REFLECTIONS FROM THE AFTER WORLD—TEN ESSAYS

Heredity.

Doubtless the study of heredity could be explored on different lines from those upon which I shall try to discourse briefly, but the subject is so many-sided and so intricate that there are bound to be antagonistic views concerning it. These views seem at first glance diametrically opposed, but after minute study it will be found that frequently one is the complement of another and not the antithesis. Take, for instance, the case of a drunkard and a rouse. Quite often the offspring of such a degenerate is well-balanced in his mind, well-developed in body, and advanced in intellectual attainment—a specimen to be proud of and in nowise enfeebled by the profligacy of his parent. But this strain, though unfelt by his children, is again brought out, even sometimes to an abnormal degree, by his children's children or theirs. Does not this show that once a seed has germinated, only by excessive will-power can its first intention of growth and development be frustrated and forced to proceed along the superior channels of environment which will in time be assimilated into it and thereby form out of evil that which is good? Direct use of will-power consciously exercised before precreation on the part of the parents knowing of this taint which may be passed on in the link of descent, can do much to mitigate the undesirable elements constituting this weakness or vice. But to be effectual this knowledge must be borne in the minds of the potential parents before the very beginning of the existence of these child egos. Too little is this fact realized as yet, but pioneers (who unfortunately have to withstand opprobrium and ridicule) are already getting many to understand this truth, so essential to the betterment of posterity. I would hasten to add that too great study of eugenics in connection with parenthood is not desirable in a general way—it stunts, it depreciates and it mars. Only when peculiar and abnormal

traits or over-developments are existent is this definite plan of action advisable.

Many would aver that in this supreme creative faculty only the Highest Power (designated according to creed or belief) could possibly come into operation, but if only the truth of the greatest being linked to the humblest is tightly apprehended, it must be seen that this wondrous force is transmitted down the scale, and this great Influence can be exercised by man to control in a huge degree the destiny of himself and his descendants.

THE PASSING OF A SOUL *

The passing of a soul! How ephemeral, how translucent how shimmering the picture conjured by the mind's eye; And this is as it should be, for the passing of the actual spirit of man from out his hampering, maybe ailing and aching, encasement is fraught with all these characteristics. To the watcher by the bed of sickness who sees but the panting gasping body, "death" indeed seems horrible and agonising—a Godless act in itself—the only compensating factor sensed, perhaps, being that the body ceases to suffer, ceases to endure. But the poor wracked and distorted frame is but making its last struggle to retain the shining spirit, it is but endeavouring to hold the light that has illumined it so long. Maybe the longing and loving ones standing by are calling it back with all the strength of their hearts: "Do not go, stay with us! God, do not take this dear soul from us!" Their sorrow is so intense, their grief so devastating, and the soul poised between the two states—but half-freed from the trammels of its fleshly covering—turns to them, responding to the appeal of love, while other loving beings, no longer in the flesh, are urging to brighter radiant conditions away from suffering and pain. Eventually the latter prevail, the struggle is over, the soul is freed, the

* This essay "came through" four days after the death of the medium's mother. Lester having several weeks before foretold her passing.

poor shell collapses, an inert and futile mass. For the watchers the tense hours have passed, reaction takes place, and more often than not the blessed soothing tears fall, like rain upon the thirsting ground. And later the overwhelming sense of loss engulfs them in appalling strength. But this is where those who have realized the exquisite truth of soul-continuity and the possibility of spirit intercourse have the grandest and most wonderful comfort—they *know* their loved one is no longer sojourning in the house of clay, and they are able to picture the Light or Soul being wafted to regions of a finer calibre, to environment of soothing influences fully compensating for the travail endured previous to this Tremendous Departure. And so their tears gradually fall with less violence, with less poignant force, with less bitterness and despair. Possibly the sceptic may wonder, may stand agape nay, may even impugn the believer for callousness or apparent indifference. But the convinced goes his way, hopeful: though the dear presence cannot actually be seen by his eyes, the knowledge of all he himself holds within his consciousness permeates him, and, in spite of the terrible sense of bereavement which possesses his soul, this radiates warmth and comfort excessive. And thus commensurate with the progress Of the mental condition of those left behind is the upward flight of the released spirit, or flame of life, the spark whose infinity, whose source and end we can hardly guess at!

THE CO-OPERATION OF THE MENTAL WITH THE PHYSICAL

What an extraordinary amount of misery might be avoided in the world if the importance of the mental aiding and abetting, as it were, the physical, and the physical the mental, were more thoroughly understood and appreciated! Take, for instance, the manual labourer who works year in year out at the same monotonous task, in itself quite a health-giving and muscle-developing one perhaps, but as

the brain is not allowed to be brought into harmonious co-operation with it, it gradually becomes a dulling and cramping influence which stifles the spiritual in his nature and induces in him a stubborn, dogged, animalized attitude towards his God and towards man. He becomes matter incarnate, the spirit prototype shrinks in proportion to his corporeal development. There is no need for this abnormality—the development of the physical is no deterrent to the development of the mental, in fact should be an accompanying asset to that growth. But the onus of educating these strenuous toilers should be put on the shoulders of capable and far-seeing individuals who would be able to inculcate in them a just comprehension of their potentialities and seek not merely to utilise them as machines able to produce so much labour per them (representing for them so much £ s. d.), but strive to advance their mental outlook and draw upon their brains as much as upon their bodies.

Lecturers should be employed to show this mighty mass of workers how to strengthen and cultivate the cerebral powers with which they are endowed. By this and other educative means better results in every way would be achieved, and in place of the dull, expressionless and sometimes brutalized type of humanity would be encountered beings radiating not only physical fitness, but forceful live mentalities through whose eyes would shine that glow, a blend of every characteristic appertaining to the well-balanced man. No longer would be seen those surly souls so often to be met with in bucolic surroundings who scan the intelligent with suspicion and dislike and see in the stride of progress only hurt to their own small personalities. The bestial and degraded forms of life would tend to disappear in proportion to the growth of spiritual development, and a more perfected creature would gradually be evolved.

On the other hand, we have to consider the antithetic example, the importance of the physical complementing the mental. So often one finds the student with much-developed cranium is but a sorry figure when stripped for the athletic contest. Puny, shrunken, and inept he is veritably an object of pity. Hours of study with huddled form cramped over multifarious volumes without ever the relaxation of healthy athleticism have indeed warped his body and are in danger of warping his mind, for there is no truer axiom than "*Mens*

sana in corpore sano" [a sound mind in a sound body]. However, there are not so many of such cases nowadays as formerly, for sport is playing an unprecedented part in the general life of the people. It is rather the danger of the physical encroaching on the mental that has to be guarded against, particularly in respect to the worker engaged in heavy manual labour born in a lowly state of life. It is here that the enlightened in high places should look to it to form for their employees a better standard of existence which will enable them to bring their dormant intelligences into action and conduce to the perpetuation of a finer and a more subtle race.

THE READJUSTMENT OF FATE

The conscious slavery of any being is most deterrent to the cultivation of individuality. Alas! too often a species of slavery is forced upon earth souls by their devotion to some cause or another, or, more deleteriously still, to some particular person who holds them in chains, so to speak, either by fear or by love.

When an ego finds himself in such a position it is most essential he should endeavour to extricate himself from the tentacles that hold down and imprison him. The assertion of will-power, not necessarily in an aggressive form, is of paramount importance once one has become assured of the serfdom in which one is enthralled. Bearings of the whole scheme of circumstances should be taken, and the benefits to be derived from a breaking-away from this bondage should be noted and weighed up as against those accruing from continuing in this numbing existence. Our state of being will invariably be found to be unprogressive and altogether abortive if we succumb too completely to any one movement or to the power of any one individual.

Let us take first the thralldom through love. Do not for one moment imagine I seek to depreciate the devotion and sympathy that is and should be extended to those whom our affection has sought out and extolled; but let us examine cautiously our tree of life from time to time and see that no

encroachments, in the form of other trees or shrubs, are growing too near to it, taking Up too ravenously the nourishment, the light, the air, necessary to that privileged tree, which by right of Nature carries the seed of our individuality. We are so often called upon to witness prolonged sacrifices which necessitate the giving up of individuality and of the cultivation of talents and the depletion of a life which by nature had all the elements for a happy and successful blossoming. But those associated by affection with individuals who make great demands on another's care should see to it that the burden is lightened whenever possible, it cannot be shifted altogether, from those overwilling shoulders. Heavy burdens too long borne sap the sweetness from the most loving, the most generous natures, and destroy the power to give generously, thus warping the ego and making it unrecognizable from its original aspect.

Beings owe consideration to self as well as to others. Too often the unselfish neglect this law and thereby ensure an existence unworthy of its purpose in many ways, though perhaps full of goodness and virtue in others. This is where a sane review of one's life and its environment is desirable and should be systematically made. A certain amount of readjustment in the order of things can then be effected, if consonant with the pursuance of the duties love and affection entail. It should be far easier to disentangle oneself from bondage should such a state have been brought about by fear, but often timid souls experience great difficulty in freeing themselves from a habit which has become, through the dominant nature of their oppressors, as a monster which hurls them to the ground and there holds and binds them fast, thoroughly demoralized and inept. One gigantic effort, one sure blow, is required to force these cruel creatures to unloose their clutch. If only the weak and fearful would but realize this they would themselves be masters, to a certain extent, of their fate. They would not then be destined to a life bereft of initiative and steeped in slavery—individuals in no way resembling the beings they were intended to be when born into the earthly existence. Be brave, be expeditious, all those who labour in this condition of undesirable thralldom: as far as possible be independent of the ties of other egos save and except those generated by love and affection! Stand alone in your

individuality as a tree that needs no support, in symmetry conforming, as it were, with other trees in the garden, but a thing of strength and beauty in its separate character and power!

THE ART OF FRIENDSHIP

Friendship for so many relationships is a misnomer—for many of these it is as much a mistake to call them by this wondrous name as it is to say that a bamboo-tree is an oak. Stability is of all qualifications the essential to friendship, and in order to ensure stability the first requisite is to have knowledge of the capacities of the two entities about to form that which should prove an indissoluble link. Upon too flimsy, too shallow a foundation is it too often striven to build up this edifice. Know, oh mortals, your man before seeking to impart your soul's worth to him, before letting him unbosom himself of his dearest secret. Study him in an amiable but critical mood, in order to take his deepest soundings before letting loose that flood of emotion which should for ever be interchanging between two loved and loving entities once they have met upon a solid basis of sympathy and supreme understanding. Frequently, unfortunately, but superficial are the ties formed—the product of propinquity, maybe, or momentary impulse following on the meeting of personalities who were in touch round a festive board, in the relaxation of an idle hour, but who, when brought face to face with the stern, the serious realities of existence, have no common ground for cohesive action, no sympathy or understanding likely to prove workable in enduring partnership. I speak of the friendship of man and man, woman and woman, as of man and woman. What a world of weeping is caused, alas, by incompatibility in the union of the latter when friendship is too lightly valued, too lightly given! Reticence, though much scorned by some, is indeed a sacred possession, so long as when its exercise is no longer needed it can give place to tolerance, to pity, to love and to every sympathetic emotion capable of being shown to those we have rightly weighed and proved are worthy of the name of friend.

Popularity for many has an irresistible appeal, and so, without thought, without knowledge, they offer a *camaraderie* to anyone and everyone that flits across their path; but such prolific giving of oneself does not indicate great depth, and often when sorrow forces its harrowing apparition upon suffering beings they look round in vain for comfort, for the sustaining aid of sympathy and love. Stability must be lacking unless due thought, due introspection and inspection have been devoted to ourselves as also to those whom we have sought to take unto our hearts in friendship's name. Seek, then, to know the mind of your friend, so that when the crisis comes you will not repine, you will not be overwhelmed at the emptiness of the vessel into which you have poured the deepest treasure of your heart.

THE ETHICS OF INDIVIDUALISM

When the esoteric ego or soul is "up against" a problem it does not feel itself able to cope with, it is essential that it should disband itself, so to speak, and seek retirement from all hostile, as alike from all sympathetic, environment. There it should absolutely disentangle itself from all superfluous thoughts and sensations, and in this isolation it is bound to come to a non-biassed and therefore just estimation of any difficult and troublous state of mind or matter circumstances have forced upon its personality. To the untutored in self-governance this may appear a somewhat ambitious and altogether too idealistic counsel. But it becomes quite easy of accomplishment once one has realized the advantages to be derived therefrom. Concentration follows on the acceptance of this ordinance and help, in the form of "spirit vibrations", is accorded a fair field for action. It is bound to be there in the air as messages waiting to be taken up—like the wireless you are now becoming so familiar with on earth. But what of getting the wrong messages? you will say. Well, there is a superabundance of good and just vibrations outweighing by far the evil or unjust, and isolation of the ego is certain to attract the former, or, in any case, these being in superior numbers

will hold the greater power. There is great assistance, if only mortals would recognize it, to be gained by getting away from all externals when nonplussed by any worry, be it in connection with work or pleasure. Too often man is prone to seek companionship in extreme difficulty, hearken to what one or other friend or acquaintance may advise, and then go off and act upon the thoughts produced by that advice, collective or individual as the case may be. In doing this he quite possibly is demolishing the house of his own building and substituting other material of conglomerate, and therefore undesirable, nature quite adverse to the foundations on which that house was originally erected. This does not necessarily imply complete oblivion to the thoughts and opinions of respected and valued friendships, but these should be imbibed as an after-dinner glass of port, to mellow, to palliate and to put the final touch upon the adequate repast. So with thought: after mature mastication of any serious problem, let the kindly and beneficent influences of our best-beloved soften and perfect our decision, already practically formed by the will-power gathered into our mental comprehension in the hour of solitary contemplation, when surrounded only by spirit waves of thought. Thus may be fostered that germ of personality without which the force of individualism is *non est*.

LOVE

The driving force of Life is Love—it inspires, it creates, and often when it has made, alas, it mars! But without it, without the capability of exuding it as a soothing dew which will benefit another or others around him, man is incomplete, is not fulfilling himself to the best of his abilities. His work will become and, his pleasures empty; life, instead of a glorious ride and great adventure, a weary, unproductive and monotonous route march. Love of humanity, love of animals, love of the pageant of Nature in all its forms, is the grand opiate to the sorrows of the world, to the trials that are bound to present themselves to men and women of any marked characteristics as they pursue their

way through their probationary earth course. Tenacious of purpose, this wonderful Spark, the vitaliser of matter, this Spiritual element, Divine—call it what you will—makes itself felt and shines forth in most extraordinarily unexpected places, illuminating the most foul spot with its energising glow, triumphant its victory, complete its power. If one could find the secret of Love, then would the whole Secret Of Creation be unfolded. But evidently the wondrous cosmos is only to be apprehended by us in the most rarified and sublime state of our progression: we must hold on to the small glimmering light at the end of the tunnel, like the poor, weary entombed miner who perceives deliverance somewhere in the future. It is sufficient to rest in this knowledge—it is enough to palliate and imbue with hope. Eternity will solve the great riddle, so let us leave the solution to evolve itself gradually.

Man's love for man is as a rule a straightforward emotion, born more often than not of congeniality in work or play—he is generally not particularly critical as to small points of character when forming a big friendship with one of his own sex, he eats the apple, as it were, without looking for the core, he does not cavil at trifles or tot up as grave indictments the idiosyncrasies of his friend as woman is prone to do when estimating her fellow-woman. In this way has man an advantage, for he is spared the many disappointing and jarring incidents which, unfortunately, too often disfigure friendships between two feminine entities. Here, perhaps, he exhibits a bigger, a finer outlook, which enables him to draw upon the kindly elements his friend is gifted with and in the interchange of endowments enjoy true friendship in all its fullness.

But love between woman and man is a very much more complex and more intricate thing than that subsisting between members of the same sex. Try as we will to understand it and to appraise it, it is for ever presenting to us new aspects and altogether unprecedented situations. For this is ever the stumbling-block and the fount of tears: man loves in a different way from woman, and although woman, being intuitive, is able to appreciate man's standpoint, man too frequently lacks intuition and constantly inflicts hurt, sometimes amounting to torture, upon the sensitive and loving femininity. It should, therefore, be

his duty—not only his duty, but a big safeguard to his happiness—to study the little details that go to the making or marring of her happiness, things that to him, somewhat grosser in calibre, may appear infinitesimal, even petty, but which, forming as they do part of her nature, have been ordained as the antithesis of, and the complement to, man in his more virile hardihood.

It were undesirable, even if it were possible, to induce uniformity in the attributes of the sexes, but it is possible, it is extremely urgent, that a greater and a more sympathetic understanding (and here it is man who has to attend his kindergarten) should be striven for and attained. There are, of course, cases where women, narrow in outlook, limited in comprehension, lacking in emotional imagination, create for their unfortunate partners a life of stultifying ineptitude. In the main, however, man is the greater defaulter, for he declines to ascend the rising ground upon which woman stands to look down into the shimmering waters of the Mirror of Life.

But whence springs this force of such unique vitality, this Love using the word in the largest and most encompassing signification—which ennobles, which transfigures and transmutes the ordinary base metals into gold and precious gems, which gives to the monotonous daily round a magic, if only an occasional, light that nevertheless makes toil less burdensome and cheers the way of even those in the deepest despair? Once more I say the answer is to be found—but in Eternity.

THE GROWTH OF AN IDOLATRY

Many centuries ago—long it may seem to the Ordinary earth-dweller, but to the historian and the biologist who have studied the formation of the earth's substances but as an hour—there dwelt the progenitors of that Mary who was to become as a being wholly unique in the history of Nature, a human entity of the species female who, it has been proclaimed (and even to hint at such a possibility being controvertible were considered blasphemous) produced a

man-child procreated unaided. To the ego that is unhampered by the earth body and has grasped just a faint meaning and understanding of science and nature (I use these Words synonymously, as they are interchangeable) it is absolutely inculcated into his being, undeniably impressed upon his mind that such a subversive and altogether contrajudicial order of Nature is non-existent. Nature will make many mistakes, maybe with a purpose, such as to create human forms of abnormal composition, commonly termed "freaks"; she will also put into the souls of human entities characteristics which constitute a type of mind analogous to "freaks" in the physical body (witness the genius of a Wilde allied to the potentialities of a beast of the field): but never has she departed, or will she depart, from her scheme of human nativity being the outcome of two minds acting upon two physical corporealities. The fundamental law can never be gainsaid, it is supreme, it is infinite. It is obvious that the greatest truths of existence are the least contestable, and yet why for hundreds of years has this absolutely unnatural, unscientific, contraplanetary assertion been accepted as sublime truth by intellectual, scientist, religionist, as well as by the humble and the unlearned? It is because human egos for all time have been animated by an inherent love of idolatry or adulation—once given a being or an object which they think a fit vessel for their admiration and devotion they must imbue it with characteristics so wonderful, so great, that in some cases, where the imagination so largely preponderates as to outweigh more intellectual elements, they become fanatical and entirely unbalanced. When such a state of mind is reached, Science (or Nature) has hard work indeed to combat this anachronism. From this nucleus of faithful fanatics has originated the fanatical idea, which is now accepted by a large percentage of the human race—the supposed wondrous truth which has come to be looked upon as a Supreme Being's great miracle.

Scientists on either side of the Veil must endeavour to break down this barrier of misconception, a grave impediment to the steady progress of Science and Nature, for these two are always and ever working together, are indissoluble. For if you are going to admit this unique thing—this supernatural, or rather unnatural, birth of Christ the

Son of Mary—you are going to admit any super-abnormal thing to be possible in Creation. What I am seeking to prove is that if communication between the spheres is to be established as a *sine qua non* [necessity], as an incontrovertible axiom, those working on both sides have to go to Nature to find in her irrefutable laws the key to the secrets which are there for the indefatigable scientist to reveal to an anxious and awaiting world.

THE RESERVATION OF JUDGMENT

How often, when in the earth body, we are apt to pass the most sweeping opinions upon the individuals we meet in our daily life! How bombastic, how didactic, how condemnatory these may be, formed as they are, perhaps, upon one or two casual meetings! It is right we should endeavour to estimate at once the character of those we meet, but only a few are endowed with the gift of giving an accurate *prima facie*~[first sight] judgement. In the case of too many prejudice will therefore permeate all their dealings with others, and thus they may be putting up a hard wall of hostility where it is quite possible a bank of flowers could be planted. Those who have proved by experience that the desirable sense of quick perception is lacking in them, should keep the mind open and receptive, ready to weigh up carefully the various conflicting points in the characters presented to them. The gold should be looked for and appreciated in all intensity, even if it be clogged with dross—it is there right enough if we have the patience and also the sympathy to discover it. Environment should be taken into consideration and allowance made for stultifying or inharmonious elements which so often tend to dam beautiful qualities and prevent them flowing tranquilly and giving their just quota to the river of life. Each entity has a bountiful supply to give of; but this is not generally realized and only a narrow egoistic existence is pursued which totally ignores the responsibilities due to other individuals' contact.

By so shutting himself up in a hut built of his own limited sensations, man is losing much for himself and depleting

others. Fraternity should form the basis of a new and better understanding of man's debt to his neighbour—should be the foundation of a truer civilization that should probe deeper into the hearts of men, bringing out, as from a goldmine, unbelievable treasure. Avoid hasty judgment when searching for the answer to Humanity's emotions. The Soul is a strange accumulator and its contents can only be gauged as they lie, the one in proportion to the others. The superficial observer, therefore, has no right to damn—for without true knowledge of the inner workings of this luminosity lit with a Spiritual Element of which we have but very scanty cognisance, it were useless for us, nay it were a great impertinence, to stand as arbiter of our brother's regeneration.

TRUE SOCIALISM THE OFFSPRING OF TRANQUILLITY

There are on earth so many diametrically opposed forces working persistently and continuously for predominance that it sometimes appears to be almost an impossibility for the poor human ego tossing on that sea of emotions to gather together and set in order the materials, as it were, to build up the house of his desire. He sees so much around him that he could make use of which appeals to his temperament and his intellect, but it is interlaced with that which is repulsive to him, and the trouble is for him to disintegrate his affinities from the heterogeneous matter which assails him on all sides. Too often this task seems Herculean and, baffled and disheartened, he gives up the attempt and holds on to that which at first appeared to him unnecessary, unlovely, or perhaps even base. He sought to build his house of marble and has allowed himself to be content with clay! Patience and tranquillity are the great factors which might have averted this degeneration, this dissipation of his high ideals and lofty aims. The rush and turmoil to get a seat of some sort or other at the play of "Life" pervades his whole outlook. The panic of living, one might say,

debars him from appreciating the beauties which are to be found for the looking. If only he would mark time and acquire poise, regain serenity and make a fresh start, this state of tranquillity would imbue him with virility and determination and make him fitter to meet all troubles with bravery and resolution. But it were hard to make people enter into such a scheme with enthusiasm. Obstinate, alas! they pursue their flurrying scurrying, course, their great aim to be "top dog" in something sometimes so little worth while, if only they could realize it! The fight for excessive wealth hurls millions into the abyss of desolation, the fight for a living wage debars the other millions from participating in the joys of a very beautiful world. Now, if only a common average could be struck, and those that have plenty stop short, others now writhing in penurious straits could, and would, have enough. Economists may question this and talk of Capital and Labour to all eternity, but nevertheless Socialism is to be the saviour of the world, but in a very different form from that which has been trying for so many years to make itself a big power. I speak of a vastly superior Socialism, shorn of all its arrogance and despotism, of all its initiative-killing and barbarous ineptitude. The present-day Communism and Bolshevism is but a distortion, a horrible parody, of the spirit of true Socialism, of which tranquillity and peace, in complete opposition to chaos and upheaval, should form the live actuating force which will one day cleanse the evil which at present permeates the world.

PART III

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE BEYOND

CHAPTER I

The depletion of the universe is by complete exhaustion, and when all the matter conserved by mortals is etherialized a substitution is effected in the etheric fluids, which conglomerate and eventually habitate in the spheres. When the so-called earthly body is without life, the non-extinct luminosity, or soul, takes flight in a synthetic manner. Only the superfluities of matter remain, and are treated in various manners, according to the religion or disposition of the friends of the so-called "departed". When the etheric fluids commingle and assimilate in the manner ordained by the unerring law of co-operation, the soul is elevated to an altitude inconceivable to the mortal brain of the earthly body. It is free then from all superfluous matter and able to soar into realms of extraordinary rarity and sublimity. Of bodily functions it now has no realization, and only the cerebral memories enable it, when visiting again (as so often it does) its earthly home, to enter into and sympathize with its loved ones' trials and tribulations. Oh, if only the exquisite freedom the spirit enjoys could be for one moment conveyed to the minds of those left on earth, how banal, how ephemeral would seem the grappling for wealth to enable one to pursue earthly pleasures, which are to so many the be-all and end-all of their existence!

When the elemental plasm is consumed by the etheric proteids the subliminal esoteric ego is liberated and immediately attuned to its new environment. Vibrations illimitable compose that ego, and every sensation, every iota of emotion ever experienced by that ego is registered in vibrations for all eternity. Infinitesimal in importance to the earthly mind may seem some action, some thought, some sensation, but it is all incorporated, so to speak, with the waves of power which shape the destinies and the eternal pilgrimage of the Soul of Man.

As the progress of the soul becomes more and more sublime the esoteric ego is less and less sensitive to the influence of the surrounding protoplasm. Infinite as is the generation of matter escaping from the terrestrial spheres, it ultimately is attuned and purified and becomes only ethereal and sublime. Thus the grossest and most material essence is eventually transmuted into vaporific translucent rarity. Ages of time, as men count it, are required for this extraordinary and almost inconceivable transmutation.

As the depositions of matter are consumed, a fundamental aura is formed around the esoteric ego. Millions upon millions of vibrations form that ego. It is a stupendous thought for the mortal brain of man to grapple with, and almost impossible for him rightly to apprehend in all its intensity and magnificence, the etherealization of the mundane mass of matter which he sees and feels, suffers through and joys through which to him is known as his fleshly body. To those sojourning in the flesh it would appear almost the delusion of a poor maniacal creature. An hypothesis so far removed from the range of even highly-developed intelligences is unfortunately too often esteemed by mortals as the product of brains disordered and deranged.

Those wonderful and inspired individuals who from time to time have arisen in earth's midst have, alas, too often been derided and spurned when they have endeavoured to raise the thoughts and ambitions of men to a more exalted and less gross appreciation of the meaning of Life and its illimitable possibilities and incommensurable destinies. Heartrending to the initiated are the life-histories of those who have perceived a glimpse of the inner and wonderful Light of the Truth of Creation, who, with disinterested zeal, have tried to bequeath a little of that knowledge to others, and for their pains received but scorn and contumely.

Scientists of many ages have probed into the metaphysics of the study of the Soul: most have been rewarded, after infinite labour and at the sacrifice of health and youth, by only the satisfying of their own instincts in the knowledge that they have ascended perhaps one or two rungs of the ladder that leads from darkness into light. But the true scientist is the true philosopher, and is not to be disheartened or dismayed—to him even one diminutive movement upwards is synonymous with Victory, with the triumph of

Truth. And so it is through all the ages: progress, however slow, is inevitably sure, and to those who studiously penetrate into the mysteries of Science—which, when all is said and done, is but Nature—the fruits she offers as reward, though but common stuff to the unseeing, the unfeeling, are luscious indeed to the solitary but ever-hopeful searcher. Therefore be joyous, be hilarious even, all souls who in the present year of 1922 realize the milestones achieved by the runner in the race for knowledge! For to me, who passed over not five years ago in the Great War, to me in that short time it has made strides stupendous and altogether unimagined by me as possible. It is a most stimulating and invigorating thought, and must surely be a whip and spur to those who, still trammelled with the earthly body, are labouring to teach to others their conviction of the survival of man's Ego.

CHAPTER II

Many times in the history of man the trivialities of life have formed the bases of destinies gigantic and epoch-making: so in the development of this revelation of the soul's survival which now to the world has come to be known as Spiritualism, but which I prefer to call Soul-continuity, the small voice of some unknown, but nevertheless perhaps highly-developed sensitive or medium has set the world agog, eager for discussion, keen antagonism and analysis. And so it should be. No cause can advance without criticism, and the greater the truth and justice of that cause, the more will it welcome controversy, opposition, and even opprobrium. Let the light of day, the synthetic light of electricity even (using these expressions symbolically) be poured upon and allowed to flood every corner, every cranny, till each particle? of evidence is brought forward, weighed, and tested. Only by this means can the logical

earthly brain be assured, receive absolute conviction, and so come to accept the exquisite truth.

Many are the tests that can be applied, both theoretically and actually, but the trouble is that no two mediums have the same vibrations, and the tests that *one* can be subjected to and, maybe, submit through that sensitive the most convincing evidence, cannot very often be utilized with another equally gifted, but of entirely antithetic composition. The streak of criticism which should be alive and alert in all worthy intelligences unhappily sometimes too aggressively obtrudes itself, and thereby helps to confound that which it is trying so hard to reveal. This would seem to be a paradox, but to all those who have made but small incursions into metaphysics it is a quite familiar occurrence.

Diverse mandates have been communicated from the spheres in the interests of mediums and of potential mediums, but all too often these laws are disregarded, and then ensues suffering maybe, and, anyway, disappointment alike to the sensitive and the spirits communicating. The danger more often than not at public seances is the juxtaposition of totally different and thoroughly antagonistic personalities. The rays emanating from their auras will not commingle and assimilate, thereby causing in the etheric fluids combustions so violent that the unfortunate spirit-plasms are dismayed, overcome, and more often (those whose calibre is of too exquisite a fibre to withstand this opposition of forces) take flight to purer regions where more peaceful and calm conditions prevail. Animosity is one of the greatest deterrents in the progress of the science of spirit communication, and this must be realized to the full when forming a circle of entities to probe into the mysteries and joys of Life continued after the so-called Death. Another point to be emphasized is the passive, hopeful, and at the same time alert, attitude that should be adopted when striving to get into touch with the vast numbers of discarnate beings who are always seeking to convey to mankind, and especially to their loved ones, the knowledge of the survival of their personalities. For this, surely, is of all questions man is ever asking himself the most persistent: Is there anything after this earth life, and, if so, do I retain my Personality? That poor little ego—to the lofty being of pharisaical tendency a gigantic, magnificent and overwhelming personality

but when passed over bared in all its poverty and stripped of its owner's over-estimation—surely *does* persist—his question is answered, but not, alas, to his entire satisfaction, for he realizes when out of that fleshly casing his meagreness, his ineptitude, his inferiority, maybe, to the gentleman who has swept his chimney, the lady who has washed his shirt, or the lad who has unstopped his drain.

When a short space of time ago an extremely bloated, overfed, over-wined individual—who on earth had extorted much wealth from the poor tenants inhabiting his squalid and dilapidated, but highly-rented, lodging-houses—discovered himself severed from his oleaginous pampered body he was amazed to find that the being who, evidently imbued with power and authority, Surveyed him with kind but stem gaze and helped him to an understanding of his whereabouts, was none other than the attendant who, in the terrestrial sphere, had pummelled his "too, too solid flesh" at the Turkish baths. Oh, strange irony indeed! Almost impossible as seemed his task when endeavouring to disperse this mass of morbid matter, still more gigantic now for him the effort to dissipate the fatuous self-satisfaction that encompasses his soul!

The good things of life are not to be derided. Too often the spiritualistic convert who glimpses truth is precipitated into wild denunciations of the joy of living. He expects to lead an etherealized, vaporistic and aloof existence whilst encased in a solid, sensory and substantial body. This is impossible and also altogether undesirable. Let him keep always, as a light burning, the thought of the inevitability of mind's Supremacy over matter, let him saturate himself with the eternal truth of the principle of serving always and co-operating (even to his material loss if need be) with his fellow-beings—but do not let him seek to emulate life in the ultra-terrestrial spheres when all his functions, organs, and temperamental aptitudes are attuned by an Omnipotence for a probationary existence in the flesh. Man must pursue his earthly journey as a man—it is no more possible for him to take on the attributes of a spirit whilst on the earth plane than it is for a monkey to emulate the life of a butterfly. Ridiculous as is the prospect of such an hypothesis, it is no more so than the spectacle of a flesh-and-blood corporeality throwing off the world and all its natural and feasible obligations.

Do not for one moment imagine I seek to preach a gospel of materialism that should be expounded as man's code whilst on earth. The point necessary to emphasize is that no being can discard without dangerous loss to his physical personality the *human* life which he is ordained to promulgate. Marvellously concise and clear to the disembodied soul is the necessity for this terrestrial journeying, but harsh and cruel it sometimes appears to those who, realizing the eternal continuity of existence, are perhaps destined to an extraordinarily sombre, drab and suffering earth sojourn. They must be of good cheer, those poor tried mortals, for eventualities more glorious and joyful than they in their happiest dreams have contemplated await them. They must keep in their minds the knowledge of complete *justice*, for that is the unswerving law which no contraventions can nullify or obstruct. Many aeons may be—are, indeed, in some cases—required for this desideratum to be achieved, for each individual ego has its travail and its final transfiguration. Some evolutions are very much more rapid than others, but the final triumph is absolutely certain.

CHAPTER III

Dangerous both mentally and physically to obtuse minds are the traversings and excursions into experiments often indulged in by, such half-converted intelligences. Those opaque individuals who are not sufficiently highly-strung and attuned should be content to be the audience, as it were, in the theatre which has as its exponents higher and more subtle minds. They should receive the message *con amore* [with love], without seeking themselves to portray the characters.

Unfortunately so many wonderful and cultivated souls, of a grand understanding, of a huge breadth of vision, who would be a tower of strength in expounding the Truth, still persistently (surpassingly strange this seemed to me even when on the earth plane) shut out obdurately any admission

of the possibility of the continuity of the soul. This attitude would seem to have become to them almost a cult, a habiliment that they cannot discard for fear of being exposed in a nude and unconventional condition. Too many of these high intelligences, alas, are for ever, whilst on earth, hedged in with conventions, formalities and quite unnecessary obligations, which they imagine are the hallmarks of their right to fraternise and mingle with their fellow-beings. They do not, therefore, find their true affinities, for the superficial and artificial atmosphere excludes the happy commingling of sympathetic entities. This is notably evinced in its bearing upon the most intimate and affectionate relationship subsisting between man and woman, and more often than not the mate that would have found its complement is passed by and doomed by the conventions to a lonely existence, or, perhaps, worse still, a union of such preposterousness as makes for continual warfare between the rays emanating from their respective auras. Until the science of the study of vibrations and the diagnosis of ray-prisms has become substantiated in a practical form the ghastly anachronisms of these unions will continue to be perpetrated. Thus a whole "world of sorrow", so to speak, is unfolded, maybe, for some benevolent worthy entity, tied by convention to a soul shallow, mercenary and grasping. This condition of things, alas, may bring about the suppression of virtue in the former and is not capable perhaps of achieving the redemption of the latter, which, being base, has in the earth sphere frequently a greater chance of supremacy. Another grievous union is that of the ascetic with the sensual. The latter may have many virtues the former lacks, and vice versa, but the life-long harnessing of natures so opposite is destined to lack full sympathy and understanding. Equally regrettable are the cases of the insipid with the temperamental, the commonplace with the artistic.

To us, privileged as we are to observe cause and effect, it is all so heartrending, and were it not that we know the mortal life-span is infinitesimal in time compared with Eternity it would retard us in progress, for we should be for ever revisiting the earth plane to endeavour to divert and influence our loved ones. Many are the efforts made to guide in propitious channels the affections of those we esteem and

love, but circumstances are often too gigantic for us to contend with, and we are obliged to leave events to work out their various courses in due time. Destinies are indeed fore-ordained, but the method of their consummation is left to the free-will of man. And upon that free-will hangs, so to speak, the garment of self-judgment which eventually is the authoritative tribunal of man's soul. This perhaps is one of the hardest dicta to comprehend—the man in the dock is his own judge! The gaping crowds that throng the courts of justice (so-called) and seek to probe into the depths of the soul of the wretched man or woman arraigned before them know, maybe, they themselves are possessed of far viler and more degenerate attributes, yet acquiesce in the sentence meted out and go to their homes crying; "Well done, he richly deserved it!", etc., etc. But the final judgment is in the accused's own soul, and nowhere, nohow can that soul be clarified save and except by its own regeneration. A different tone than that formerly obtaining is fortunately now becoming prevalent in the conduct of earth's prisons and reformatories. The introduction of music, ever a noble incentive to higher and more ambitious aspirations, is a keen factor in the amelioration of the state of mentality which causes man and woman to commit crimes. More often than not a base act is perpetrated solely through the monotonous, ambition-killing, undemonstrative and love-lacking existence which a person is forced by environment and circumstances to lead. Had that soul been placed in a "garden of happiness" instead of a filthy slum, it would never have performed that crime—the idea would never have envolved itself in that brain. But unhappily the people who as a rule seek to "reform" individuals err on the side of presenting a hard, un-human religion in place of an all-understanding love of fellow-beings and sympathy with their trials, temptations and frailties. This is true religion and could embrace Christianity, Judaism, Mahommedanism, Buddhism and all those religious indeed which teach of a spirit of sacrifice and altruism. But years have, alas, debased the originally pure element which characterised formerly these inspired ethics and codes made for the congenial fraternity of human beings. Dogmatism and ritual have created antagonism and most unbrotherly malice. It astounds one to think it possible that those who profess to represent just and honoured faiths can

by this very malice present them as hypocritical cant and humbug. What an awakening is in store for such traducers of their religion! They find absolute disillusionment awaiting them here. Their lowly Position is now commensurate with the desecration they permitted their faith to suffer. There are so many of these poor deluded "ministers" segregated here in schools corresponding with your kindergartens. They have so much to learn and unlearn, and yet they lack the open mind of the infant, who on earth is the pupil of such establishments. They are impregnated with superstition, saturated with self-conceit and imbued with ideas so narrow, so uncatholic and sometimes even malevolent that their progress is slow and difficult. Entities who on earth occupied realms of action diametrically opposed to the priestly profession often visit them in an effort to broaden their outlook

stimulate their atrophied minds and inculcate in them sympathetic understanding. It would surprise many, and shock not a few to know that there is oft times more sweetness, more humility, more unselfishness, emanating from a Prostitute than from many an accredited teacher of whatsoever faith. The priest stands for so much that is noble, the "fallen" woman for evil, yet frequently the former is clothed only in an outer garment Of righteousness, whilst the latter, beneath a sordid exterior, carries often the jewels of generosity, kindness and, maybe, self-sacrifice. It is essential that this truth be known, digested and pondered over—this truth which subverts so many man-made, orthodox doctrines. I adjure you mortals to realize it is fact, it is absolute truth.

Tantamount to profanity probably these pronouncements to many appear, for mankind has become so habituated to labels Or hall-marks of Good and Evil being placed upon certain avocations that it has lost the perception to discover anything but virtue in one category and sin in another. In my earthly sojourn I met with many so-called good and so-called evil persons, but even then I was at pains to discern sometimes a preponderance of bad in the "sinner" or good in the saint. Innocuous the latter frequently is, but does he advance the world in propounding the principles of the really virtuous life, which embraces love and self-sacrifice for his fellows in addition to his own personal rectitude? The monastic and conventual orders that prescribe total withdrawal from the world and the surrendering of the Omnipotent's

gift of life to fasting and prayer, are they doing a more worthy deed than those who, professing no creed, no faith, give of their substance and also of the, joy of their spirits in ministering to the poor and the afflicted? I have in my mind the remembrance of many men of medicine who have worked unremittingly to cure disease and sickness, who have laboured sometimes in an environment that sickens and nauseates and perhaps finally" died" of some loathsome malady which has been bequeathed to them by one of the unhappy and oftentimes vicious creatures whose misery they have been working so hard to allay. Noble souls indeed, and they have a wonderful compensation in their destinies!

Look at the women, too, who have laboured likewise, unceasingly and uncomplainingly—asking nothing, demanding no bouquets, giving up ease and comfort for a life strenuous, harsh, and altogether devoid of aesthetic charm. Many other lives without, maybe, embracing such a width of humanity, are nevertheless lives of self-sacrifice and abnegation, entailing the denial of the pursuit of certain aptitudes or of the development of various talents, which are subordinated often to the claims of the ailing and infirm. The vibrations and ray-prisms of these good souls are very beautiful to behold, and their warmth and peace is exquisitely sensed in these ultra-terrestrial regions. This fact should demonstrate the significance of thought, and must prove to earth-beings that it is not only actions good or bad that are practically concrete but very ideas and thoughts become an actual power, and are felt adversely or otherwise by disembodied spirits in their various spheres. It must be recognized that there are many, many planes to traverse (we here know not how many) as the soul becomes more and more etherealized, but every vibration from the earth plane is realized and registered, penetrating even to the highest. Gigantic and overwhelming, is it not, to ponder on? If only this truth could be accepted by all, how different would be the conditions of living—what a much happier co-operating community would exist!

CHAPTER IV

To animal-lovers I am hoping to bring a message of comfort in endeavouring to assure them that their dear creature

can, if desired, be constantly with them. Animals have souls of a less intense, but none the less persistent, composition than human beings. That dear little pal who is the constant companion on your walks and sits with head on paws, eyes intently watching you he loves so devotedly, as his hairy form ties stretched luxuriously by the fire—yes, he surely is an entity who progresses part of the way with you, as also the fat, sleek, "cuddable", oftentimes dignified cat. The noble equine friend, he too, if loved, can be met with once More, and indeed any animal that has had affection showered upon it when on earth.

Peaceful, happy joy-bringers are these friends when their environment is laden with affection. In fact, they would almost seem to enact the part of the conductor of an orchestra, who blends and assimilates the various instruments, attuning them to work for a happy and harmonious result. So these dear beasts bring peace and harmony into the home, and the very fact of the existence of the love commonly felt for them oftentimes becomes a bond and link between human entities. Give them love and they return it with fifty per cent interest tacked on!

You can make or mar animals; they respond to vibrations as a needle to a magnet and such are their powers that were they able to write, what wonderful pen-portraits would be given to the world! Aye, and true in every detail! A dog I was the happy possessor of once came to me in a terribly excited state of mind, howling, barking and moaning. I endeavoured to allay his fears and sauntered out along the road. Here I found a man of good appearance, well-groomed, well-dressed, seated under a tree by which my dog had passed after going for his usual run to a river close by. My dog followed up behind me and immediately started barking again, and altogether displayed a most hostile attitude towards the stranger, whom I had great difficulty in preventing him from attacking. It afterwards transpired that this individual was indicted and afterwards found guilty of one of the foulest and most loathesome crimes. To outward appearances this man would seem kind, courteous, and of a refined disposition. But all animal-lovers can give instances of their pets' perspicacity, some seeming uncanny in the extreme.

The world would be a very much sadder spot without these affinities, and here, as with you, we would not be without their love and comfort. It is no wonder, surely, that sometimes one finds a man or woman who has suffered many trials from the avariciousness and antagonism of humans seeking peace and contentment remote from the world, with no society save these dumb comrades. Treasure them beyond measure, talk to them both silently and in words, study their tastes, their appetites, and you and they will never be the losers, for they are a big force in Nature and a protection not only when on earth but on other planes, where they keep off many injurious and harmful elements. Unfortunately humans are unable to understand many of these (to them) extraordinary truths until they have passed to the Beyond. If I attempted to explain some of these ultra-terrestrial facts the earth words I should be obliged to use would only befog and in no way make clear to the earthly vision these phenomena. So we must leave this knowledge to unfold itself to you when you too have reached the Other Side.

CHAPTER V

In the laboratories of earth testing-cases are ever presenting sporadic results, and though the methods employed are slow, still the unforeseen phenomena which are constantly opening up quite other fields for investigation prove most progressive and inspiring. Witness the extraordinary case of steam generating power which fifty years ago even was only being utilized in quite a small way. Now the possibilities of such force seem illimitable in all departments of science, and the conservative old fogey who wisely shakes his head at every innovation might easily employ the energy expended on this bodily movement in harrowing the fields and tilling the soil. Movement must produce force, so why not conserve every atom of it, and not waste it in puerility? Conservatism is excellent in many ways, but let it not impede research and frustrate and nullify discovery. Virtually almost every investigation uncovers, so to speak, some phase previously

unnoted, and to the scientist there is ever a radiance, a glamour, surrounding any form of experiment. Wireless telegraphy is only the earthly counterpart Of communication between the spheres, and a mind attuned to the comprehension of the one is More inclined to acceptance of the other, which previously it might have dubbed "supernatural". Wireless is becoming universal and no longer a wonder of wonders. Spirit communing, though known for ages but recognized only by the few, is now steadily unfolding itself alike to scientist, religionist, and man in the street.

Nevertheless, the spirit of enquiry in many individuals still lies dormant and inert. They sit tight in their grooves. Like unto a snail in its shelly habitation they carry with them, even should they travel the globe, a hard encasement, for their mental vision will not take in new ideas, from whatever angle they be presented to them. All the world to them is "of a muchness", even as the sky, seen through a small piece of glass, would appear the same whether viewed in London or Tokio. These persons, alas, are often the lucky possessors of wealth, and are thus enabled to gaze upon wonderful scenic beauties and meet extraordinarily interesting types of humanity—opportunities denied their poorer brethren who frequently possess a keener sense of the lovely and a more just perception of its intrinsic worth. Purseproud and arrogant they swagger through life, effulgent in their spurious grandeur, pertinacious in their refusal to surrender an iota of their possessions or the power too often conceded them by the weaker and poorer majority of mankind. They patronise, they condescend, they even shower a fraction of their wealth, maybe, upon some of their humbler brethren in the anticipation of more splendour, more renown, more adulation. They bait the line with a sprat (their material wealth) to catch a whale (kudos and prestige).

Luckily these individuals, though greatly predominating, are not the only possessors of an abundance of the world's goods. There are those that walk the earth enjoying its by no means to be despised comforts and luxuries—beautiful draperies, aesthetic furnishings, exquisite dwellings, arcadian flowering gardens and all other personal and artistic joys—but who share them with others, for preference their poorer neighbours. They give with a humble heart and endeavour to brighten

the sadder lives by every means in their power. These good souls have no vainglorious obnoxious pride: Complacent smugness (I know no other word for it!) does not pervade their womenkind nor a mock geniality and fatuous sleekness their menfolk. After all, wealth is to a great extent a fortuitous circumstance in a man's life, an inherited possession, and in other cases more likely than not the result of a selfish and grasping disposition. So wherefore this vanity, this aggressive air of superiority? In any case it is but material good, and beggared indeed is he who possessing naught else, is bereft of it when in due course he passes the portals of so-called "death"! If only he could on earth have cultivated true benevolence, true humility, and a just estimation of his attributes he would present a very much nobler and more adequate appearance on his entry here! Such a man quite possibly has been a "pillar of the church" and even assisted at the counting up of the collection, which he has swelled by a five pound note ostentatiously laid upon the plate, for he virtuously carries out the precept of not hiding his light under a bushel.

Humbug and hypocrisy stand little chance here, and those who have lied for personal gain, with approximate loss to their fellow-creatures, are certainly unmasked and occupy a very unenviable position. We feel a bit sorry for them in our slightly enlightened state, but cannot help conjecturing what our feelings would be were we still sojourning as mortals—surely a not unholy joy had we suffered and seen those we esteem suffer through them! To put it in vulgar parlance, "Every dog has his day"—if not in one stage of evolution then in another—but "and some have a day and a half" will not "go" here: they will have their share, but no more. Well, it is as it should be, "*Justitia non novit patrem nec matrem, solum veritatem spectat*" [Justice knows neither father nor mother, justice looks to truth alone].

CHAPTER VI

The panoply of pomp encompassing death, what an anachronism it seems! The sombre trappings, the lugubrious visages of the paid attendants, the nauseous blendings of the scents of flowers and disinfectant—oh, it is all wrong!

Why not, when the spirit which animated has fled, why not *immediately* consume by fire the now pitiful and useless shell? The harrowing sight of the dear face daily, nay hourly, losing its familiar contours is in itself enough to create the idea of "death" being an event of profound terror. It scares, it terrorises and to many it confirms their idea of complete annihilation of soul and body. Far better to let this sad relic be quickly dispatched and keep in the mind the thought of that face still radiating warm life. For this is the state in which it reaches its new home—vital, however emaciated or distorted it may have become through the transformation of death".

The ordeal endured by those left behind in giving adequate ceremony to the departed is impressed on their memories, and only tends to inculcate fear of their ultimate end and a wish to avoid, as much as possible, meditation and pondering on that end and its sequel. Instead there should be a cheerful philosophy that eventualities may prove happier than the earthly pilgrimage. Freedom from bodily aches and pains would in all probability make it that for most beings. And in addition are other wondrous Surprises which those who have possessed an average sense of their obligations and responsibilities may rest assured they will participate in. For the treacherous, the wholly self-centred and thoroughly debased I cannot hold out such a pleasing prospect. Here steps in the unerring law of justice, which will not be gainsaid try as we may to evade it. And the extraordinary part of it is that as we appreciably progress we do not wish to evade it; we become so imbued with the rightness of an Overpowering Element (which some would call God but to which even here we can give no absolutely final designation, but which nevertheless pacifies and tranquillises) that we acquiesce in the retribution, so to speak, with dignity and philosophy.

I am not uttering this message in any spirit of denunciation. What am I that I should seek to arraign men and women—I who led a life certainly not ethereal or spiritual? I only want to bring conviction of the real Goodness of things to those, who are striving and struggling, embittered by the hardships, the inequality and oftentimes the misery of their lives and who are in a morass, mental and moral, from which they find it difficult to extricate themselves.

Realization of these truths is terribly difficult for some, and their surroundings and their mode of life often preclude even the most susceptible and receptive from absorbing them.

Love generates belief in the soul and is the greatest power for good. Love of a chum, a parent, a brother or sister, a wife or mistress—so long as it is love—moves forces so tremendous, so penetrating and far-reaching, that it is literally (and here I am stating a fact hard indeed for material beings to grasp) able to move mountains. It creates will-power and initiative, and by this means is our progress here made, both actually (when we move from place to place) and in our souls' advancement. Love, oh mortals, where and whenever you can! Give of your best whenever you feel a vibration in sympathy with your own: but wheresoever you have given it never, I beg of you, take it away—that impoverishes you and the one on whom you have showered it! When I say this I am thinking of those who love and then let the emotion pass out of their lives, let some worldly act occupy their lives to the shutting-out of the affection which has been generated, which was genuine, was true, was good. Why then, when some new affinity comes within our circle should we exclude the old affinities? It is an insult to them and to our intelligence to behave as if that which was once cherished is now valueless. Even if we are unable to come in contact with them, once loved they should remain firmly planted in our hearts, so long as they are still what we thought them, what our vibrations responded to. It saddens me to see that with some of my friends links are being broken, chains severed, that never should have been.

Opportunity should be fostered for communing as much as possible with the really congenial egos we have been privileged to meet and love. "The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried, grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel." Keep the door ever open for them, bearing in mind that fact that we shall all meet again, for there is no Death, only transportation and transformation.

CHAPTER VII

Mediumship should only be undertaken by those physically and mentally fitted for it. It is no good whatever for a bigoted soul of hard principles and narrow outlook undertaking to be a messenger between the two Worlds. Without sympathy such an interpreter more often than not misinterprets and gives to the world false ideas.

Needless to say, spirit communications are bound to be many and diverse in their description of conditions here, coloured naturally by the dispositions, temperaments and convictions of the entities communing with mortals; for these entities have come over with their predilections and idiosyncrasies unchanged. But a receptive, courteous and generous-minded sensitive will give to the earth beings a more reliable translation, as it were, of the spirits' thoughts and emotions.

Physically healthy, too, must the mediums be or else the spirit-plasms will absorb too much of their strength and cause weakness to brain and body alike. Communing should never be continued for too long at a stretch, and nutrition should be administered throughout. I am quite averse from the idea inculcated by some that sensitives are in a better state for receiving when their stomachs are empty and their energies at the lowest ebb. I am no advocate of the development of a spurious etherealism which only engenders a morbid state of mind and body calculated to divert sympathy and create a just contempt on the part of healthy, happy, well-balanced individuals. Exponents who, through an overzealous misconception, have denied themselves normal bodily necessities and comforts and have become lean, emaciated, and anaemic—what inadequate vehicles are such for the spreading of the sublime, *sane* Truth! They should bring a message of hope and joy, and it were better, surely, that their personalities be happy, joyous and genial. Sensitives of this type will make many more "converts" and appeal far more widely to persons of diverse beliefs, characters, and occupations than the abnormal ascetic who

carries an atmosphere of gloom and foreboding wherever he goes. There is another type of medium, too, who retards and does not advance the cause. I refer to those who are certainly gifted, but take only a mercenary interest in their power and give to the initiated an impression that Spiritualism is a species of modern "black magic".

I wish to impress upon any endowed with all excellent mental and spiritual qualifications necessary to mediumship, but possessing only frail and delicate bodies and too highly-strung organisms, that it is not wise, nay, it is dangerous, for them to practise. The human body is an instrument so finely wrought that it can quite easily be irrevocably deranged, and as the discarnate bodies must absorb matter physical from the carnate when they manifest, it is only those who have and to spare that should be utilized. Until a vehicle other than the human being be discovered great care and discrimination must be used on both sides of the Veil.

Happily investigation in all spheres is making steady progress, and ere long I may safely predict that an instrument which to the world will appear absolutely magical will be evolved. Here that well-worn—but never, be it said, worn-out—quotation from our prophetic William would seem uniquely applicable, "There are more things in heaven and earth... Than are dreamt of in your philosophy".

CHAPTER VIII

One of the greatest and most practical benefits to be derived from the study of "Spiritualism" is in the employment of spirit agency in the amelioration, and often the curing, of physical ailments and diseases. Having the gift of an elongated vision which visualizes objects in an altogether more exact manner than that pertaining to the earth folk—tantamount to what is known to you as the "X-rays"—we are somewhat in the position of a conjuror's assistant, who knows the exact position of all the hidden impedimenta

necessary to the performance of a successful feat. We can, and do, render invaluable help if we are approached in a manner compatible with the conditions governing the exercise of our capabilities.

A medium must be Procured who is a sensitive of the most sympathetic type. Then the sitter or sitters must radiate ray-prisms of a character harmonious to that medium, and she (or he) in turn will attract discarnate beings possessing qualities of healing Or, anyway, soothing, propensities. There must not be any emanation of antagonism from any of these entities during this period of co-operation. The discarnate beings are then enabled to probe and penetrate into the causes and effects of the malady in question and give an accurate diagnosis to the consultant through the medium. Very often practical advise as to diet and other treatment is conveyed to the patient—often seeming of such simplicity that the sophisticated might indeed deem it futile. In all probability, however, such treatment, if persevered in, would appreciably lessen, if not completely cure, the complaint.

Added to this material aid, spirits often bring to bear upon the patient waves of the power of healing which radiate from their own being, so to speak, which vitalize and impregnate the human being with a species of energy akin to electricity.

The man in the street, if he accepts my words as a verity, will think: "How wonderful! But how can I, an ordinary material being, knowing naught of spirit communing, get in touch and so avail myself of these inexpensive physicians?" All that is required is, naturally, first to get the suitable concrete conditions and environment which I have already detailed, and then approach the circle of entities with an alert and hopeful state of mentality in conjunction with feelings of kindness and gratitude for benefits to be received. These conditions fulfilled, help is bound to be given, but it cannot be too strongly emphasized that *the conditions must be observed*.

An enormous amount of strain is put upon the medium in cases of healing, and so it is obvious that this valuable entity should be treated with all possible consideration and care. A medium or sensitive, though envied by many the possession of special gifts, has much to endure which other mortals are

exempt from. To begin with, natures so susceptible to every vibration of good or evil power are terribly incommoded when in the company of certain entities. Where many persons of pachydermatous calibre would pass by a word or action without feeling any uneasiness, the poor medium (I am speaking now of the medium of fine spiritual texture—there are others of whom I will speak later) suffers intensely should there be hurt or animosity in intention. Therefore the necessity of guarding from harmful influences these persons when experimenting or when communing in any way with discarnates cannot be too strongly asserted.

A medium, if taking up his work seriously (professionally or otherwise—there is no reason why he should not make mediumship a career) should be able to lead a tranquil, happy, and comfortable life. He should not be exposed to violent upheavals of an unpleasant nature, for his machinery is of even greater delicacy than other mortals' and a very small misadventure may put that machinery out of gear. It were well that all persons in sympathy with the movement of "Spiritualism" should endeavour to educate the families of sensitives (unhappily often antagonistic to that mediumship) to a proper understanding of the importance of this.

There are mediums who possess a certain amount of purely *physical* sensitiveness, as it were. These are not greatly sought after, the results ensuing through them not being of a high standard, and more often than not the mediums think primarily of the monetary factor. The best discarnates endeavour to get into touch with entities who combine the mental susceptibility with the physical. The word "mental" here is used as comprehending not necessarily intellectual attainment but at least appreciation of intellect, allied to sympathy and love—gifts of the heart, so to speak. If developed, this latter species can become so useful—so powerful, in fact—time and health being the requisite factors, that miracles can actually be accomplished with their aid.

CHAPTER IX

The world is progressing by leaps and bounds, despite politicians and other corrupt folk in places of power. (Now I should get myself disliked for this, were I in the flesh, shouldn't I?) It is indeed a fact that much of the misery, the poverty and the inequality of social conditions are attributable to men in high office. What, for instance, is wrong with our politicians? Why don't they now work wholeheartedly and single-mindedly, as in days gone by? To our somewhat enlightened minds here a good deal of the prevalent mediocrity and toadying, amounting almost to corruption, is due to a too great consideration of monetary recompense. I desire to emphasize the truth that the actual *law-makers* of any nation should not be paid. Many will argue that they should, as any persons in trades or professions are paid for "services rendered", but lawgiving should be unbiassed—totally uninfluenced by any other consideration than perfect equality. The mere fact of payment, unfortunately, is sufficient to weigh with some individuals and so prevent this happy consummation.

Politicians have a noble work presented to them, for the social conditions, and therefore often the happiness, of many homes is dependent upon them. But few, alas, realize this responsibility, and it is deplorable to see how the nations' privileges are abused and misery reigns where indeed the conditions of life could and should be absolutely the opposite, were those in power imbued with altruistic conceptions of their duty.

Notwithstanding this, things *are* moving in the right direction. The conditions of the poor, for instance, are wonderfully ameliorated, and though this is inducing in Labour a disproportionate idea of its relationship to other powers in the social scheme, yet the *ideal* everywhere with regard to men's equality is becoming ever more freely accepted. The abuses which inevitably creep in with all innovation will gradually be overcome, and so a happier state of things than that now existent will arise in due course.

Many to-day deplore the decadence of the world brought about, as they declare, by the conditions consequent on the Great War. This may be true of small matters, but a bigger, finer, and more generous-minded spirit actually animates the whole world—brought about by travail, by bloodshed and by sacrifice, that sacrifice to which only those who went through the terrific epoch-making struggle can adequately testify. Many and glorious were the deeds that I even, in my limited sphere of action, witnessed, enacted in cold blood by natures one might have labelled ordinary, commonplace, even supine. When brought face to face with the gigantic, all that was great in those egos responded gigantically. How little many had suspected wonderful heroism lay beneath those simple, sometimes fatuous, exteriors! These great souls have achieved their apotheosis; they could go no higher! These wonderful sacrifices are bound to have left the earth more sublime. Their memory ever perpetuated in the minds of those still sojourning on earth is bound to strengthen and inspire.

Fallacious are the arguments advanced by ignorant persons in condemning the after-effects of this war. Materially in many ways it was an apparent failure, but spiritually a triumph. The hard-headed man of business will think this an absurd, unpractical way of viewing the dreadful havoc created, but in a small period of time the very unmaterial good will be transmuted into something actual, tangible, and concrete. I am not speaking now as a “vaporistic, etherealized entity” but as a man having a far-sighted vision of the material needs of men on earth. Eventualities will prove the good ensuing has outweighed the evil, though those years were so terrible in the living. Get a nation to think, and you already have it progressing. Sorrow immediately brings meditation. Nations and individuals become torpid, dulled, inactive, if they are content and placid for too long. They never rise above themselves, but keep to the dead-level of mediocrity. They become somewhat like the parson of a remote country village, happy in his bun-fights, his jumble sales and the puerile adulation of admiring womenfolk—an existence that makes for ease and comfort but does not conduce to new aspiration or ambitious effort.

A fight is good if it is to prove the triumph of some virtue, but unfortunately science, which should be used only for the good of man, through the evil egoism of a virulent enemy

had to be brought into play to combat him, and so ensued a struggle awful and I devastating through the very perfection of that science. This in itself should be a preventive of such another inhuman war—it rests with man to profit by this lesson fraught with terror, pain, and sorrow.

CHAPTER X

Sacrilegious as some would esteem this statement, it is a fact that the very religions which make for a harsh piety and asceticism are those which an Omnipotence would, by all the evidences of nature, seem not to be in sympathy with. Man was meant to live for man, and unless some purpose is served whereby his fellow-beings are improved spiritually or materially, no object is achieved by denial of whatsoever comforts or joys happen to be within his destiny. These are few enough for some, alas, and any being who brings only a merry visage even and a happy laugh to ameliorate the sadness of humanity is indeed doing good and radiating warmth and beneficence.

Animal life and human life alike manifest the right to be joyous, all joy in propagating their species, in cultivating ties; but in spite of this many religions would seem to belaud and extol a life free from every natural and sane impulse. It were difficult, however, to let this truth percolate into the brains of many religious folk, who have become so used to the idea of renunciation being synonymous with goodness that they imagine virtue can only be resident in a personality grim, forbidding, and uncompromising, or at any rate devoid of gracious attributes and joie de vivre. Instead of this dour aspect, let vibrations of love and ecstasy emanate unceasingly. Tune up your hearts, oh sad-visaged ones, to a truer and happier understanding of the meaning of Creation, and you will gather and garner wherever you roam and lay up treasure of permanent and great value! Reverence of the great, the good, the omnipotent and omniscient should be fostered and cultivated, but never let it be allied to lugubriousness and gloom,

for this cannot be welcome to an all-powerful Goodness, which we realize—much more here than when we were on earth—does permeate and leaven all phases of existence.

CHAPTER XI

Unimaginative individuals are apt to label anything in the nature of psychic phenomena as "childishness" and "superstition"; often they evince towards it a most cantankerous attitude which is very repellant to those of wide outlook and generous sympathies. Why this air of superiority, or this amused toleration of folk who happen to be sufficiently intelligent to believe in spirit communication? With an easy condescension they laugh at the "credulity" of the initiated and pity them for possessing a facile imagination. But it were better if they would try and understand just a little of this thing they deride, for when they, in time, "pass over" they are far better equipped and have an altogether more satisfactory entry if they are not too much at sea as to the conditions of their new phase of life. Belief or disbelief cannot be counted virtue or sin, but a mind somewhat attuned to accept unaccustomed ideas is certainly one already on the road of progression. There is more progression here than retrogression, and what, to many men and women, old in years when carnate, seems the end of the journey, turns out to be, much to their amazement, just the prologue! And what will be the epilogue—ah, we must travel far before that will be unfolded to us!

It is terribly tantalizing, even to those somewhat advanced, to be unable to foresee the ultimate end—if end it can be designated. Well, we must go on each in his own little unpretentious and sometimes (to the individual) seemingly futile way. Many here even are too content, too lacking in the essential qualities that make for the advancement of their mental and moral attributes. Development must continue; surely there is no one who has not some latent talent or gift which would give him boundless joy if fostered, but to which circumstances or environment have prevented

him from giving play when on earth. Here he can, if only he has the will, make good, and time and opportunity are at his disposal for the realization of his powers. Never then, oh mortals, think you are too old to learn, too old to laugh, too old to play—keep on whilst on earth and carry over these happy personalities to cheer us up. We surely would wish to see our old pals smiling, however worn and decrepit the dear shells they have now cast aside. It is necessary to realize that we look forward to their coming just as much as they do when hoping that "death" will bring them in contact with their loved ones again. So for us the sorrow we experience in thinking of the loss that our *other* loved ones are sustaining by this "death" is counterbalanced by the joy we feel in the reunion of affections we contracted when on earth.

Some having a comprehension of the truth before passing, come over full of understanding and easily able to adapt themselves to their new environment. Others wander around somewhat aimlessly, dazed and stupefied, others amazed, and yet others in a combative and defiant mood. But all in time subside into philosophical realization and take up threads of existence according to character and aptitude. A wonderful steep at first is necessary to many—those who have suffered supremely either physically or mentally in the latter part of their earth sojourn. The old especially as a rule require and receive this beneficent gift of somnolence. During this sleep advanced spirits are constantly emitting strength and vitality into these entities. Doubtless some will wonder that this should be possible or needful, since the carnate shell has been discarded, but a residual plasm still clings to the soul, and through this at first different elements are able to penetrate which strengthen and soothe the very esoteric soul itself. The difficulty in giving this truth to the world in a manner acceptable to the cerebral capacity of mortals is stupendous, and until some actually practical demonstration is made possible by scientists on both sides cooperating, this will remain the bar affixed across the doorway which divides hypothesis from truth. But we are slowly but surely every day, every hour, pushing that bar aside and experiencing already the glorious consciousness of success.

CHAPTER XII

The comedy of stupendous satisfaction and Complacence exhibited by some persons in their attitude towards their own moral rectitude and the manner in which they perform their allotted roles is bound to afford a certain amount of amusement to those in the position to know how feeble and inadequately these individuals have actually comported themselves. They sit in their armchairs (metaphorically speaking) and calmly chew over and digest the idea that *they* are all right—others are sinful, or at least have not a proper understanding of their duties, but *they*, they are absolutely doing always, thinking always, the right thing, and whatsoever their faith, or lack of faith, they are convinced *their* way of looking at life is bound to gain them a comfortable heaven. It is always a pity to over-develop this sense of security—the sudden coming-to after the soothing anaesthetic (their too placid serenity) is a great shock, the disillusionment too severe. But it cannot be wondered at that many seek a consolation in the thought of their ultimate serene heaven, with no work, no worry, no ambition; for the ordinary ups and downs of the material life led by mortals are so full of discomfort and ineffectualities that they cannot help reckoning upon the certainty of a peaceful happy era following immediately upon their "decease". I am not seeking to disabuse their minds of the conviction of the ultimate consummation of their desires, but only to impress upon them that a smug egotism is not a factor likely to contribute towards the achievement of that desideratum, and only a broad and generous outlook is consistent with the existence we all eventually hope to attain to.

It is, however, extremely difficult to engender in some individuals any sense of the breadth of humanity which should be embraced by their sympathies. They cannot get into their mentalities the fact that though certainly egos separate and important, they are at the same time but infinitesimal cogs in the gigantic machine, the Universe; and though each has its separate necessary purpose to fulfil,

it has also to incorporate and be incorporated with the one huge, all-developing Scheme. It is the most foolish thing in the world to be didactic, prejudiced, or dogmatic—those who *know* the most usually present to the world the most retiring, unaggressive, unassertive front. Sad indeed is it that some persons of great capabilities and understanding, so often in addition possess an element of self-distrust which unhappily evinces itself to the more sophisticated as ineptitude and lack of ability. Thus it is often found that the really ignorant, shallow and of little real understanding, are by their qualities of arrogance, self-confidence and "push" enabled to climb to a certain material altitude which by moral right they have no claim to reach. The gauche and unsophisticated—but oftentimes sincere and intellectual—pursue their way in all simplicity, a lowly route perhaps, whilst their luckier brethren, for ever on the lookout for the "main chance" but far beneath them in real charm of character, flaunt flamboyantly along a road strewn with luxury and ease. All this has to be righted, and is eventually.

CHAPTER XIII

The ecstatic feeling exhibited by those who have experienced a life of pain when finding themselves at ease and in peaceful environment is truly joyous to behold. Gone are the excruciating agonies and the depression and misery consequent upon much suffering. Instead of an outlook drear and awful, gradually comes o'er these weary ones the consciousness of exhilaration and boundless vitality. Surely it is hard to find greater happiness than that of seeing loved souls one left behind in sickness or in travail rising supremely joyous, like unto a water-lily from the murky stream beneath it. Who would have thought, when passing by the waters a short while before and gazing into their Cimmerian depths, that soon a beauteous excrescence would formulate, of exquisite

calibre and design? But so it is. This thought must prove a solace and a brilliant ray of hope to those who are enduring anguish and pain on earth. If only they will take it as a vital truth it is a great alleviator. We can but emphasize unremittingly this fact, and of necessity it must eventually impregnate the world. But some individuals' mentality resembles the rhinoceros hide, and it is extremely difficult to pierce through their pachydermatous envelopment, and this prevents their participating in this grand truth.

I loathe the appearance of having arrogated to myself the privilege of the pulpit. To those who knew me on earth it would indeed seem far removed from my very unorthodox—not to say heterodox—views. I was certainly not famous for extreme piety (South African and Fleet Street pals, please note 1), but without censuring, without exhibiting an undue spirit of intolerance (which would come ill from me), I do wish to proclaim a code of ethics which on earth I dimly glimpsed but now realize absolutely, and feel it incumbent upon me to deliver whenever and wherever circumstances ordain it can be transmitted correctly.

CHAPTER XIV

Ecclesiastics of all denominations are contriving to prescribe for mankind a technical formula for their safe conduct to celestial spheres, but as the very seed they sow is tainted with unmistakable signs of decay it were surely better that they throw this seed onto the scrapheap and seek for a more reliable and prolific substitute. To begin with they should examine the qualifications of the sowers (themselves). Having probed well into the innermost depths of their egos, they should then, if realizing competence to preach a code of right living, see that they have a good grain to plant. Having learned by experience that certain doctrines prove sterile in the production of an altruistic community living in concord and happy in its faith, they should discard these as food unfit for the multitude, and concentrate upon a less dogmatic

and more all-embracing circle of thought. It were far better if these "ministers" would allow *detail* to be decided upon more or less at the option of each individual's consciousness or temperamental ability. So long as they are in sympathy and unity in the main, all will work well in pursuit of the principle they seek to maintain. A good few clerics are now disentangling themselves from the encumbering impedimenta which for so long have clogged their movements, and the sense of freedom they thus enjoy is comparable to the energising air of the mountains after long sojourn in the valley's narrow and enervating confines. Others, unfortunately, still cling to their timeworn dogmas as an old lady to her antique woolen gown—it is soft, it is warm, it is familiar, and she is known to her neighbours by it.

A sense of perplexity is very obnoxious to some people, and so they prefer to anaesthetise their minds and shut out any innovation which would upset their stereotyped ideas on the subject of belief in an after-life. This will, however, be a more festful abode for them if they will try to disintegrate the complexities somewhat before entering their next sphere of existence. Further, if they happen to be of the above category, when they do "pass over" and realize the misunderstandings which obstructed them on earth they will be very

much perturbed when contemplating their loved ones' like ignorance. This induces a retardation in their progress, if they allow them Ives to be obsessed with the idea to the exclusion of other necessary preoccupations. The tenets, therefore, people hold on earth, should be of wide application and not of a too adamant character: thus when elevated to subliminal altitudes, blessed with a universal sympathy, and a generous charity, these entities will of necessity more easily adapt themselves to the consciousness of their surrounding.

CHAPTER XV

The subsidiary lines of thought which naturally enter into man's comprehension, once he has accepted the fundamental principles of spirit continuity and the possibility of spirit communication, are usually first concerned with personal

subjects, such as the manner in which his "departed" spend their time, details of their work and relaxation. As in the terrestrial sphere the ways are many and diverse; but it may be taken as a general rule that whatsoever interested and absorbed and made the fullest appeal to the soul and intellect, incorporating the one with the other, as it were, will in all probability be the specialization which will individualize an entity.

Amusing are some of the speculations made by persons on earth when pondering on the possibilities of their future avocations. It is easy to imagine that the musician's career should continue in eloquent development from sphere to sphere; also that the painter should pursue his exquisite art when translated to scenes accumulating in beauty which would synchronize with his etherealization—but how about humbler and extremely lowly trades? One would not wish the plumber to "Plumb" to all eternity, nor the household drudge for ever to turn out and garnish innumerable dwelling-houses, though each possibly has performed the allotted task excellently well. No! that plumber, it may be, had the makings in him of a fine mechanic, and transplanted to less material realms will therefore be able to develop his talent. The housewife possessed possibly a gift for organization, or a supreme love of children. Here, no longer lacking time and opportunity, she can give full expression to her soul's desire, be it of the practical or the artistic order.

The promulgation of the arts here progresses in a wonderfully intensified degree. Take music. Those who on earth developed, for instance, a talent for pianoforte playing and had at their disposal a certain number of sound-vibrations (seeming to them marvellously perfect) here are enabled; owing to the existence of a hugely increased scale, to produce harmonies vastly superior, augmented to an amazing extent. An organ on earth appears to be a wondrous instrument for the essaying of complex harmonies—seeming to incorporate the various essences of tone from other vehicles of sound and thus almost creating the impression of an orchestra. Imagine, all ye who glory in the production of exquisite music, what is in store for you in future spheres! To me it has been an unlimited source of joy. And so it is with all instruments, take whichever one you will—even to the vibrations emanating from the human vocal chords. The painter too, has an enlarged

medium for expression. He thinks, on earth, he has visioned all possible shades and variations of colour, but when "passed over" he realizes there is a marvellously increased scheme of tone-gradations undreamt of in his earth conception. So is it with all the arts, crafts, and other occupations which have formed man's life-work. Whatever is good is reproduced here on a finer scale.

Earth-folk, naturally, not having experienced what I have just set forth, are prone to think a very insipid existence, lacking zest and colour, must of necessity await them here. But this is very, very far from being the case: they lose much they prized in the flesh, but the gain far outweighs in aesthetic beauty that loss, and so is more than a compensation. For those who are in a too gross state of being to appreciate such joys, time and travail are required to render more desirable these entities and fit them for occupation of a rarer environment.

CHAPTER XVI

Telepathy is now occupying the minds of mortals in an increasing degree. Studied and utilized to its fullest extent it could revolutionize modes of imparting knowledge and become a medium for teaching various subjects which at present are only mastered after a vast amount of drudgery.

If you consider any of the great teachers and leaders (I experienced this especially when at Cambridge) you will always find that the most successful imparters of facts were those who exercised somewhat of an hypnotic force upon their hearers. Do not misunderstand me when using this term: I mean to imply the action of a wave of thought rather than an actual willing. These gifted men, by the very introspection and study which had made them the erudite men they were, had accumulated a wonderfully energising force which was able to enter into, and convince, the minds of their students, This truth being fully realized should reveal the immense importance of study in its most detailed form, as it not only

heightens the powers of the entity who pursues it but will become a gigantic force capable of encompassing diverse minds in a limitless degree. Once more it cannot be too strongly impressed upon mortals that though separate and independant egos they are at the same time but cogs in the great cosmic machine. Each is as a link receiving strength from the preceding link, giving strength to that succeeding, and so forming an irresistible chain.

Telepathy, it may thus be seen, is a concrete power which can be possessed by many if they will only concentrate and study any particular matter of temporary or permanent importance to them. The force, as I have said, is possessed by the teachers (and others like them) subconsciously through their intensified mode or system of thought as applied to the department of knowledge they specialize in. It can be acquired by others of less erudite habit consciously by application, concentration and isolation of one particular idea. Here we utilize it in extraordinary fullness—it economises time, space, and power. More often than not we use it as a mode of thought-transference, substituting it for oral speech.

This is a science which should be gone into by those who have the brain and the time at their disposal to devote to it. Of necessity it is an arduous task, and the ordinary cares and obligations of the world make it a very difficult specialization for any but the most advanced scientists to pursue.

CHAPTER XVII

It is estimated that only one per cent of those "passing over" in the Great War had any accurate conception of what actually would be their state of existence following their life on earth. Many entered the subsequent phase with a sense of bewilderment when at last cognisant of the fact that they were "dead ". Those of a biassed mind, imbued with dogmatism

of a hard-and-fast description, found it extremely difficult to reconcile with fact their preconceived ideas of a vapid heaven with angels tenaciously clinging to gilt-tipped clouds languorously caressing their harps to all eternity. Some indeed tried to resist for a short while the forces which encompassed them, and were for exerting all their powers to get back into and revitalize their fleshly forms. Only a few entered as into a garden they had already glimpsed from the roadway. These were delighted to find dreams realized, the only bar to their full enjoyment being the fact that their friends, would now be mourning them and experiencing the agony of bereavement. Such conditions necessitate the sending of spirits (they are not as a rule yet able or fitted to go themselves) to comfort, if possible, the sorrowing earth-beings, and endeavour to transmit to them waves of thought that will console and reconcile them to a more philosophical state of mind. Beneficent indeed are the emanations of those spirits whose duties mainly consist of this mission of mercy. Their powers act as a salubrious zephyr, wafting tranquillity and peace. But sometimes, alas, their task is difficult in the extreme, as walls of opposition, arising through the bitterness of despair and angry rebellion against destiny, interpose themselves and cause vibrations of a fiercely discordant nature. This militates against the effect which the soothing spirits wish to create. But time, aided by these benevolent ministers, brings peace and reconciliation with the laws of the Universe.

Terrible indeed to watch are the vain railings against these decrees, but if only the truth of soul-continuity and the sense of non-annihilation were more widely believed in, how much less terrible the death-bed, animated by the prospect of reunion in the near future! Again, if the bereaved could in addition know we are continually visiting them and knocking at the door, so to speak, they would not repine or give way to this awful grief, but would open the portals and welcome us in whatsoever guise we were enabled to come.

The happiness which mediums, by true descriptions of departed friends, are able to give to the loved ones, is surely a blessed confirmation of the assertion of this continuity. Sometimes a trivial characteristic is noted which brings complete realization to the enquirer. Tests or proofs are often given quite unsought when no thought of the departed

is in the mind of the seeker. Or, again, sometimes messages are sent from spirits via mediums to persons entirely unknown to them. If the sensitives are kind-hearted, altruistic beings, they are often put to great pains to discover the identity and whereabouts of the persons for whom the messages are intended. Snell instances, though giving much work to the mediums, are fully compensated for by the absolute proof and conviction they afford.

When tests are sought they are not always accorded. Very often there is an extremely antagonistic element at work in some of the enquirers' minds, amounting to a hope of finding the proof sterile, and this frustrates the consummation desired by the rest of the questioners. It will be sensed from these remarks that truth absolute, when asked to testify to its verity, is often humbled and chagrined. Does this seem very extraordinary to the mortal brain? I think not: for is not the same phenomenon frequently met with on earth? A proper sense of pride often unfortunately inverts the positions of innocent and guilty. It is not to be wondered at that, under certain circumstances, discarnate entities refuse to be dictated to and will not take up the challenge.

CHAPTER XVIII

I often wonder if, had I not been destined to make my exit from the earth-plane at a comparatively juvenile age, the sense of realities I dimly discerned would have become enlarged and broadened, or remained at a dead-level, being only fed by the environment engendered by material experiences. There were certainly many joys derived from that sojourn, many wondrous intellects encountered, many cheery jovial personalities and a few exquisitely sweet and sympathetic ones.

A few days before I was fated to leave them all I had a dream (as I then thought, but now I know it was a temporary

departure of my soul from its body), most vivid, of a severance, and I felt myself looking down as from a high altitude on the ones I had loved so much. Though in my dream imbued with a perfectly content and tranquil sensation, the misery I experienced on waking, when I *knew* what that dream portended I was intense. To leave them all, the old, the young—I had deep-rooted affection for diverse types—the prospect was indeed saddening! It came upon me with overwhelming force, this knowledge, and I knew I should have to face and endure "death" and by this very destiny give up the ambitions and hopes cherished by my loved ones for a successful scientific career—hopes which I myself had engendered in them and which I had every confidence through application to realize. The path I had marked out in life which could most feasibly be calculated to bring comfort and happiness to one who had made great sacrifices for me and for my brothers was to be erased, wiped out—all my plans to become sterile, abortive and impotent. At least that was how it *then* appeared to me. Since I have been able to apprehend, to sense the meaning of it all, and inevitably to bow the head. It has not been too easy in the doing; we do not, when leaving earth, immediately become beings subservient and resigned, or thoroughly in tune with our more ethereal environment. The change is of slow growth. Gradations of emotions have to be experienced ere we attain a philosophical condition, which eventually enables us to regret no longer, but to enjoy and revel in the undoubtedly enhanced scope of vision and thought which actually obtains here. We gradually become cognisant of the fact that our work was not useless, was not futile—we have only found another abiding-place in which to pursue it.

The material joys we had hoped to offer to the loved ones in need are left for others to supply. They should appreciate the loss we sustained in having to renounce these happy responsibilities, and give us no cause to suffer in witnessing the omission of their sacred duties. It must be realized we do sense these omissions if they are made—we do suffer in the knowledge. But since many on reading this may be filled with a dull despair at the thought of their exit from the earth-plane and entrance into this sphere, where vision is augmented in a marvellous degree, I must again impress the fact upon them

that huge compensations exist, calculated in any case to make life here infinitely preferable to that on earth, once a proper understanding and comprehension encompass none.

CHAPTER XIX

The inevitability of Nature's decrees is felt and sensed in every form of life subconsciously. It is only on the soul's attaining a proper spiritual and intellectual status, however, that it actually becomes realized and conscious. Thus it is seen that only when a certain evolution or state of progression has been reached can the desirable condition of philosophic tranquillity be enjoyed. Till then the ego is destined to experience many violent emotions, which raise to the heights or fling to the depths, many hours of introspective analysis, fraught alternately with joyfulness and bleak despair. It is a gigantic vista that opes before us once we have "passed over" and realized the survival *ad infinitum* of that ego—a journey one almost is appalled to contemplate. However, we have Time at our disposal, a servitor of unique and unlimited possibilities—Time, incorporating as it does the qualifications of nurse and physician with those of tutor, legislator, and judge. One can never be bored with this food for thought, it is of boundless scope.

Testimony has been given, to many a great mind which has convinced it of the infallibility of man's power to choose the *right* if he will, no matter if circumstances arise which seemingly should inhibit it. When I say *right* I must define what would constitute right, taking into consideration the various factors of heredity, environment, and temperament. It is only feasible to maintain that that which would therefore constitute sin in one set of conditions could not be so reckoned in another. Subversely, that which would constitute virtue in one case likewise might lose that characteristic in another. Thus it is seen that man's intelligence whilst on *earth*, not

seeing, not knowing, not sensing the complete chain of circumstance incorporated in the whole mass of conditions, is not able always (I might say, very seldom) to judge fairly and dispassionately, the network of good and evil is so intricate. Nevertheless, if he asks himself honestly and soul-searchingly which course shall be taken the answer is there if only he will disintegrate it from its depths. If he does not find it on earth he will in the next spheres.

Once we realize we have free-will (many defiantly refuse to) we are certainly charged with a sense of the weight of our responsibilities, but at the same time we are pacified by the understanding of the innate Goodness pervading existence; we feel, as it were, that there are solid foundations on which to build our conceptions of the great scheme of life. It takes the bitterness out of existence, it sweetens, it perfumes.

Orthodox beings, saturated with ecclesiastical atmosphere, admit, of course, this free-will of man, but they do not conciliate and make to fit those garments of right or of wrong to the entities of differentiated types of humanity placed in their so varied sets of circumstances. Did they do so, they would bear a far greater likeness to the Christ they continually declare they seek to exemplify. A huge charity is One of the greatest assets in the progress of a soul—it is its best tutor, its best counsellor.

CHAPTER XX

Our gardens here are unimaginable to mortals' cerebral intelligence, because they are the outcome of good thoughts and emotions we and those we have come in contact with have entertained. Perhaps it is more understandable if I put it a little differently. These benevolent, altruistic thoughts act as a vitalizer, and so strengthen the growth of the shrubs and flowers and bring them in some instances to a wonderful profusion and enthralling state of exquisite perfection. To

these lovely lands we go to rest when the turmoil of our mental exertions and sorrows (for such we experience even here) is weighing us down. Here we tarry until fresh life pervades our being, and surging with a wondrous exhilaration we fling ourselves with renewed energy into our diverse occupations.

Here I must remind you of what I have already mentioned, the marvellous gamut of colour undreamt of by Botticelli, Velasquez, Turner, and the rest, unsensed on earth's nevertheless beautiful lands and seas. Think a minute, all ye with the artist's soul, is not this a beautiful state to look forward to, a lovely jewel to flash before the eyes, like unto the fairy visions conjured to entrance a child's mind? Oh, the translucent streams with verdure and blossoms in overwhelming profusion! Shells of iridescent colourings scintillate in the bed of these beautiful waters and bring a truly wonderful feeling of peace and harmony it is indeed difficult to translate to you earth-dwellers. I would so love to enrich your understanding to this extent, but alas I the limited earth vocabulary at my disposal and the restricted imagination of mortals render it impossible to convey the impression in all its grandeur. This is where we are always handicapped in trying to impress upon the earthly cerebrum the reality of our life here and its conditions. The carnate entities require first to be put into a proper state of receptivity and sympathy before we can impregnate them with something approaching the truth. Myriads of discarnates are labouring ceaselessly to impart this truth—do not, I beg, turn a deaf ear or an unseeing eye to their endeavours

CHAPTER XXI

There are too many forms of life that constitute a basis for profound study in the relation they occupy in regard to continuity of existence that they can only adequately be dealt with in a book given over to scientific thesis alone;

but I wish just to touch on the promulgation of insect life as it appears to the disembodied entity. The multiplication of these esoteric embryos seems to earthly brains totally unproductive of good, but when they realize that this very form of life is the outcome of various will-powers being exerted by a more advanced species of living entity the apparent futility and uselessness of this Ordinance disappear. For so it is: life is generated by life. The Omnipotent infuses life into the highest and most intellectual beings, and so down the scale this power is transmitted (sometimes subconsciously but nevertheless immutably) to less etherealized spirits. Ponder on this when spurning the seemingly unnecessary microbe which infests your dwelling-house or cankers your rose-tree.

Here we know very, very little of this force, inconceivable almost in its intensity, but the mere sensation of the idea even, if I am able to impart it, is sufficient to open up a new vista of imagination and a new field for research. Man must endeavour to impregnate himself with the truth of the concreteness of things he dubbed abstract and the illusiveness of those he thought material—he must subvert many of his solidified conceptions. Unfortunately, it is only possible to give a transient glimpse of the workings of this energising influence it is not fully worked out in our intelligence *here*, and only when we attain to most rare and most advanced realms can we hope to appreciate it in all its clarity and greatness. Therefore it were useless for me, from my slightly superior point of vantage, to attempt fully to inform carnate beings of this marvel. Suffice it to say that mollusc and amoeba and life in its very highest form alike are the result of streams of will-power in some form or another, penetrating and percolating through millions of intervening atoms of space and through aeons of time as men count it. The brain, slightly more endowed in these ultra-terrestrial spheres, it is only feasible to imagine, becomes more and more able to grasp these extraordinary truths as it soars upwards in its expanding glory—into that great Beyond whose mysteries we, in these preparatory spheres, only dare guess at!

CHAPTER XXII

As I review these few chapters, the outcome of the commingling of concentration and sympathy working harmoniously on either side of the Veil, I realize how many tomes it would require even to touch on some of the subjects which must of necessity arise when discussing the end of earth life, termed "death". But this little work is not meant to examine eruditely the innermost workings of every striking phenomenon. If it can reach the heart and arouse the mentality of many who have never before conceived a wish to explore the possibilities of the after life, then it will not have failed: if it can bring a ray of consolation to the bereaved, a streak of hope to the despairing, and a sense of confirmation to many already half-convinced it will then certainly have performed its allotted mission

To me, privileged as I have been to visit daily some of my dearest ones when inspiring these pages, it has been indeed a labour of love and joy. It has confirmed my supposition that through Supreme affection and affinity more can be accomplished than through merely intellectual vibrations, for the medium through whom this has been written and the helper who has daily given her valued assistance as editress have cords and vibrations in wonderful attune with my own. On earth the greatest palship and sympathy existed, as now, even severed as we are by the mysterious transfigurator, "Death", it still exists in the same force. Through this great power it has been possible to achieve this modest treatise. We hope one day to give to the world a fuller, and possibly a more scientific, explanation of many of the phenomena to which we have in this book made but passing reference. But it must be understood that this is the first work that has been inscribed by the medium and the first work inspired by my spirit, and thus great power has had to be conveyed from one ego to the other, necessitating a great strain on both sides. Difficulties have been splendidly surmounted, however, and the messages been received and put down in conformity with my conception. The writing has not been merely automatic, as

the brains of medium and assistant have often been consulted, and at times called in to interpret an idea or to put it into words. Again, sometimes the words have flowed continuously and as quickly as if I were myself holding the pen.

The day is not far distant when such an effort will be much more generally undertaken, the loved ones gone from earth seeking out those left thereon, inspiring them to music, literature, painting, and other arts—helping them by their enlarged and enlightened vision not only to realize there is no "death", but stimulating, strengthening, and improving in divers ways their intellects and softening and Purifying the thoughts of their hearts, too often embittered and hardened by the seemingly cruel and arbitrary rulings of an inexorable destiny.

Be of a brave heart and a resolute courage, all ye still labouring in a none too happy world! Lift up the veil that covers your eyes ordained to see and to glory in wonderful light, for it is there for your seeking, radiating hope and happiness! A blessed thing to ponder upon and delight in realizing, and a beneficent essence to saturate oneself in—this knowledge of the continuity of the soul, of the imperishable ego, and the glorious joy of reunion with the loved ones!

PART IV

LETTERS

Letters from Lester written during his life and a few from other people concerning him.

NOTE: The following letters maybe considered of a somewhat intimate nature, but the compilers of the book think that, apart from their interest as original literature, it is essential to give them to the public as showing the character and mentality of their writer, the late R. Lester Coltman, and bringing out the similarity to them in general style of the spirit-communications as imparted to the medium, Lilian Walbrook, in the book.

Certain people referred to in these letters have been approached for consent to allow their names to appear, and the compilers feel sure that all referred to will be as kind as these and find no objection to being mentioned.

LETTERS

Letter from R. Lester COLTMAN to MRS. WALBROOK and N. WALBROOK.

Cambridge.
26th Aug., 1914

My dear Grandma and Aunt Norah,

To you, the former, I believe I have long owed a letter, and to you, the latter, I have owed a letter one hour and twenty-three minutes. Thank you very much, dear Grandma, for your last letter, so patriotic and noble and you for yours, dear Aunt Norah.

We are not yet invaded, although last week I had the double assurance of Mrs. Cox and the greengrocer that such would be the case ere a week. On further interrogation of the prophets, however, I learn that their previous surmises were effected without the co-operative prognostication of the milkman, who, in a recent debate, shed light upon certain obscure aspects of the campaign, and led to incontrovertible inferences that invasion will not ensue for three or four days. Mrs. Cox, greengrocer, and milkman, although their thorough appreciation of the situation leads them to deprecate sundry acts of General Joffre, Kitchener, Jellicoe, etc., acknowledge nevertheless that, for a novice, the War Minister's negotiations are quite wily. I, being neither landlady, greengrocer, nor milkman, cannot perceive the situation with the comprehensive faculties prompted by years employed in any of the above erudite vocations, and consequently consider Kitchener's present behaviour to be as thorough, inscrutable, and competent as could be wished for. Kitchener, unlike 99% of men, is a worthy man, a man to be approved of. Never was a more worthy

man, or a more capable. I hear from soldiers stationed here who were with him in the South African War, that a kinder man or more discreet or wily organizer, never breathed, but, of course, one knows that as soon as one has seen his photo. That man will regulate the conflict as it should be regulated, and while he is at his place none need fear for Britain's success. Apart from ability, however Kitchener's demeanour is such as to inspire commendation. In fact, he meets with the complete approval of all such as estimate a man's worth by those characteristics which should be taken into account in virile estimation. The majority of people imagine that one who is silent, reticent, and loth to expound at every opportunity, who does not open his mouth on all occasions in meaningless rhetoric, is devoid of judgment and logical prompting to his actions. They love a yapper, who stands up in crises and spouts patriotic ramblings, and then departs to hoard up provisions. But Kitchener is not a yapper. He is a respectable silent man, and his actions in the past have indicated his worth. Very little of his ideas enter the papers, but we can be sure from various facts that he omits no single detail, and in spite of his variance in one or two points from complete acquiescence with the views of Mrs. Cox, yet in other respects he will no doubt prove quite competent. It is obvious he expects the war to last two years or more, and this is natural, since so undeniably excellent an army as the German cannot be shattered in a month. It might take little time to repel them from the frontier, but the object of the Allies, and one that will be attained, is a complete subjugation of Militarism—a restoration of continental equilibrium, the prerogatives of small races, and a sufficient crippling of Germany to ensure peace for years.

At the end of this struggle we will, compared with other European nations, be more eminent than ever previously. At present the only drawback is our expenditure, and loss of men. That is enough, certainly, but our trade will increase, and only incidental discharge of labour has so far ensued.

I would like to see the German fleet come out. I expect when it does, although we will sink it, that we will suffer considerable losses. Modern projectiles of as much as one ton are serious things, and we must be prepared for loss,

even as for reverses on the Continent. The strategy of the Allies has been good, and if the German army had not moved whither it has, there would have been only the usual desultory fighting.... I expect any day to hear of some great unforeseen development engineered by the desirable Kitchener. The present state of affairs is, at any rate, completely what was expected by the authorities (except Mrs. Cox and greengrocer. The milkman expected it).

German atrocities ate terrible and barbaric. They burnt one man alive, which treatment is exceedingly inconvenient, and even painful. I should like to encounter a German smaller than myself, As a matter of fact, all Germans I have ever met, save one, are dogs. My friend, T. O. Leslie, on one memorable occasion half stew a bullying German twice his size at school. A week later I had the good fortune to disfigure the same German for a similar reason. Thus I do not approve of Germans. Tolerance, chivalry, and reticence, the three essential characteristics of desirable people, are quite absent in them. My friend Feldmann, the one decent German I have known, and than whom I have never known a finer fellow, wilt be called to arms from South Africa. I trust he is saved should he be at the front, since it is desirable that one decent German should exist, Feldmann does not drink beer, and hates sausages, in fact on all occasions when such fare was on the table at Potchefstroom, he gave the same to me, whence further evidence of his value as a being.

There are 70,000 troops here encamped on the numerous commons. They are waiting for auspicious moments before departing for Harwich and thence to the continent. Such numbers of course make them visible wherever one goes, but they are continually departing and re-arriving in batches. When they march out every day long, weedy patriotic youths follow them, whistling the tunes the bands play, and hoping that when they get to the front they will be as steady as would the said youths themselves. The said youths do not enlist, as they deem it their duty to stay and defend their land, keeping up the hearts of all by whistling rag-time. There are concerts every night on the commons and the soldiers reader many excellent items, chiefly comic songs. Many of them were in the Boer War, but there are others sadly larking in stamina and not able... [other pages not included]

Extract from letter from MRS. ETHEL COLTMAN to NORAH and LILIAN WALBROOK,

Johannesburg,
5th Feb., 1919.

I told you I would let you know about the sitting I had with Mrs. Praed on Saturday, February last.

When she first spoke to me she described Val and Oak perfectly. I asked, "What about my other child?" She said, "I cannot see him yet." I asked if he was in this world, and she said if not she ought to see his spirit, but she could not.... She went off into a trance and the old Scotch doctor controlled her. He then spoke of Val and Oak, described them both; told me all about Val's marriage and described the child.... He paused, and I asked him "What about my youngest child?" He made a long pause, and then said: "I'm afraid, my lassie, that I must tell you he is in the spirit world. I have tried to avoid telling you this, but I fear it is true. I grieve for you because I see he is one in ten thousand, and the links of the love chain that bind you are wonderfully bright and strong. The love between you was a wonderful love, and it is bound to bring you together again." He then described my darling's appearance and character perfectly, spoke of his love of animals, etc., said, "He had no vices, and his life was most unselfish," that all he did was with a view to my welfare and happiness.

I asked if Lester died at that first shot in the head when he fell over the machine-gun. He said, "No, lassie, that shot paralysed the brain, and he never regained consciousness, and then a shell came and it was finished in a second. He suffered no pain, it was so sudden, and there was nothing left to identify him, nothing!"

I can't tell you how I felt when he said all this. He said "He has a great reward, though, for his noble death—greater love hath no man than this—and there is a beautiful light all round your boy. He is happy and with his cousin, about his own age, who passed over a few months before, and with your father"—then followed a *perfect description of our dear Paley*, who sent me a loving message. He said Lester's work was to

find some one to whom he could impart his knowledge, so that his studies would benefit this world. He said Lester's intellect was splendid, and he spoke of his last eloquent letter to me and what a comfort it was. He said, "Your boy is preparing a beautiful home for you, but you have much more work to do here before you can go to him." I told him I wanted to go now, I didn't want to live to be old. He said, "There is much work for you to do here, lassie.

There was a lot more I cannot write, it would take Teams. I was an hour with Mrs. Praed, but all details were so true and perfect that I could not but believe that what she said was true—that my loved boy had laid down his life for his country. I was dreadfully overcome....

Extracts from letter from C. W. ORR to NORAH WALBROOK. MR. ORR trained for some time in England with LT. R. LESTER COLTMAN, intending to go to France with the Guards, bit ill-health Prevented his fulfilling his intention.

Menton, France,
10th Nov., 1920.

Dear Miss Walbrook,

Very many grateful thanks for the photos of Lester...I quite know what you mean by his charm; I felt it so much myself, and it was all the more fascinating because he himself was so entirely unconscious of it. His taste in music was singularly pure and critical, and on the very last occasion we met I remember him asking me if I had heard from Mr. Delius, in whose works I am very interested and whose music I had played sometimes to Lester....

Yours sincerely,
CHARLES W. ORR.

Extract from letter from C. W. ORR to NORAH WALBROOK.

Mentone, France.
12th Jan., 1921.

Dear Miss Walbrook,

...No, I am not at all sceptical about spiritualism, but interested rather than otherwise. I thoroughly believe in thought transference and remember Lester telling me of some wonderful experiences he had had in South Africa. I think there is a great fascination in "knocking at all the walls of this world in an effort to get out somewhere". It does not seem impossible to believe that the so-called "dead" can communicate with us, granting that we are sufficiently de-materialized to respond to their message.... I do not care for a medium as a kind of go-between—I would rather educate myself to a state of sensitiveness in order to be able to respond to any message from the other world.

I heard Lester play some things by ear and was astonished at his accuracy. He had extraordinarily good taste in music...

Yours sincerely,
CHARLES W. ORR.

Additional Chapter

PART V

ADDITIONAL CHAPTER

Ineffectual as are many of the invading forces which are endeavouring to overthrow the spreading of the great truth of creation—in other words, the knowledge of the continuity of the soul and all it implies—still the work of the anti-spiritualists, though abortive in the long run, has yet the power to retard, and because of this should be combated and defeated wherever and whenever possible at once.

No false statement made publicly or privately should be allowed to stand where there is the intellectual ability to disprove it. Many perhaps may feel they lack that ability, though in their minds convinced and ardent believers; a certain shyness and lack of confidence, maybe, prohibits them from voicing their opinions, or they fear that they have not the command of language needed to do the subject adequate justice. But if they will take heart, be courageous and quietly commune a minute or so, the ever-watchful helpers will inspire, will direct and will enlist them as soldiers and servitors of the Truth. It has been proved over and over again that this is the case: the inarticulate and the faltering have become orators of a high order, or, at any rate, those who do not attain to such heights have been enabled to deliver in clear and decisive words the message. The essential thing is to have the conviction firmly embedded in the esoteric ego, and not to be swayed by opposition once that seed is definitely sown there.

Of course some are convinced merely through wishing to be, by a blind faith, which is the possession of spiritualists as of the followers of any creed or belief. We welcome all believers, but those who bring with their conviction Reason, Study, and Research are thrice strong for the cause. That is why it is incumbent upon all converts, however little endowed with the brain of the scientist, to endeavour to understand as

far as possible the scientific bearings of the subject, for this is where Proof is to be found, and to the materialist proof pure and simple, plain and unadorned, is the only irrefutable argument. That is why it were well if Science could be studied, if only in a simple form, by all potential mediums and also those interested in the spread of the knowledge of "Spiritualism". Thus, knowing something of the foundations upon which their faith is built, they would be enabled more adequately to present their case and give to the listener that seal of conviction evoked by their own inner proof-positive.

* * *

Here in these spheres we are not *necessarily en rapport* with all collateral events affecting our earth friends. This should be understood by communicators, as it so often seems that great surprise and mistrust are displayed when some earthfolk get messages that we do not know certain, maybe important, happenings concerning them or their environment. The *desire* on their part for us to become cognisant of their movements always makes it easier for us to do so. Again, should we wish to find out some fact requisite to us for assisting a loved one we can, by intense concentration and desire, be put in possession of the *means* of discovering what we want. We are put in possession of the *means*, but more often than not an exhaustive and most difficult investigation, necessitating deep research, is demanded to ensure success. As the knowledge of vibrant waves becomes more generally understood by humanity such an assertion will be more easily grasped, but this treatise is not intended for scientific dissertation on the subject—a most entrancing one to those whose minds are fitted to pursue it. When gross errors are made by spirit friends of the earth-folk the belief of the latter in the benefits to be obtained by communication between carnate and discarnate should not be seriously shaken, for though

such errors are to be deplored they should not be allowed to damn the cause, am; more than the errors made by human beings are allowed to do so in regard to their earth work. Mistakes can of course be constantly made by egos of integrity in either world.

We are working at the study of those etheric waves just as laboriously are you are, and although we are a good few steps in advance of you in knowledge thereof we have by no means yet found the best way to utilize the cosmic sensitive plasms in such a manner as will doubtless soon make a kind of telephonic communication possible. It astounds me to see how few humans are putting the discovery of vibrant waves on a collateral plane with the metaphysics of the continuity of the soul ego and the possibility of the latter's communicating with other egos (Still its confreres notwithstanding) sojourning on earth in material bodies. But a few additional startling discoveries on your side are needed probably before the links can form a cohesive chain. *Patientia vinces* [patience is victorious], and the progress of the snail is sometimes more real than that of the hare the latter may easily fall into a trap.

As I have previously said, the study of these magnetic vibrant waves, though not Merely in its infancy has not yet reached mature manhood, and therefore it is but natural that at times gross errors are made in the *reading* of these waves. However, big mistakes are an essential to progress in any state on the earth as in the succeeding planes near to the earth, for these impel further investigation the pursuance of which eventually eliminates the recurrence of such errors. And so, perfecting one stage, we grope onwards to the next—blundering maybe very often, but through these, very blunders coming upon Truth itself.

* * *

The fragmentary messages which are often the only ones that discarnates can "get through" to their earth friends are

sometimes so enigmatic as to seem to the ultra-practical so devoid of application to the material needs of the person for whom they are intended as to make it appear waste of time and energy to receive them. But the transmitting of all messages, fragmentary or complete, is essential, because as from the dustheap so often can be disentangled an unsuspected treasure, so from the mass of diverse messages emanating from various intelligences may be extracted wonderful truths that may convince, confirm, and also inspire. The wheat has to be separated from the chaff and eventually made into wholesome bread. Yes, one day not too far distant this knowledge of soul-continuity or spiritualism is to become the everyday nutritious fare of the multitude.

Labour, then, in this direction cannot be too perseveringly and diligently pursued. Carry on", as in War so in Peace, and Victory will one day be achieved. It is often found that after a lapse of time messages appearing to be but short, disconnected and irrelevant, assume great importance when linked to some other messages previously given—the transmitter not having been able, perhaps, to get all through at once owing to the counter-vibrations and cross-currents. As the study of these big forces progresses the truth of this will be proved and the necessity for examining minutely, and piecing together, these spasmodic thought-waves, will be realized. Millions and millions of them are floating, as it were, in a sea of etheric consistency. It is the work of the scientist to study how to direct these concrete expressions of the minds of entities carnate and discarnate into channels separate and differentiated, to pigeon-hole them, so to speak, in order that they may form a utilitarian force upon which to draw. Extreme patience and great precision are the only factors that can be exerted to yield success.

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One wishes to avoid tautology, but when engaged on a work of this nature this is not always easy, as one feels that certain points cannot be too emphatically impressed upon the reader's

mind. One of the greatest essentials is to approach the study of "Spiritualism" without bias One way or the other. Tolerance must be the primary attitude adopted at each discovery or hint of discovery. Scientific and other tests should be used when opportunity offers and documentary evidence stored for future reference.

A spiritually sympathetic circle ("spiritually" here connoting like vibrations) should, whenever possible, be formed when investigating—it need not necessarily be more than three persons who are met, indeed I have as often as not found two quite adequate if there is a sufficiency of force emanating from these entities—but as physical power is a great asset in the speedy transmitting of messages a male element is often desirable for that purpose. This, too, is a great relief when the medium is a feminine sensitive highly-strung and very possibly not over robust. There is not sufficient thought given to the consideration of what may or may not prove a pre-eminently productive circle. People say: "So-and-so is a good medium, ergo we shall have good results." But this may not be the case. What is the physical power of this medium, and if not adequate who will supply the deficiency? Another thing: What are the ruling sympathies of the sensitive, has he or she any violent antipathies or any strong attractions? All these points should be taken into account and due weight given to them. Mediums should be allowed (however unpleasant this may be to some of the would-be sitters) courteously but firmly to indicate their wishes, and should an entity hostile to their auras be present they should be enabled to exclude that individual from the circle. The person objected to need not be offended in any way—doubtless any such individual will find a welcome at another circle where he or she may be in perfect attune with some other sensitive. But these gradations of vibrations affect harmoniously or detrimentally the results of spirit communication to a remarkable degree, and therefore are worthy of being deemed a factor of paramount importance.

Also the physical comfort of the medium should be studied and any small fads or fancies given into, for a good medium is a being apart, to be treasured and rated at a high value.

Again, it cannot be too strongly urged that food for the body be administered freely, milk if possible, as it is a great nerve-fortifier and the speediest agent in the work of repairing the wasted tissues.

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There are many experienced phenomena-hunters who yet have not firmly grasped the fundamental principle which must underlie manifestations—if these fail to appear, or, when appearing, fail to come up to the standard they themselves have set, then their faith trembles, their logic wavers, and vacillating and unsatisfactory emotions gain hold upon them. They omit to take into consideration the fact that a million conflicting agencies (the sea of sensations, all that ever were and all that ever will be) are constantly waging battle, are loose and at large in the cosmic fluid. The fact of the *concreteness* of ideas, though admitted assuredly by all who have made but small incursions into the realms of the study of soul-essences and their various proclivities, is not made a really live thing, a solid foundation, as it were, on which to build working hypotheses. If these investigators would strive for systematic results they must recognize that the spiritual and the material elements (as they know them) are working co-existently all the time—that no material sensation can be sensed, no material act enacted, without its prototype being created in spirit form.

I know this is a gigantic axiom for man's consciousness rightly to appreciate, but, once he has enlarged his vision sufficiently to take in this wonderful truth, his path will be inordinately easier and he will find himself half-way up the hill and able to contemplate ascent to the summit with equanimity. Deep reflection should be given to this side of the question before setting out to probe deeper and deeper into the mysteries of a superlative creative faculty, which it must be realized is existent collaterally on the material planets as

corporeal man judges them and also in the whole of that region which he, when incarnate, would name immaterial.

From our point of vantage, many may say, it should be easy for us, if communicate we can with our incarnate friends, to imbue your scientists with first-hand knowledge. But there is a spiritual law (the secret of which we here are still groping for) which precludes a too easy filching of one brain's store accumulated through experience and study. It would seem that certain conditions are necessary to help in this transfusing, as it were, of the knowledge gained by those who have passed from earth—either great love and affection, or true intellectual affinity. When the desideratum is attained there appears to be no limit to the flow of ideas and educative force which can be transmitted from one entity to another.

Therefore, as I have stated, these seekers after truth, these searchers for veritable phenomena, must not be cast down by seemingly disappointing results, for doubtless in their research they will hit upon some unsought wonder, and be adding another brick to the pyramidal structure which is day by day being erected in their midst.

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People frequently approach a study of religion or a belief in the continuity of the soul in a manner which demands too much precise detail, and, failing that, they are despondent, vacillating and in the end lose faith ad heart. They do not seem able to grasp the fact (admitted they have realized soul continuity and the possibility of the "departed" communicating with them) that soul-durability does not connote omniscience and a solution of all the wonders of the gigantic scheme of creation. It is quite impossible for me, for instance, in this sphere to which I have attained after departure from the earth but five years, to enlighten you on all the pros and cons of every belief or lack of belief. I can but teach what my intelligence and investigations have, *on earth and here*,

proved to me. There is no "divine Revelation"—or anyway, I have not experienced it, although, being freed of the material, I am indeed imbued with a finer sense of discernment and a subtler susceptibility to the essence of the Spirit of Life, which to me, at any rate, stands for a Divine Power, a Burning Light, in fact *the* Creator. I can go no further at present. It is to me a supreme element which imparts to one courage, sympathy and faith: it tranquillizes, it strengthens, and it embraces everything and every state for all time. But I would not go so far as to say it can actually be seen—it may be that aeons ahead this is possible to every separate ego or it may be that aeons ahead each ego becomes assimilated by, or incorporated in, this wonderful Light. But though as yet unseen by me and those in my environment it is nevertheless felt and sensed in varying degree, according to temperament, character, and composition.

I would again say most emphatically that this Force is realized by me very much more strongly than when I was an earth-dweller, that I see it also more strongly realized by others whom I knew on earth and now know in spirit-form, but that notwithstanding this I am no whit more "religious" in the common and ordinary meaning of the word than before "passing over", that the absurd ritual and narrow-mindedness of the self-righteous "psalm-smiter" are still as ludicrous to me and as provocative of mirth mingled with contempt as by my friends and associates they were known to be by me when on earth. I have no regret for my condemnation of the paltry, stultifying views the so-called religious people take of life and of a large-minded Creator, and were I able to re-visit earth in my former corporeality I should still express this sentiment in forceful language, as formerly, though in my judgment of many things that had annoyed me and made me vilely impatient I should prove myself less didactic, less intolerant, and less self-opinionated.

But I must admit that the main tenets I held on earth with regard to immortality, with regard to good and evil, and also my half-formed conception of the *fundamental* basis of science (especially the branch of psychical research) have suffered a not very great divergence from my opinions when in the flesh. It will thus be seen that it is ever advisable to learn, ponder on, and absorb, all possible knowledge of whatsoever

branch of art, science, or craft we are interested in whilst on earth. It is never wasted, it is never futile. Concentration on, and perseverance in, the cultivation of the talents we are dowered with when born into the earth-sphere is a finer, a far greater act of worship and evidence of the acknowledgement of at, All-Powerful Spirit than the lip-service employed in parrot-like repetition of a creed or belief the meaning of which has very likely become to the "worshipper" lost (if ever understood by him). Let him go into the fields, to the mountain, to the desert, to the veldt, if he wishes to feel the uplift, the majesty, the grandeur, the omnipotence of a Deity. Let him also find among those around him the ailing, the sorrowing and those needful of sympathy, and according to his ability and his purse-strings let him offer comfort, and thereby realize true Religion and the Brotherhood of Man in all its completeness.

Allocation to these spheres and to the particular mental and spiritual environment each particular ego finds himself in is not set up by tribunal, as many might be apt to imagine; it is all a matter of self-relegation, dependent upon mind evolution. It is a perfectly natural, and therefore a perfectly scientific, law—it is the law of Nature (and therefore of Creation) itself. And let it here be understood that various types of personality will evolve, will progress nearer the All-Powerful Light, along *absolutely different* roads, yet each in as great a degree converging on the one goal of perfection. I wish to impress upon mortals this truth as many a one who professes he is "broadminded" and understanding when meeting his fellow-creatures allows a mannerism only, maybe, or perhaps a standpoint of life totally opposed to his own, to damn and place beyond salvation an individual who quite probably has as much essential worth, and as high a degree of advancement to perfection, as himself. The one may swear and be nearer the angels than the other who sweareth not and foreswears his neighbours. Notwithstanding this, very likely a human being better than either of these will turn to the non-swearer, the man of "respectability", though his intuition tells him which is in very truth the better man (or woman). This is where the curse of conventionality takes the reins, obliterating a real sense of values and obstructing the power of discernment of a well-balanced, judicial, mind. To

illustrate my point: a Dan Leno or a Gladstone would evolve in accordance with his separate mentality, but when progressed to a like high standard a Dan Leno would never be a Gladstone nor a Gladstone a Dan Leno. Thus we improve our divine gifts and at the same time retain individuality. Perhaps a creature who had admired Gladstone would not have the perception to admire a Dan Leno or a Fred Emney, voting these latter vulgar and failing to appreciate the divine spark of genius because in a guise that he did not apprehend. But here all find their level, and the beauty of every form of excellence emerges gradually, casting off aught gross that may have marred it and proving perfection is possible in all things. In his activities is man epitomizing his religion, and many a one in deeds only he enacts his worship.

THE END