

SOME DISCERN SPIRITS

THE MEDIUMSHIP OF ESTELLE ROBERTS

by

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When Your Animal Dies
When a Child Dies

“Now concerning spiritual gifts; brethren, I would not have you ignorant . . . there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit . . . to one is given . . . the gifts of healing . . . to another the discerning of spirits.” - 1 Corinthians XII.

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CHAPTER I

THE VIRTUOSO

The Royal Albert Hall was filled to capacity, a vast audience having assembled to hear the sound of a woman's voice. My position, just above the platform, commanded a good view of the interior of this famous concert hall. Gallery, tiers and boxes were crowded and the arena showed a sea of faces, upturned towards the performer. The atmosphere was electrical, charged with that indefinable 'something' which is always present when a mass of people is held spellbound and expectant.

The scene before my eyes sent my thoughts momentarily drifting to other occasions when I had been present at the Royal Albert Hall. Beneath the glass dome of the famous London landmark, I have sat enraptured by the music of immortal composers interpreted by artistes of international reputation. I have marvelled at the virtuosity displayed by celebrated violinists, and held my breath in wonder at the brilliant technique of great pianists. I have listened, with joy, to the nightingale notes of some sweet singer, and been stirred by the sound of well-loved and familiar music played by members of different symphony orchestras.

Yet, as my thoughts became again focussed on the present scene, I could remember no previous occasion when an Albert Hall audience had been held more firmly in the grip of the moment - for Estelle Roberts was describing the dead.

Mrs. Roberts is considered by many people to be the world's greatest medium. Certainly she is the most versatile medium of whom there is any record. It was to witness a display of her remarkable gift of clairvoyance that the audience of 9,000 had gathered. Every available seat had been allocated months previously, but this known fact did not prevent hundreds more people from queuing outside the gallery in the hope of securing an unreserved seat or, at least, standing accommodation.

Do not think that this impressive gathering at the Royal Albert Hall was due to a rare public appearance of Estelle Roberts. Only a few weeks previously a similar meeting, held in this same hall, had attracted just as many people. The demand for tickets had been so overwhelming that a second Royal Albert Hall meeting was arranged to receive the 'overflow' which, incidentally, resolved itself into a bigger assembly than the first.

These meetings were organised by the 'Sunday Pictorial.' They were the outcome of a series of articles written by Victor Thompson, then the assistant editor. He had told, of his investigations into the truths of Spiritualism. He had described how he set out to discover why, when orthodox church congregations continued to dwindle, the Spiritualist churches were crowded. Within a few weeks of his inquiry, Victor Thompson became convinced of Survival.

His newspaper series on his psychic experiences with Estelle Roberts and other mediums aroused so much interest that the Aeolian Hall, London, where Estelle gave clairvoyance every Sunday, became the scene of waiting queues and a weekly

clamour for admittance. To enable the hundreds who were turned away disappointed every week to have a better chance of hearing Mrs. Roberts, the 'Sunday Pictorial' co-operated in arranging two services for her at the Seymour Hall, London. But although this hall accommodates 2,000 people, the demand for seats was still unsatisfied and the Royal Albert Hall was consequently booked.

Hear her, then, as she displays her remarkable gift of clairvoyance at the first of the two meetings. Microphones were provided in order that her voice could be heard in every part of the crowded auditorium.

For a variety of psychic reasons it is not an easy matter to give clairvoyance before a congregation numbering several thousands. At such large gatherings the dead usually 'build up' in the vicinity of the medium and provide their evidence before she knows which member of the audience is being sought. But at the majority of Spiritualist meetings Estelle can see the one for whom the message is intended because the spirit indicates the particular person in the audience who is to be addressed.

Describing a dead boy whom she said had passed over as a result of a street accident which occurred a few weeks previously. Estelle announced: "He is looking anxiously amongst you for his mother." Saying that the youth was intensely excited, the medium detailed his appearance and distinguishing characteristics before she announced that his name was Kennedy. "Where is his mother?" she asked. A man in the audience replied: "She could not come." "Are you the boy's father?" asked Estelle. "Yes," he acknowledged.

Because the medium possesses the gift of clairsaudience she could hear, as well as see, the dead lad. Thus Estelle was able to repeat the conversation the boy had heard take place in his parents' home that morning.

"Your son says," she told the recipient of the message, "that you asked his mother to come here, but she did not want to do so. She said she didn't think she would be able to stand it."

Stating the boy's approximate age and height, the medium said that he appeared to have passed to the Other Side six or seven weeks previously.

"It is not quite so long ago as that," responded the father. Then Estelle relayed the son's message to his father. "All I remember," said the dead lad, "is going out on my bicycle and then, suddenly, there was oblivion and I was in the spirit world." The youth was anxious that his parents should not blame the driver of the vehicle that collided with him. He insisted that the accident was his own fault.

The next spirit description was for an actor in the audience who received evidence of Survival from relatives and friends who returned to demonstrate their continued existence. A dead husband was described to a woman in the auditorium. Estelle gave his full name - Johnny Dwyer - and said that in his earthly life he had been on the stage. Providing further evidence, the medium reminded the woman of a mental

message she had sent to her husband. It was to the effect that if he could come back that evening, he would bring with him two friends who had also passed over. They were well-known variety artistes, whom Estelle named. In addition to these dead friends, Mrs. Roberts declared, Johnny Dwyer had also brought his daughter and his son who were also with him in the spirit world. "But they are all very much alive," the medium assured the recipient of the communication, and asked that a message might be sent to the dead actor's son, Leslie, who, she said, was touring with a theatrical company. These statements were acknowledged as being accurate.

Soon, Mrs. Roberts was speaking of another spirit, a young woman who passed over when she was 24 or 25, and who was seeking her mother in the vast assembly. When the medium gave the name of Engels, in amplification of further details, a member of the audience responded. "Your daughter tells me she has been in the spirit world between four and five years," said Estelle. "It will be five years next January," answered the mother, who was next told that she had been worrying about her own health, fearing that she had cancer. "Your fears are groundless," the sensitive assured her. "Since you have been sitting here at this meeting, your pain has, for some unknown reason, disappeared. Is that not so?"

"That is perfectly true," came the reply.

Mrs. Roberts explained that, while the dead girl was waiting for her message to be conveyed to her mother, she had asked some spirit doctors who were associated with the medium to examine her parent. These doctors insisted that the mother need have no fear. She would not be required to undergo the operation she dreaded. Does it sound fantastic that dead medical men can give an opinion about a living person's health? It may not seem quite so strange by the time you know more of Estelle's psychic powers. Her words eased a mind that had been full of fear, and left the recipient of the message in a state of calm tranquility.

"Does the name of Scantlebury convey anything?" the sensitive now inquired of the audience. A woman replied that she understood this name. It was a code word between herself and a dead friend who had made a promise to try to give the name at the Albert Hall meeting. Mrs. Roberts provided the same member of the audience with names and spirit messages from members of her family.

Trying to catch the sound of a name that was being conveyed to her by another spirit communicator, Estelle said at first it sounded like Craddow. "No, it is more like Blackow," she said, correcting her first impression. "It is a man who wants to speak to his wife," she insisted. "The name is Blakoe," answered a woman. "I am his wife." Estelle then gave a full description of her husband, saying he was about 30 years old when he passed to the spirit world.

"Did you come here with a friend, and were you talking to her about her daughter on the Other Side?" asked the medium. "Your husband tells me you said to yourself: 'If only she could get a message from her daughter tonight I know what it would mean

to her, as her girl has only recently passed over'." The woman acknowledged that this wish had indeed occupied her mind before the meeting. "Your husband received your thought," Estelle continued, "and he has brought your friend's daughter with him."

Then she spoke to the dead girl's mother, who was sitting beside Mrs. Blakoe. Describing the spirit as a "fine-looking young woman," Mrs. Roberts said she was killed in a street accident. "Was it a car?" she asked. "It was a motor-cycle side car," the mother replied. "She says she remembers the car swerving and then nothing else," said Estelle. "She does not want you to think of her, as you did for some little time, with her head and face injured. She wants you to know she is full of life and happiness, with the desire to be near you just as she always was."

A woman in the gallery claimed the next spirit message from a communicator named Cooper, who wanted to speak to his wife, Annie. "He has brought his, and your, daughter with him," Estelle said. The recipient of the message was a little emotional on hearing Mrs. Roberts's words. "Don't cry," urged the medium, just realise that they are able to speak to you and are alive." Estelle then told her that, just before leaving for the meeting, she went to a cupboard, took out a scarf belonging to her husband and held it for a moment before returning it. "Your husband and your daughter were watching you," Mrs. Roberts assured her. "They know of your loneliness; your husband wants me to tell you how happy he is to speak to you and bring your little girl along with him." The medium referred to the troubles the wife had experienced during the preceding weeks. She gave the husband's assurance that these worries would be straightened out. Estelle also spoke of her husband's brother who was also in the spirit world. He had returned to tell his sister-in-law that she would assuredly see her husband and daughter again.

Then Estelle referred to a spirit who gave the name of Fabian and who asked for his wife, Florence. A member of the audience acknowledged the description of her husband. The medium then spoke of the woman's sister, Clara, who had accompanied her to the meeting. Estelle stated that Clara's dead husband was also present. She gave his name as Bresley, which was corrected by his wife, Clara, to Breeley. Giving further details of the two husbands, Estelle stated that this was the first time their wives had received spirit messages from them. She added that one husband, Fabian, passed over very quickly, but that the other man had suffered a great deal before he left his earthly body. "They want you two to sit in a circle together," said Estelle, "so that they can gather round with several others who want to contact you. Then they will be able to communicate with you a little better."

"Was your husband about 50?" asked Estelle of Fabian's wife. "He was 49," the woman replied.

"And Mr. Breeley was a little older?"

"He was 60."

“And you are both strangers to me?”

“Yes, we have both travelled from Torquay.”

For an hour the medium gave messages from the dead. At the conclusion of every series of descriptions, she asked the recipients whether there had been any previous contact between her and them. In each case a negative reply was given. One person said that she had seen Estelle once at another public meeting, but had never spoken to her. The others were complete strangers. Some had travelled long distances to be present at the Royal Albert Hall meeting.

If you have never seen Estelle Roberts, you must visualise a slim woman of average height. Her dark hair now shows signs of greying. She appears to be in her middle years, but is actually older than she looks. Her eyes are arresting, deep-set and sombre, beneath characteristic brows and a high forehead. She dresses well and becomingly.

Mrs. Roberts is a dramatic, forceful personality as she paces the platform, stopping to address one person, then another, in the audience. Never for a moment does she lose her composure or assurance. Sometimes you see her bend her head as she talks to one of her spirit helpers or to a dead individual who has come to claim recognition. Occasionally, she may shade her eyes with her hands as she concentrates her gaze on a spirit form. This woman, who has known hardship and want in earlier days, has never had a lesson in deportment or public speaking. Yet she is complete mistress of herself and her environment, whether before an assembly of thousands or a small, intimate audience. It is all the same to her.

Her lithe figure gives the impression of the strength of the thoroughbred horse. Although of unexalted origin she has patrician grace and carriage. Despite the fact that she never consciously strives for effect, often a message she delivers, is dramatic in the extreme. There are times, too, when she gives evidence of a nature that will touch the emotions of most of the audience. The recipient of the message will weep tears of joy at the discovery that one mourned as lost forever has spanned the gulf of death to prove that love is undying.

“Could I have known that?” and “Have I ever met you before?” she will ask some of those to whom she has given proofs of Survival. So accurate are her spirit descriptions that sceptical newcomers may wonder whether the medium has planted confederates in the audience. It is to prove her *bona fides* in this respect that she, thus questions many of the recipients of her messages.

Mrs. Roberts has been giving clairvoyance from public platforms for over a score of years. She has appeared in practically every important town in England. She has given public clairvoyance at large propaganda meetings in Scotland, Ireland and Wales. To plant confederates among these audiences over such a long period of time would involve the employment of hosts of shady characters and the payment of large sums of money to avoid denunciation by blackmailers. Spiritualists themselves are

nearly always the first to discover and expose trickery and fraud in the movement. It is therefore sufficient to say that never has a breath of suspicion been raised against the mediumship of Mrs. Estelle Roberts.

She is one of the greatest propagandists Spiritualism has produced in nearly a century of history. She has the qualities of the movement's early pioneers, bravery, confidence, tenacity of purpose and complete and utter faith in those on the Other Side whom she serves so faithfully.

In a three years' intensive tour covering nearly every large town in this country, Hannen Swaffer and my husband addressed over 250,000 people on the subject of Spiritualism. At most of these meetings, Estelle Roberts demonstrated her psychic powers. Reporters from the local Press were sometimes asked by the speakers to interview members of the audience who received messages, and satisfy themselves that they were strangers to Estelle: Speakers and medium often arrived in the town but an hour or two before the meeting was timed to begin.

The temperament of Mrs. Roberts is one particularly suited to meet the queries of an audience entirely new to Spiritualism. Is there a hardened sceptic in the audience ready to explain away the whole case? This would not affect Estelle. She has more than once astounded such scepticism by a display of brilliant and unexpected clairvoyance for which no materialistic solution can be provided by the receiver of the message.

Is there a physicist at the meeting, curious to find an explanation on scientific lines? The medium may give him minute details of a subject which he knows must be beyond her normal knowledge and intelligence.

Is there a clergyman in the audience well versed in the theology of his calling? He may become thoughtful and impressed by the simplicity of the truths expounded, truths equally applicable to all creeds and races.

Is there a mourner in the throng whose heart is wrung with grief? It is the mourners whom Estelle would help before any others. To give comfort to those who have lost their dear ones is the principal motive in this medium's life.

Occasionally, Mrs. Roberts may have difficulty in getting a psychic description understood or accepted by the one for whom it is intended. A blank "No" or "I do not remember" is given to the medium. Sometimes, there is a complicated or involved message to convey. Such trials merely put the medium on her mettle. It is in these circumstances you see her at her best as, piece by piece, she forces home the evidence. She is tenacity itself with a 'tough' member of the audience and rarely leaves an individual until he or she is able to understand and accept the spirit description.

It is not only to help the person in the audience that the medium persists in her efforts to claim recognition of a spirit description. Estelle Roberts sees both sides of the picture. Spirits are not 'called up,' or invoked, as some who are ignorant of the

subject imagine. The dead return of their own volition, and usually for the purpose of comforting aching hearts. They come back yearning to prove their identity to the ones they love. They are bitterly disappointed if their efforts fail. Because her psychic vision can pierce the veil and discern such disappointment and grief, Estelle will do her utmost to press home the evidence being provided until it is understood and accepted. Link by link she forges a chain of events that finally lead to recognition of the dead individual.

I have heard some people say they do not care for Estelle's platform manner. "She is too combative, too provocative," they will assert. Her self-assurance annoys them. Probably, they do not realise or make allowances for the fact that it is often these very traits that enable her to give a successful demonstration of clairvoyance under trying or difficult circumstances.

Mediums are attuned to unseen vibrations. They act as transmitters and receivers of spirit messages in much the same way as wireless sets, telegraph and telephone services are transmitters for earthly messages. Because of this sensitivity to vibrations, the success or failure of public demonstrations of clairvoyance depends largely upon the atmosphere created by an audience. At large meetings there will be a high percentage of people who are receiving their first introduction to Spiritualism. Many of them will be keenly critical - not a deterrent to successful clairvoyance, providing they hold unbiased or open minds - others in the audience may be definitely hostile. To accommodate as many people as possible, propaganda meetings are held in a theatre, cinema, or similar place of entertainment, devoid of any spiritual atmosphere or conditions. It is the high quality of Estelle Roberts's mediumship and the forcefulness of her platform personality that enable her to overcome difficulties of vibrations such as these.

I have placed special emphasis on the dynamic personality displayed by Mrs. Roberts on the public platform. Here is the reason - an interesting point I think. Meet her in the ante-room of a hall before the Spiritualist service is timed to begin. You will not discover the strong, forceful personality of the medium who later demonstrates her gifts on the public platform. No, you will meet a pleasant and - if she will forgive me - a much more ordinary type of person. Guileless of quick repartee, or dominance of character, she will not be over-talkative. Only a slight restlessness seems to pervade her as she waits to go on to the platform.

What then constitutes the difference - the taking on, as it were, of a deeper, more powerful and dynamic personality? It is this. On the platform she becomes vitalised by her spirit guide, Red Cloud, who has drawn closer to help her demonstrate her psychic gifts. This dead North American Indian is the power behind the throne of her mediumship. Every well-developed psychic has a guide whose function is to protect the medium from undesirable influences and to help the dead to provide their evidence. Red Cloud's Indian personality cloaks a highly evolved being of great wisdom and humanity.

Many of the advanced beings Spiritualists call guides have renounced their rightful evolutionary progress in the spirit world so that they may return to serve humanity. They come back to demonstrate the facts of Survival and help us to understand the operation of the spiritual laws of the universe. Only through the powers of mediumship can they demonstrate these truths. Upon the co-operation of the medium depends the success or failure of the guide's mission. Estelle Roberts is a psychic who understands the importance of this mutual association. She is a willing instrument of the spirit world.

CHAPTER II

"THY SERVANT HEARETH"

The psychic powers of Estelle Roberts first manifested when she was eight years old. She does not retain a very pleasant recollection of the event. It resulted in her being severely reprimanded by an irate father for telling untruths.

In a room on the third floor of their house in Middlesex, she and her elder sister were getting ready for school. Suddenly, the two children heard three taps on the window. Simultaneously, the room darkened. It seemed as though a heavy cloud had cast a shadow on the window. Startled, Estelle looked up, and, fearful that the sight that met her eyes might frighten her sister she cried: "Oh, don't look, don't look!" Childlike, her sister promptly looked - and fainted!

Estelle stood, transfixed by the apparition of a knight in shining armour who appeared to be suspended in air in the window space. In his outstretched hand was a glistening sword. His visor was thrown back. To this day Estelle can still recall his striking features. His deeply penetrating eyes searched those of the young medium to whom he held a beckoning hand. The next moment, he completely vanished.

Meanwhile, having heard her sister's scream, the father rushed upstairs. When Estelle explained what had occurred, he scolded her for telling such a fantastic story. "What you saw must have been a bat," he insisted. Later on, in another room, and in the presence of a doctor who had been summoned, Estelle's sister told a similar tale. The two children had not talked together since the experience, yet their stories tallied.

Estelle Roberts says: "That was my first experience of having seen something from Beyond. I did not know then what it was or what it meant. But it made such an impression on my childish mind that, although I have since spoken to thousands of spirits of all kinds, of all ages, from all generations, my recollection of the knight in armour has never for one moment become blurred or confused."

The medium considers that this, her first supernormal experience - shared by her sister - was an indication of the psychic work, which later was to become her life's mission. It was not until she was a middle-aged woman that the figure of the knight

again appeared to her. On this occasion, the spirit visitor disclosed his identity. "It is a name you would know instantly if I could tell you," Mrs. Roberts declares.

At school Estelle was neither particularly clever nor very dull. Only in one respect did she differ from her companions. She constantly heard spirit voices. "They were talking to me all the time, she avers. "The other children called me a dreamer. Little they knew that, when I seemed too abstracted to take notice of what they said, I was listening to conversations far more fascinating. My parents, good, sound Church people, deliberately suppressed my psychic tendencies. I do not blame them. They knew nothing about Spiritualism. Neither did I. They attributed my apparitions and voices to imagination."

So many mediums tell similar stories of their childhood days, how their psychic powers were misunderstood by well-meaning parents and relatives. As they were constantly told that their supernormal experiences were imaginary, the incipient mediums tried to smother their perfectly natural gifts. In many cases, at least, a temporary atrophy of psychic powers has resulted. In all cases, distress to such children has been caused by ignorance of the parents. Fortunate is the mediumistic child belonging to a family who understand the gifts of the spirit, Instead of being scolded for telling 'untruths,' their psychic gifts are fostered and encouraged by those competent to deal with them. However, Estelle was not one of these fortunate children. She had more than one beating for describing psychic experiences. Naturally, then, she did not understand the meaning of these forces. When, like Joan of Arc, she heard spirit voices, she tried to think, as her parents insisted, it was merely her imagination. Sometimes she deliberately stifled this clairaudence: at other times, in terror and bewilderment, she listened to the voices, wondering what it all meant.

At the age of 15, Estelle obtained a situation as a nursemaid. She hoped that the work would occupy her mind to the exclusion of the strange manifestations. Fortunately for the world, her hopes were not realised. The supernormal voices still persisted. Estelle had yet to learn that she was the possessor of great gifts - faculties she would not today exchange for all the material riches in the universe. The desire to serve her fellowmen and women was to be awakened when she understood her mediumship. But the hour of enlightenment had not yet struck. Recording her experiences as a nursemaid, Estelle states: "As I wheeled a child in the perambulator, my spirit forms seemed to follow me. I could hear them all the time. They told me things I didn't know, that I could never even have guessed. More and more I fought against these powers."

When another year or two went by, she realised she was different from other girls. In her ignorance, she began to wonder whether she was going insane. It was a spectre of fear that was to follow her for years until knowledge came.

Estelle married at the age of 17. She and her husband were devoted to each other and she confided her fears in him. Here, at last, she found a sympathetic listener, one

who did not attribute her strange experiences to 'imagination.' He knew nothing about Spiritualism, but came to the conclusion that his young wife was 'fey.' He said there was no other explanation to account for her vision and her voices.

One night, as Estelle lay in bed, she clairvoyantly saw the figure of a relative of her husband pass slowly across the room. "Your aunt is dead," she told him. "How can you possibly know?" he asked with some scepticism. The young wife could not explain. She merely knew it was so. Early next morning came a telegram. The aunt had died the night before as Estelle had stated.

During the last war, Estelle Roberts often learned, by psychic means, of the deaths of sons and husbands of different friends and relatives. "I could always tell my friends what had happened even before the official telegram arrived," she declares, "although I still did not understand the reason."

Then came her own tragedy. Her husband, never a strong man, became seriously ill. His wife had to work hard to support him and their three children. Life seemed very difficult. My voices tried to cheer and comfort me," Mrs. Roberts says, "but they gave me no consolation. Rather, did they bring bad tidings, for when I saw spirit forms round my husband's bed, I knew that his time had come. I sent the children out of the house and sat alone with him, watching and tending him in his last hours."

She had been told psychically that her husband would not recover. "Imagine the strain of sitting at that bedside waiting for what I realised was inevitable," she writes. "As the time drew near I could see the spirit forms of his father and mother by the bed, sharing my vigil. Then I saw fresh forms, the figures, as I now know, of spirit doctors."

The wife sat transfixed at the sight of these beings. Quietly, as her husband drew his last earthly breath, she watched a thin, almost transparent-looking cord, which appeared, to her psychic vision, to withdraw slowly from his head. Gradually, the same silk-like substance emerged from other parts of the body until, finally, the spirit form of her beloved husband was visible to her. It was a separate and living duplicate of the physical body which lay on the bed. Slowly, his etheric body was removed from her vision. With it went the spirit doctors who had come to help his transition to the new world. The dead relatives, who had come to greet him, also departed.

Estelle clairvoyantly saw the process that normally takes place when death occurs. Most mediums who have sat by the bedsides of the dying describe similar experiences. Developed psychics understand what occurs and are neither frightened nor bewildered by the event. But this young wife did not realise the significance of what she was witnessing: The 'ghostly' forms scared her and their departure left her completely at a loss.

Few mourners attended the funeral of Estelle's husband and there was nobody to offer a word of comfort or hope to the sorrowing young widow. She stood by the

open grave, a lonely and disconsolate figure. Tears coursed down her cheeks as the thought of her children smote her. "How am I to provide for them? What sort of future is there for us all?" she wondered despairingly. Then, in that moment of mental panic, came sympathy and encouragement from an unexpected source.

Estelle says: "As the parson read the burial service I stood with my eyes fixed on the grave. Suddenly I saw, quite clearly, my husband's etheric body hovering over his own coffin. I could recognise his features. He was looking at me, smiling gently an encouraging smile which told me, as eloquently as words, that I must not despair. 'Dust to dust, ashes to ashes,' intoned the clergyman. It did not worry me, for I realised at that moment that my husband was not dead: he had not left me."

The experience was a great spiritual consolation to the bereaved wife. But material problems harassed her mind. She had to think how best to earn enough money to keep her children from want. She left her house in Sussex and went to live at Hampton-on-Thames.

"Then began a weary search for work," she says, "iron rations for me; little for the children. I did not know it then, but I was being tested for the work which I was fated to undertake later on. I had to suffer. I had to know want and hunger, if only to strengthen the bonds of sympathy which now make my heart go out to the poorest of the hundreds of people who come to me for help."

Estelle eventually took a job as waitress, in a London café. To fulfil her duties she had to leave her house at seven o'clock every morning and did not return home until 11 o'clock at night. Her eldest daughter looked after the other two children as best she could while her mother was away. Every night, after her long day's toil, the weary woman prepared her family's meals for the following day. "But every day," she states, "as, with aching feet, I tramped the café floor, I could hear, my voices and see my visions. Behind the heads of the customers I served I could see the forms of 'guardian angels.' I could have given those customers of mine something much more valuable than the sausages and chips most of them ate. Had I understood, I could have given them spiritual food."

But she held her own counsel. She thought they would believe her to be crazy if she told them of her visions. Indeed, she was not at all certain that they might not be right. Her supernormal faculties still perplexed her because she did not know the simple explanation - that she was a medium. She continued to speak of her experiences to some of her friends.

It was while she had her job as a waitress that Harry Hawker, the famous test pilot, made an attempt to fly the Atlantic. For a week no news was heard of him and there was much public speculation. It happened that Estelle had once been given work at an aviation company. There she had done most of the sewing for the canvas boat intended for Hawker's Atlantic flight. As she sewed the canvas her psychic sense told her that one day the airman would crash into the sea and that the boat would be the

means of saving him. She made this prediction to her friends. It did not surprise her, therefore, to learn that, after a week of silence, the news was received that he had been rescued at sea. The canvas boat carried on the plane had saved his life.

Estelle married for the second time. It was not long after this event that her footsteps were guided towards the organised Spiritualist movement. The testing-time was nearing an end and her real life's work about to begin. She was invited by a neighbour to attend a Spiritualist service at Hampton Hill. The church was a primitive-looking structure and she was not very impressed by the sight of it. It happened that clairvoyance was given on that day by Mrs. Cannock, now a veteran medium. When the service came to an end, Mrs. Cannock spoke to the visitor. "You are a born medium," she informed her. "You have a great work to do in the world."

All at once, the real meaning of her strange powers dawned upon Estelle Roberts. She declares: "Truth burst upon me suddenly. I had seen the spirits; I had heard the voices. I had known about Spiritualism from childhood; known, and never realised." In that flash of conviction she spoke to the president of the Spiritualist church. "I can go onto the platform and give messages just like Mrs. Cannock," she told him eagerly. "But have you been trained?" he cautiously asked this enthusiastic stranger. "Do you sit in a circle?" She did not even know what he meant and had to be informed that Spiritualists often sat in developing circles to foster their psychic powers and to communicate with their dead relatives and friends.

Estelle told Mrs. Cannock that, if she could receive some authentic manifestation of spirit power, other than the strange visions and voices to which, she was accustomed, she would afterwards work for Spiritualism. She felt it imperative that some psychic sign be vouchsafed her before taking such an important step.

Mrs. Cannock, the experienced medium, suggested that Estelle sat at a table for one hour a night for seven consecutive nights. She explained that sometimes the dead communicate with the living by means of an ordinary wooden table. Usually, the sitters place their hands lightly upon the table, and messages are received by means of raps which correspond to the letters of the alphabet. Mrs. Roberts agreed to try this experiment.

"I sat faithfully for six nights," she says, "but nothing happened." Impatient, sceptical and a little irritated, she sat on the seventh night. As the hour she had allocated came to an end she stood up. "That's that!" she said to herself. "It's the finish of Spiritualism as far as I'm concerned."

Intending to go to her children's room she walked towards the door. As she moved she felt something pressing against the back of her neck. The pressure continued as she approached the door, and she looked behind her. "The table at which I had been sitting was suspended in mid-air," she declares. "The edge of it was actually touching my neck. The table was held steadily in the air, half-way between floor and ceiling, without any visible means of support. As I looked it moved back across the room and

descended gently to the floor in its original position.”

The memory of that night is still vivid in the medium’s mind. She placed her hands on the table and heard raps which spelled out the following message: “I, Red Cloud, come to work for humanity. You already hear me talk. Do not touch table anymore.” As the message was received in raps on the table, Estelle clairaudiently heard the same spoken message.

This message was her first conscious link with her guide, Red Cloud. The passage marked the beginning of a great cooperation between two individuals, one living, one dead; an association that was to have far-reaching effects.

The following Sunday, Estelle Roberts took the platform at Hampton Hill Spiritualist Church and gave her first public clairvoyance. The audience was astounded by the fact that this untrained, inexperienced medium could give such accurate proofs of Survival. Excitedly they crowded round her after the meeting. “You must go on with the wonderful work,” they told her.

More than a score of years have passed since Estelle Roberts gave her first psychic demonstration at a Spiritualist meeting. On that first occasion she addressed a gathering of 50 or 60 people, who received her spirit descriptions with enthusiasm. Still more impressed have been the audiences who, in the years that followed, numbered thousands at a single meeting.

Estelle can tell many stories of her mediumistic development after Red Cloud’s first manifestation. She began to see him clairvoyantly, to hear his voice and to talk with him. She acquired complete and utter confidence in his beneficent influence. Guide and medium made a pact. Red Cloud told Mrs. Roberts that at whatever time in her life she desired his aid he would be by her side. She, on her part, promised to do anything asked of her. Their mutual promises have never been broken.

In those earlier years, Estelle and her husband sat together twice a week with the object of fostering her psychic gifts. The sittings took place under her guide’s directions. One Thursday night they were told they would be shown a psychic light on the following Tuesday. They both forgot their promise to hold the sitting on this particular night. Instead, they went out together. On their return, they were met at the door by three frightened children. “Why are you out of bed?” asked the mother. “What is the matter?”

“Someone has been knocking in the room,” they replied. “We came downstairs because we were scared.”

The children were comforted and then sent back to their beds. But the noises began all over again. Estelle became annoyed by the resumption of these psychic manifestations and said aloud: “I am amazed that you should frighten three little children when I am not at home.” The following answer was received: “You promised to stay at home tonight for the sitting. You forgot, but we remembered. That is why we rapped.” Further, the medium was told that it was necessary for her

to keep the appointments she made with her spirit helpers. They had come to assist the development of her gifts. Estelle, was most contrite, and the raps were not heard again.

Her psychic power was used on one occasion to warn the family of danger. She had gone to bed, but awoke to find herself lying on the floor. She did not know how this had happened and returned to bed. Later, she found herself, once more, on floor and again got into bed. Then, for the third time she was moved from her bed by supernormal forces. This time, her husband awoke to see the amazing spectacle of his wife's form floating in the air. Her body was touching the ceiling. Alarmed, he called her name, and immediately she descended to the ground.

Now wide awake, she looked upwards and saw a thin curl of smoke. "Look, look!" she exclaimed excitedly. Her husband immediately rushed downstairs.. As he opened the door of the living room, a loud explosion occurred. Firemen, who were summoned, told Mrs. Roberts, after taking action, that the fire must have started in the living room five hours previously. Slow combustion had taken place. The inrush of air which occurred when her husband opened the door caused the explosion. All the furniture, chairs, table, and piano were reduced to ashes. The strange psychic warning had enabled the family to escape the injuries which would have followed had the danger not been discovered in time.

Estelle has related her first experience of trance control. It happened some time after she began to give private sittings. She had noticed an increasing tendency to become sleepy during these séances, otherwise she felt entirely normal. Then, one day, Red Cloud asked her permission to allow him to control her body so that he could speak direct, when necessary, through her lips. At first, Mrs. Roberts demurred. She did not like the idea of being reduced to a state of unconsciousness. But Red Cloud told her that her willingness to comply with his wishes would be of great help to the service she had undertaken. He promised that he would never allow any harm to come to her through this further trust in him. The medium then agreed.

Describing the first time she went under control, Mrs. Roberts states: "I just surrendered myself to the feeling of intense drowsiness. I recovered consciousness to find myself looking at my own body, listening to the deep tones of Red Cloud's voice coming from my earthly lips. Where I was I did not know, but I could not have been far away to see and hear like this. As I have since discovered, Red Cloud allowed me to know what was happening in the early stages of my mediumship to reassure me, to make me realise that I was being used for a high purpose. Now, I never have any knowledge of what happens when I am in trance, unless the sitter tells me afterwards."

Thus her mediumship gained strength, until today she stands unique amongst mediums of the past and present era.

Estelle's loyalty to her calling has been tried and tested on numerous occasions.

Sometimes, she has had heartrending decisions to make. Once, her eldest daughter lay seriously ill. Despite all care, the day came when she appeared to be sinking fast. Her mother was in despair. She was engaged to give clairvoyance that night at London's famous Queen's Hall, but could not, bear the thought of leaving the sick bed. She feared her daughter might pass over in her absence. In desperation, the medium appealed to Red Cloud, saying: "You know I am due to give clairvoyance tonight. Should I stay with my child or take my meeting?" Clairaudiently, she heard his definite answer: "A good soldier never deserts his post. Go and do your work."

Estelle kept her public engagement. Her clairvoyance that night was magnificent. Many aching hearts were comforted by the evidence she provided that their loved ones still survived. Her work finished, the medium hastened home. She found her daughter in the act of opening her eyes and saying that she felt better. "You have earned your reward," Red Cloud told his medium. "The girl will recover."

Estelle possesses practically all the gifts of the spirit enumerated by Paul in the New Testament. Her mediumship comprises clairvoyance, clairaudience, trance control, trance speaking and teaching, psychometry, psychic diagnosis of diseases and psychic healing. She is a medium for apports, automatic writing and the direct voice. She possesses the powers of materialisation, levitation and spirit photography. Which of these numerous gifts is Estelle's most important contribution to Spiritualism must be a matter of personal opinion. Certainly her public clairvoyance has been the means of attracting the greatest number of people to investigate the subject for themselves.

But there is no doubt about the outstanding features of her mediumship. These are the remarkable accuracy of her evidence, the detailed nature of these proofs, and the efficient presentation of these facts. That combination has won her the eminent position she holds today.

CHAPTER III

THE POWER BEHIND THE THRONE

During the long years I have been a Spiritualist I have become well acquainted with many of the North American Indian guides and controls of well-known mediums. Their personalities are strikingly different, yet they have one attribute in common. It can best be described as a quality of 'lovableness,' and Red Cloud exudes it more than most. That essence invariably attracts a responsive love in those who know him.

I do not mean, of course, that he inspires a gushing or sentimental kind of affection. He would never permit anyone to praise him. Indeed, he refuses to accept thanks from those to whom he renders service. Even the conventional word of thanks which involuntarily falls from the lips receives the inevitable reply: "Do not thank me; thank the Great Spirit." Red Cloud is not alone in this firm refusal to accept any

word of praise. There is no evolved spirit who would allow expressions of gratitude, which should be offered to God, to be deviated from that Source. The guides did not return to this world to glorify themselves, but to serve humanity.

It has often been asked why so many mediums have Indian guides. The North American Indians were, in the days of their prime, masters of psychic laws. Their knowledge of supernormal forces was profound. That is one reason why so many advanced spirit beings, when they return to earth, use the 'personality' of a long-dead Indian. Red Cloud, I understand, is one of a 'brotherhood' of spirit beings who have renounced their true status in the Beyond to return to earth as the guide of a medium.

Another member of this 'brotherhood' once stated: "I had to come in the form of a humble Indian to win your love, not by the use of any high-sounding name, but to prove myself by the truths I taught." Such a statement might with equal truth have been uttered by Red Cloud. "By their fruits shall ye know them," said the Nazarene. By the spiritual service they have rendered to this world, many a simple Indian spirit guide has revealed the greatness of a highly evolved soul.

Who, actually, is the personality known as Red Cloud? Some individuals believe they know his real name. But does it matter who or what he is? Red Cloud himself will tell you that, before the Christian era, he walked the earth as an Indian. Whether this was but one aspect of his life - or lives - is not pertinent to these pages.

This guide, beloved by all who know him, has been seen in materialised form at different séances held by his medium. They will be described in a later chapter. A psychic picture of Red Cloud was obtained through the mediumship of Mrs. Madge Donohoe, who has now passed on. The spirit picture shows the head and shoulders of a man who wears the head-dress of an Indian, but the cast of his countenance is not typical of the Red Man. The eyes are deep-set, overshadowed by rather massive brows. His age would be difficult to assess, but suggests one in the prime of life. The features are fine and clean-cut; the facial expression is wise, tolerant and kindly. The rather wide mouth indicates a sense of humour.

The voice of Red Cloud, whether heard through his medium's lips or independently in the direct voice - and it is similar in both forms of Mediumship - is of a different quality and calibre to Estelle's. The tone, distinctly unfeminine, is somewhat husky and low-pitched. Although he has a good command of English, he has a specially appealing way of pronouncing some of the vowels. His occasional transposition of a syllable has often an entertaining effect. I have sometimes wondered whether these 'lapses' are entirely unconscious. I imagine that Red Cloud never wants his earthly listeners to forget that this messenger from Beyond is but a 'simple Indian' and that the truths he teaches are of a simple nature, however profound may be their implication.

Through Estelle's lips I have heard this guide expound a variety of subjects. He has

lectured in public to large audiences; he has addressed a selected few. Red Cloud's teaching covers a vast range of thought, both spiritual and temporal. He emphasises the fact that this world and the next are, in reality, but one. He reiterates that, here and now, we are spiritual beings who, at death, merely cast aside our earthly bodies. Red Cloud expounds the truths of an operation of the natural law of cause and effect – "as ye sow, so shall ye reap." He points out constantly that we are personally responsible for all our actions and that we are building the characters we will eventually take with us to the Other Side. Continually he emphasizes the values of love, unselfishness and service to others. The guide insists that we should recognise universal kinship - the brotherhood of mankind.

There is nothing new or startling in any of these expositions. Similar tenets were expounded by Jesus of Nazareth and other inspired teachers. Religions have been founded on the standards of life set by these spiritual leaders of earlier times. Yet their simple teachings have become lost in the mass of dogma and creed built up by Orthodoxy. Nearly all the advanced spirits who return to the world propound the same truths which, if followed, would outlaw war, greed and hatred, and introduce a new heaven upon earth.

I often used to attend Red Cloud's teaching circle, which was held in the private house of Mrs. Roberts. On these occasions Red Cloud, controlling his medium, would lecture informally on different subjects. All the members were convinced of the truth of Survival, but they were anxious to gain greater knowledge of its broader implications.

All kinds of people, drawn from all classes of society, have been invited to Red Cloud's lectures. Few individuals ever went away unimpressed. Newcomers were generally interested to watch the transformation which took place when Mrs. Roberts became entranced by her guide. Seated in an armchair, the medium would close her eyes while a hymn was sung by those present. Within a few minutes, Estelle's head and shoulders would lean heavily forward. As her breathing became more pronounced, it would be observed that a subtle change of facial expression had taken place. Although the features remained unaltered, the physical characteristics of her countenance appeared to have been remoulded. Then, as Estelle rose from her chair, it would be seen that another entity now controlled her body. She was in safe hands - for Red Cloud was in command.

His deep, husky voice pronounced a few words in an unknown tongue before he invoked 'The Great White Spirit.' Then he would welcome his small audience, greet newcomers, and perhaps say a few words to one or another of his earthly friends. Sometimes he would give instructions to certain of his helpers as to the type of psychic healing to be given to different patients. Estelle's psychic powers have been the means of curing those pronounced incurable. Individuals with healing power are linked with Red Cloud in this work. Some of them used also to attend his teaching circle.

Sometimes Red Cloud would ask the circle: "What shall I talk about tonight?" and they would choose a subject. Many times, I have heard him lecture for over an hour on an involved and complicated theme presented to him in this impromptu manner. He has an eloquent flow of language and is a master of rhetoric, despite the occasional transposition of syllables.

After his address the guide usually invited questions from his listeners. A lively discussion often followed, particularly if his subject had been controversial. Visitors to his teaching circle would not necessarily agree with all Red Cloud's pronouncements. His views on certain aspects of life often differ in wide measure from conventional ones. Sometimes his statements have produced a difference of opinion from some of those present. A friendly and good-tempered argument would often take place between the dead and the living. I have never known Red Cloud show the slightest sign of irritation or ill-will to anyone who disagreed with his point of view - a point of view expressed by one who is not shackled by earthly dimensions and limitations.

Over a period of time you would hear almost every subject under the sun discussed at Red Cloud's teaching circle. You could not fail to be impressed by the versatility of his knowledge, and the freshness and originality of his outlook. You might listen to a discussion between the guide and a reputable scientist who had been invited to the circle. You would observe that Red Cloud was well acquainted with the latest trends of scientific discovery. You might perhaps hear him discourse with a doctor on certain aspects of modern medicine, and listen while he compared some of the more recent ideas of healing with those that are centuries old. You might hear him detail the customs prevalent in former ages, or talk with authority about dead empires, lost cities and bygone times. He has a vast store of esoteric wisdom. Red Cloud's knowledge regarding ancient and contemporary religions is considerable. At times, he will quote at length from the Bible.

You may be a sceptic whose first reaction to what I have written is to say: "All this knowledge may, even subconsciously, come from the medium's own brain." If so, you have obviously not met Estelle Roberts. I know her very well. There are no airs and graces about the medium. She has the great charm of perfect naturalness. Estelle is intelligent, but she herself would be the first to agree that she is by no means a highly educated woman. She had to labour too hard in her early years to find time for cultural pursuits.

I have been to Estelle's home on scores of occasions. Apart from her mediumship, to which she has willingly dedicated her life, she has but one other interest - her garden. Here, she avers, she renews her psychic strength and obtains such relaxation as she requires. If Mrs. Roberts is an avid reader of any kind of literature, I have seen no sign of it in her home. No, Red Cloud's vast store of knowledge does not spring from the mind of his medium. On the contrary, it can be said that Estelle's mentality has been enriched by her association with Red Cloud and other spirit

teachers who have impregnated her mind with their own great wisdom.

I have never heard the medium express any interest in poetry, either of the past or present era, I have seen no sign of such an interest in her home, beyond a very familiar quotation about a garden *in* her garden. Yet I have heard Red Cloud accurately repeat several applicable lines written by a modern poet whose verses are by no means familiar to the majority.

The guide will sometimes recite impromptu verse which appropriately expresses his ideas. On numbers of occasions, I have heard him speak at length in beautiful and rhythmic blank verse. Estelle is quite incapable of such feats in her normal state.

The sceptical reader may again say that Mrs. Roberts might be capable of keeping secret the fact of her cultural pursuits. But she would rank with the greatest actresses of all time so to deceive those who know her, intimately.

One of Red Cloud's most endearing qualities is his profound humanity. He has a wide tolerance and a deep understanding of temporal problems and difficulties. Despite his high evolutionary status, he has not lost the common touch, and is neither aloof nor unapproachable. His compassion is profound. Red Cloud's disposition is gentle and kindly; he never condemns, but I, feel he would not teach: "Resist not evil." Rather would he say: "Overcome and vanquish that which is wrong."

Because he considers that knowledge of Survival should be spread far and wide, he realises that enemies of progress must be encountered and fought. Truth is not always well received, and I have heard Red Cloud say to a Spiritualist who talked of popularity:

*"Thou hast no enemies, you say;
The boast is poor.
He that hath battled in the fray
Of duty that the brave endure
Must have made foes.
If thou hast none,
Small is the work that thou hast done."*

There is another aspect of Red Cloud's character which is most human and lovable. It is his keen sense of humour. His succinct wit is heard at its best during a direct-voice sitting. The success of this type of physical phenomena depends a great deal upon the sitters. Emotional strain, fear or apprehension can upset psychic vibrations and weaken the power. Red Cloud's amusing repartee puts everybody at ease at a voice sitting. Those who think that talks with the dead are necessarily gloomy, lugubrious affairs should hear the laughter that at times resounds from the séance room.

"You are all good souls here," said Red Cloud benignly during a voice circle I attended. "Only the good ones come here," answered my husband jokingly.

“Except those who need help,” another sitter interposed with mock reproof. “Very well then,” said my husband. “I will pray for you.”

Red Cloud promptly broke in, saying: “Charity begins at home.” It was the perfect reply!

Red Cloud is known and beloved by people who hail from all corners of the earth. To them he has provided incontestable evidence of Survival. In many cases, this knowledge has changed their whole outlook. The names of some of the people who sit with different mediums in this country might, if published, occasion surprise. Certain members of our own royal family are by no means unfamiliar with psychic matters. Etiquette does not permit their names to be divulged, although it is well known that Queen Victoria sat regularly with a medium after her husband’s passing. A crowned head, and other members of a European royal family have sat with Estelle Roberts. The guide’s words of encouragement and advice helped one ruler to make a decision which changed his country’s history.

Estelle’s patients would, at one time, have been very surprised had they known the true rank of one of Red Cloud’s healers. This individual learned of his power to heal the sick. He did not hesitate to use his gifts for their benefit, although it was necessary for him to, remain incognito. At least one member of the War Cabinet has sat with Estelle. There are individuals whose names are household words, some with scientific degrees and honours, people of the highest intellect, literary giants - all have accepted the identity of Red Cloud without question. He has proved Survival to their satisfaction. In like manner he has comforted those whom the world calls lowly in station. To this guide, material position and rank are unimportant. Red Cloud will probably call you either “Little man,” or “Little lady,” when he talks with you.

For reasons of his own, he has given to those associated with him in his work, names of characters in the Old and New Testament, or else he provides them with names which have a spiritual significance.

Red Cloud teaches always that character, and character alone, decides the position we will occupy when we are called to the spirit world. Service to others is the *leit-motif* of his work on earth. He is never tired of reiterating that it is more blessed to give than receive. I cannot do better than close this chapter with his own words, which I have heard him quote so many times:

*“The glory of life is to love,
Not to be loved;
To give, not to get;
To serve, not to be served;
To be a strong hand to another in time of need,
To be a cup of strength to a soul in a crisis of weakness;
That is to know the glory of life.”*

CHAPTER IV

"GREATER THINGS . . .

The divine gift of healing was practised by the Nazarene two thousand years ago. The Church worships this great master of psychic laws who said, "Heal the sick," but Orthodoxy turns aside from those mediums who follow his example by laying their hands upon the suffering. "Greater things than these shall ye do," Jesus of Nazareth prophesied. Today, there is great and still growing testimony to the efficacy of the healing power exercised by mediums to cure 'incurables.'

Estelle Roberts has practised her gift of healing ever since Red Cloud told her, in the early days of their association, that she was to be used for this purpose. At first, she could hardly believe that this great power was hers, but one day a woman brought a small boy to her. He was very ill. Estelle clairvoyantly heard Red Cloud tell her to lay her hands upon the child's head. "He will be cured," said the guide. The child recovered. Not long afterwards, a woman came to her house late at night. She was in great distress, for her grandson, a child of two, lay dying from meningitis. "Ask Red Cloud if he can help him," implored the visitor. Estelle's tender heart was touched. "I will come and see the child at once," she told the distressed woman, and together they went to a humble house in Surbiton.

Here, the medium found the boy's mother bending over the sick bed. The doctor had left the house earlier that evening, saying there was nothing more that could be done, and that he would return the next morning with a death certificate. Mrs. Roberts declares: "Never shall I forget that mother's face, drawn with suffering and misery, unable to do anything for the child whose very life was ebbing away."

Overcome with sadness at the deathbed scene, the medium involuntarily exclaimed: "Oh, Red Cloud, this child, this child . . ." In response to her appeal, the guide answered her in soothing but clear words. Clairaudiently she heard his instructions to take the boy in her arms and to sit with him on a chair. She was then to place her hands over his head and ears. Estelle held the child for nearly three hours. Then the guide said that the little one could be put back into his bed. Before leaving the house that night the medium comforted the child's mother, saying: "Don't worry! Red Cloud tells me that the mucus will pass through the boy's nose and ears two hours from now He will live.'

Next day, Mrs. Roberts returned to the house in Surbiton and found an altogether changed atmosphere. The little boy's mother told her that the doctor had arrived earlier in the morning, bringing with him a death certificate. He was astonished and puzzled to discover the change in the child's condition and was quite unable to account for the improvement. That same boy is now a healthy young man. Whenever his mother meets Estelle Roberts she reiterates her gratitude for the help she received from the spirit world.

On one occasion Mrs. Roberts received a visit from a stranger who did not volunteer

his name. He asked her whether she would permit him to take her to a house where she was needed. She agreed to his request, and thereupon he took her in his car to the house of a well-known Richmond doctor. The medium was conducted to a bedroom, where she found the medical man standing by the bedside of a girl of 12 or 13 years of age. She was the daughter of his housekeeper, who also stood by the bed. The girl was obviously extremely ill. Mrs. Roberts recognised the mother as a woman who had sat with her.

This woman told Estelle that she had promised the doctor she would not divulge the girl's complaint to her. "But," said the mother, "the doctor here wishes to operate. I will not agree until Red Cloud has been consulted. Will you tell me what he says?" Here the medical man interposed, somewhat tersely, that he did not agree with "this Red Cloud business," but wished: to do what the child's mother wanted. "Speak to, this Red Cloud of yours as soon as possible, will you?" he asked.

Within the next few minutes the medium became entranced. Through her lips Red Cloud told the doctor: "You think that the child has appendicitis, but it is nothing of the kind. You will do more harm than good by operating. She has inflammation. Give her a dose of castor oil, then let her rest. In the morning she will be perfectly well."

The practitioner replied: "I cannot accept that." The guide's only response was: "I have spoken?"

As the medium came out of trance, she heard the doctor and his housekeeper discussing the situation. Such was the mother's faith in Red Cloud's opinion that she flatly refused her consent to an operation. In vain the doctor pleaded with her to reconsider her decision, for he was sincerely concerned with the little patient's welfare. He insisted that grave results would attend neglected action.

Finally, since his housekeeper remained adamant, he requested that both she and the medium sign a document stating that they accepted full responsibility for the decision taken. Later, the two women signed this statement. Their faith in Red Cloud, born of experience of his word, was completely justified. Within 24 hours the little girl completely recovered and was out of her sick bed. There has never been a recurrence of this condition.

There is a sequel to this story. Some time afterwards, the mother called with her girl to see Estelle. Once again she wanted to consult Red Cloud. The guide entranced his medium and said to the mother: "The child has tonsillitis; the doctor advises an operation." The parent nodded her head in agreement. "I agree," said Red Cloud. Turning to the girl, the guide said "You will be brave, won't you?" The child replied: "Yes"

The remarkable healing powers of Estelle Roberts were employed most successfully during the time she was a staff medium attached to the Marylebone Spiritualist Association. In their well-equipped treatment rooms, she did splendid work, assisted by a number of psychic healers. Later, she removed to premises in Wimbledon

where the House of Red Cloud, an association centred around her mediumship, was formed. The war upheaval brought this new society's activities to a temporary standstill. But, before this dislocation, psychic healing played a prominent part in the activities at Wimbledon.

Red Cloud had gradually selected a group of individuals who could be used as instruments for transmitting healing rays from the spirit world to those who were sick. Under the guide's directions the 15 men and women he had chosen worked devotedly without fee or material reward. Some have been associated with Estelle Roberts in this work for many years. In specially-fitted rooms at the Wimbledon centre, these earnest, white-coated assistants gave, on an average, 150 treatments a week. No charge was ever made to a patient: On the contrary, I know that some of the needy ones were reimbursed for the expenses incurred in travelling to the House of Red Cloud for treatment. Anyone who was too sick to make the journey to Wimbledon, was visited at home by the healer in charge of the patient's case.

Psychic healing takes varying forms, but in the case of Estelle Roberts it is effected by the utilisation of different rays which, coming from the spirit world, pass through the medium to the patient. In the spirit sphere, Red Cloud is aided by many who, in their earthly lives, specialised in medicine and surgery. One famous specialist, who works with Red Cloud on the Other Side, has not only fully proved his identity but continues to communicate at Estelle's direct-voice circles.

There are records of astonishing cures of cases regarded by the medical world as hopeless. Because of the healing rays permeating from the spirit world through Red Cloud's medium and helpers, sufferers from organic diseases have been restored to health and strength. As in biblical times, the blind have been made to see, the deaf to hear and the lame to walk. This testimony to the efficacy of spirit healing is most impressive and cannot be ignored, for there are so many living witnesses.

Spiritualists realise that the healing 'miracles' of the Bible were achieved through the operation of natural laws which were understood so completely by one who was a master of psychic forces. And yet, even today, there are foolish people who still think that Satan is behind all Spiritualism!

I have no wish to imply that every patient who came to Estelle Roberts for treatment was healed. I would not, and could not, presume to explain why some are cured of diseases and others are not; why some are taken and others left. I am convinced that the divine law is perfect in its justice, though the operation is so often beyond our puny understanding. But even in the cases Red Cloud has been powerless to cure, he has usually been successful in effecting a certain amount of relief in the diseased condition. There have been many instances, also, when the soul has been awakened in a sufferer who formerly experienced only despair or rebellion at his or her lot. Such individuals, after association with Red Cloud's healing ministry, have borne their load of physical suffering with a new spiritual understanding and renewed strength to help sustain them through the rest of their earthly days.

It was a moving spectacle the last time I witnessed the reception and treatment of old and new patients at the House of Red Cloud. The medium was only partially controlled by her guide. Every now and then, however, Red Cloud would 'break through' her semi-trance and completely control her in order to talk to a patient. It was most touching to see the sufferer's face brighten at the sound of the guide's helpful and encouraging words.

Red Cloud's band of healers were all present to lend their own psychic powers when immediate treatment through his medium was considered necessary. New patients were also allocated, after diagnosis of their complaints, to the healers specially qualified to continue the treatment specified by Red Cloud. One by one, each sufferer was taken to the medium.. Her sensitive fingers passed over the body of the sick person. Within a few seconds she had localised the danger zone and given a perfect diagnosis of the case. The patient's aura was visible to the medium's X-ray sight. From this she gathered the cause of the affliction and, with Red Cloud's co-operation, made her diagnosis.

When an individual was thought to require immediate treatment he or she was placed on a couch. It was an impressive sight to see the healing being administered. Twelve of Estelle's assistants linked hands and formed a circle round the couch. The medium and three healers stood within the circle. One touched the patient's feet, another the head, and a third directed his hands to the afflicted part while, through the medium's own hands, the spirit power poured. We all remained silent while the health-giving rays from another world were received by the sufferer. How I wished I had the gift of clairvoyance and could see the spirit helpers who were, at the same time, grouped round the patient, lending their aid!

Estelle was given no information about new patients who were brought before her. It was fascinating to see the amazed faces when she diagnosed their complaints and told them their symptoms. She informed one man: "You are taking insulin, and the doses are being lowered."

"Quite right," came the reply.

To another she said: "I see around you conditions of smoke or steam." He answered: "I understand. It is escaping gas. I have just changed my job."

"You had bronchitis last winter," the medium told the next patient. "You have been receiving medical treatment."

"That is quite true," answered the stranger. "I spent a month in hospital. Then she said: "You do a lot of standing."

"I am on my feet all day," he replied.

I watched a care-worn woman take her young son to the medium. The boy was painfully thin. We could all see Estelle's anxiety to lay her hands upon him. "It is Red Cloud," she exclaimed. "He hates disease." When the medium correctly diagnosed

his condition, the mother told a pathetic story. She had been everywhere, she said, but nobody had been able to help her son. She left the treatment room with new hope and confidence.

There was present, that evening, a man who had been blind for five years but who was beginning to regain his sight because of the psychic healing. We watched Estelle give him treatment. "I am going to cup your eyes with my hands," she said. "When I remove them, tell me if you catch a ray of light. I will try the right eye first." There was a pause. Then, the patient's face beamed. "I can see light over there," he said, indicating the position with his hand. The process was repeated with his left eye. Once again he triumphantly stated that he could see a streak of light when previously only blackness reigned. It was a memorable evening to me, but only one of many to the medium and her healers.

Mrs. Roberts has no normal manipulative or surgical knowledge. Yet I was in her house once when Red Cloud controlled her and, with a skilful movement or two, reset a dislocated joint in a woman's shoulder.

Perhaps the most astounding psychic "operation" ever performed was when Red Cloud, through his medium, removed a splinter of bone from the back of a woman patient. A medical practitioner, who was investigating psychic healing, was among the witnesses who were present on that occasion. The sufferer came to Estelle Roberts for treatment. She complained of a pain in her back which she thought might be the result of an accident previously sustained. She explained that she had received medical attention but the pain still persisted. Psychic healers prepared the patient for Red Cloud. She was placed face downwards upon an examination table, with her backbone exposed.

Then, Red Cloud controlled his medium. With minute care the guide examined the sufferer's vertebrae before stating that the condition was caused by a splinter of bone which had lodged itself near the spine. He said he wished to 'operate' forthwith in order to remove the cause of the pain. But first, he said, it would be necessary to administer an 'anaesthetic.' The entranced medium moved her hands over the patient's face. Soon, the woman lapsed into unconsciousness. The doctor, in some astonishment, stepped forward, examined and tested her. Then he announced that she appeared to be anaesthetised.

Disbelievers and sceptics can, if they wish, attribute what followed to trickery or conjuring on the part of the medium. But they must bear in mind that, before going into trance, Estelle Roberts had donned a short-sleeved, white coat for her work. Her arms and hands were bare. For a time, the medium's hands passed over the patient's back with massaging movements. From the exposed spine, the onlookers next saw something obtruding, which then detached itself, leaving the skin unbroken, with no trace of blood on the surface.

"Here is the piece of bone which has caused the trouble," announced Red Cloud.

Mrs. Roberts came out of trance to find the others still examining the splinter of bone Red Cloud had passed to them. When the patient regained consciousness, she declared that the pain had completely disappeared and that she could move and walk normally. Later, the piece of bone was submitted to expert examination. Those who tested it stated that it was certainly a splinter of bone which might well have been chipped off the patient's vertebra by the accident she had sustained.

It has been asked how such a psychic operation could be effected. One possibility is that the bone could have been dematerialised within the patient's body and rematerialised when it was brought to the surface. Does it sound too fantastic to accept? Remember that scientific research has revealed that solid matter is a kind of illusion for it really consists of a collection of particles charged with electricity. In common with all 'solid' substances, our physical bodies must therefore be considered in terms of electronic radiations. Red Cloud may have reduced the bone to its non-material elements and then reassembled the particles.

Certain medical men, less hidebound than their colleagues, have shown great interest in the healing and diagnoses of Estelle Roberts. They have even sought her advice. When a Harley Street specialist telephoned the medium and asked whether he could bring a woman patient to her for diagnosis, she agreed and the appointment was kept. Without going into trance Mrs. Roberts informed the specialist that his patient had a clot of blood in her head. She revealed the exact locality. Estelle then referred to digestive trouble, and mentioned that the sick woman had been having injections. The patient gave no indication of her ailments. Indeed, during the interview she did not speak a word.

The specialist told Estelle that her diagnosis was correct, and the medium then gave the doctor's patient psychic healing. She astonished the Harley Street practitioner by telling him that he, too, was in need of psychic healing. Before the doctor and patient left they had both undergone treatment!

CHAPTER V

AFTER THE GREAT SACRIFICE

Soldiers, sailors, airmen, civilians who died on duty, victims of the 'blitzkrieg' - all have returned, from time to time, through Estelle's mediumship, to prove that their lives have not been extinguished though their physical bodies perished. Not all of them have expressed perfect happiness in their new state: some have wished to be back on earth with their families. But all have been made happier and more content once they have re-established the association with their wives, sweethearts and children, and helped dry the tears of those who mourned them.

Some are slightly bitter or cynical. They know that it cannot be the will of the Great Spirit that physical lives should be curtailed through bloody warfare. Fruit should not fall from the Tree of Life until it is ripe and mellow. Some people cry out against

God for not having prevented the war. But His law of cause and effect cannot be altered. He has given mankind free will. Whilst selfishness, greed and lust for power supersede man's higher qualities, wars will continue. One day we will learn that lesson.

With the typewritten records now before me, and the experience not a day old at the time of writing this chapter, I must describe the war's most dramatic voice séance. In the Surrey home of Estelle Roberts, I listened to the clear, resonant voices of dead airmen whilst they talked with Air Chief Marshal Lord Dowding who, as head of Fighter Command, won the Battle of Britain which was the means of saving civilisation. Servicemen, who had given their physical lives for the ideals in which they believed, greeted Lord Dowding one after another. They thanked their 'Chief - as they called him - for his championship of Proved Survival, the public avowal of which could have jeopardised his reputation. All the dead men gave proof of their identity to relatives and friends at the séance.

Estelle Roberts's voice circle is really her own private home circle which was inaugurated at the request of four dead Servicemen. One of the group of Organisers was awarded the D.F.C. before he crashed in a bomber over Hamburg. Another came down in the Channel; his body was not recovered until a month after the accident. The third lost his earthly life when the destroyer on which he served was dive-bombed off Crete. The other naval man was killed in a submarine.

Having successfully proved their own survival they formed a group under Red Cloud's direction for the specific purpose of assisting others who died in the war to provide evidence of their continued existence. This home circle has given the utmost consolation to sorrowing relatives and friends.

Sixteen of us attended the voice séance to which I refer. All were present at the invitation of the dead who had indicated their desire to greet Lord Dowding, and show their appreciation of the great service he was rendering them in vouching for the truths of Survival.

It is true that only the thinnest gossamer veil divides this world from the next. But in Estelle Roberts's séance room, where the war dead returned, even this fine curtain seemed to disappear - so natural, so spontaneous was the conversation of the so-called dead. We sat in darkness, save for the band of phosphorous paint on the trumpet which made its movements clearly visible as it floated in the air. The drama of this séance could not be paralleled on any living stage or screen as the heroes of the war spoke to their loved ones, giving proof after proof of their continued existence. Tears of happy reunion mingled with laughter. Many of these gallant young men had passed to the Beyond with a joke on their lips. Their high spirits were but a corollary to the steadfastness of their purpose. Death had not changed these gay, virile boys into sanctimonious saints. They still jested with each other and with their earthly friends.

The first psychic phenomenon to occur after the medium became entranced was when the trumpet in the centre of the circle tapped out the V sign in morse. A moment later the trumpet rose in the air, and the first spirit voice was heard. This was a young girl who greeted her parents and jokingly said that "Ladies first" was still a rule in her world. It was not long, however, before she said that her brother Clive was anxious to speak. Then, Clive Wilson announced himself. He is one of the band of the four Servicemen responsible for the circle.

He greeted his parents with a "Hullo." When they asked: "How are you?" he replied, "I'm very well. Don't you think I'm getting on?" He gave them some personal messages in clear, firm sentences in which he named members of his family. Then he said: "Please introduce me to the Chief" He explained to Lord Dowding: "I was an airman. I was out on reconnaissance . . . my body was washed ashore. But I'm very much alive." He expressed his gratitude to the Air Chief Marshal for spreading the news of the spirit messages he had received. Dowding replied: "It's wonderful to feel that we are able to help you and those you have left behind."

In terms of brotherly affection, Clive asked his parents to give his love to his sister. He was so vividly alive, so very cheerful. When asked to give the name he was called by his friends on the Other Side, he unhesitatingly said, "Big Feet." Mrs. Wilson told me afterwards that her boy had long narrow feet. Apparently his dead colleagues still 'pulled his leg' about his feet!

When Clive said goodbye we heard a friendly altercation between two spirit voices. They were arguing as to which of them should speak first. The winner of the argument revealed himself as 'David White.'

"Hullo Mother," he called, in a voice that was both distinct and loud. But he wanted to be certain he could be heard. "Can you hear me?" he anxiously asked. "Is my voice clear?" Assured that he could be heard distinctly, he sent his love to members of his family whom he named. He added news about a brother in one of the Services by saying all was well with him. David went on to say: "I never regret going down in that submarine. I can do a better job here.

"Dad is here with me," he told his mother. The boy conversed happily and naturally with her. When the sitting was over, his mother told me that her husband passed on only a few months before her son. I was struck by her serene attitude about these two dear ones - an attitude acquired through the knowledge that they were not far from her side. From time to time she has received guidance of this fact. She had no reason, therefore to mourn.

"Oh, it's nice to talk," David White continued. "Can you all hear me?" he asked the sitters. "Yes, indeed," we all answered assuringly, and he seemed very happy that he was making such a successful effort through the trumpet. "We all feel over here that we have done our bit," he went on. Although he had not served in the R.A.F., he specially asked if he could greet Lord Dowding and "another Chief who has done

such a lot for us, Hannen Swaffer.” The two sitters welcomed him and David told the famous journalist: “I’ve met a pal of yours, another journalist who has not been over here very long.”

Red Cloud interposed by explaining that the boy was referring to A. B. Austin, the ‘Daily Herald’ war correspondent who was killed in Italy. “Please remember me to him,” Lord Dowding asked Red Cloud. “He was on my, staff at Fighter Command and he was a very fine officer. The guide answered in gentle tones: “He *is* a fine officer,” forcing home to us all the lesson of Survival.

There was a pause, then, “Hold on!” said Red Cloud, his usual indication that another communicator was about to speak. A masculine voice spoke through the trumpet which hovered in the air above our heads. “My name is Jenkins. I crashed in the Flying Boat ____.” I cannot reveal the name of the machine, for the boy spoke of matters concerning the flying boat which have not yet been made public.

It was the first time the airman had been able to manifest to his father, who welcomed him joyfully. To receive your first spirit message from a beloved son is an outstanding event. Father and son talked avidly, the boy helping to clear the troubled mind of his parent who was still worried over details of the flying-boat fatality. The boy’s explanation and comforting words ended the sitter’s anxiety and mystification about the accident. Urging his father to abandon his inquiries, the aviator told him that the Air Ministry officials had provided all the information that was available. No good purpose would be achieved by pursuing the matter further.

“The bus was worn out,” the dead boy said. “I told you so before I went. Don’t blame anyone. We had to use every plane.” He continued: “They found several pieces of the flying boat.”

“I’ve got a piece at home,” replied his father. “I know,” said his son. “It’s a piece of the tail.”

“I will keep it, all my life,” the father declared.

“Try to make Mother understand I’m not dead,” the boy pleaded. “It was not my fault the plane crashed. I got a good way out - 40 hours’ flying time - then she went to pieces. You’ve been talking to someone who flew that bus before I did.”

“That’s right,” exclaimed the sitter. “Is his theory right?”

“Fairly right,” answered his son, who begged earnestly: “Father, don’t look back; look forward. There are thousands of us, and we’re all mothers’ sons. But we are still alive! I will be all right so long as you do not grieve.”

He gave his father advice of a personal nature. His parents had, amongst other things, been concerned about the disposal of the boy’s money, and the lad solved this problem. When the sitter asked the airman: “Shall we stay in our house or move?” the speedy reply was: “Stay, because of me. It’s my home.” With the flyers parting words: “Bring mother next time,” the drama of father and son’s first reunion ended.

Red Cloud further told this parent: "Your boy is happy now. To break up his home would distress him at present." Speaking of the cause of the accident which had so troubled the sitter's mind, the guide explained the spirit world's philosophy. Whilst men made mistakes, no blame should be attached to them when the mistakes were not made deliberately.

The airman was followed by a boy who said: "My name is Heath. . . Arthur Heath . . . I died on a destroyer at Crete. But I'm fine. . ." Addressing his mother, the young man said he had been to Palestine to see his brother Will.

"Have you seen Grandma?" asked the sitter. "No," answered Arthur, "I've been around with the boys." His mother commented that his brother was not very receptive to Spiritualism. "What a fool he is!" answered the dead boy with fraternal bluntness. "Tell him I'm doing a great job. I never died. I'm a good expression of a dead man!" Here his mother remarked that he had looked so well in uniform. "I still look fine in my uniform," Arthur insisted.

When the dead boy said goodbye, Red Cloud stated that the next communicator would need the help of the sitters. This request from the guide usually means that a spirit has not spoken before in the direct voice. Through the trumpet we heard: "Hullo. Am I down to earth yet? I want to talk to my wife. . . Dick Stevens . . . You are sitting next to my Chief"

The spirit speaker was "Cat's-eyes" Stevens, the famous Battle of Britain fighter pilot, returning to his wife, who sat beside Lord Dowding.

"You remember me?" Stevens asked his old Chief. "Of course," replied Lord Dowding. They talked about another famous pilot, one whom the Air Chief Marshal has been trying to interest in Survival. Stevens told his wife that their daughter was with him. "I do not want you to look back," he said, "but forward to the time when we will be together."

When his wife mentioned John, Stevens immediately showed that he knew whom she meant by saying: "My son. But don't let him pencil everywhere!" This, the wife afterwards stated, was her little son's latest habit.

Stevens was excited by his ability to speak in the direct voice. "This is marvellous!" he declared. Some intimate messages from husband to wife were given. The dead flyer asked her not to grieve about their daughter in the spirit world. He described how he had crashed when "Jerry brought me down." He spoke again of his daughter, saying to his wife: "I'll kiss Frances for you. God bless you. . . And I'll walk beside you." Then, with a "Goodbye sir' to Lord Dowding, he left.

"That is one of the real Battle of Britain boys," commented Red Cloud. "What a fine character! And hasn't he a will of his own?"

"That is true," agreed Mrs. Stevens. She was the second person to impress me, after the sitting, by her calm, serene attitude. This woman was not bowed down by grief.

Some people, she told me, could not understand why she was able to go about her daily life with such bright confidence after such a great bereavement. The answer lay in her husband's words to her at the séance: "I'll walk beside you."

After Stevens, through the trumpet, said goodbye to us all, another voice was heard introducing himself with a cheerful greeting. "Father, this is Wynne," he said. He was obviously used to manipulating the trumpet, and quite proud of his success. Raising it high in the air he exclaimed: "I'm getting it much higher than the other boys. I've got a surprise for you," he broke off to say to his father, a sitter named Merrifeld. "By Jove, I am clever at doing it!" he said, raising the trumpet still higher.

Once again, to arouse his father's curiosity, he repeated: "I've got a visitor for you." But first he asked to be introduced to the sitters. He told us that he also was an airman. When his father began to give us fuller details about his son the boy broke in: "That's enough! We learn here to forget ourselves a bit."

Then came his 'surprise' for his father. A voice announced himself as 'Harold,' a fellow-director of Wynne's father. One could realise, from the sitter's response, that he was indeed an unexpected spirit visitor. His comments were outspoken in regard to his former business associates, but they are not for publication. "Is Tom as pig-headed as ever?" he asked. "He is so church-ridden that he won't listen."

There followed a few words from Lottie, Swaffer's dead sister-in-law, one who has frequently communicated. Then there was another dramatic episode. A quiet voice began: "This is a great pleasure. I have been over many years. . . . since the last war . . . I'm just an ordinary man. In the last war I gave all I had. I feel that so much is being done to put the world right. We are working with you. Have courage . . . fight on. It's a great task you have set yourselves . . . I would like my brother to know it's Claude."

"It's my brother!" exclaimed a surprised sitter. "Have you met Billy?"

"Yes," was the reply, "and my other brother. This is a surprise for you. But I must not stay. I'm a soldier," he repeated, "of the last war. We and the boys of this war are linked in one great band."

"This is wonderful!" exclaimed the sitter. "I never expected it. He passed in 1918."

"You have another brother, Dickie," volunteered Red Cloud. "Yes," said the sitter. "He lived only a few hours."

Of the four who organised the séance Bill Castello was the last to speak. This airman is the young man who won the D.F.C. and who lost his physical life in a bomber over Hamburg. "I brought Claude," he told his parents. When his father asked him what he would like him to do with the racing car he had owned, Bill seemed unconcerned. "Give it away," he said. The flyer explained that he could not speak for very long because of the strain on the medium. Asked if he had any special message to give, he replied by sending some very audible kisses through the trumpet.

Then he requested his father to introduce him to the 'Chief.' Lord Dowding asked Bill to help him, from the spirit world, to deal with the hundreds of letters he was receiving from war widows, pointing out that there were 'so few mediums.' Bill replied that the circle had been started in order to help the war bereaved.

"Tell them of your experiences," said the dead airman, "and thank you, sir, for, all you are doing." His final words to his parents were the repetition of his old motto: "Keep the flag flying."

Although the power of the medium was coming to an end, Red Cloud allowed another communicator to speak through the trumpet. "Hello," said the voice, "this is Harold."

"Lindsay here," answered an officer who recognised his friend's voice. "It's a long time since we read books together," went on the dead boy. "I've given up Marx. This is the real philosophy of life . . . I've been near to you . . . After I crashed I realised what a fallacy it was. Death is not the end . . . You got my last letter. I never finished it . . . I knew I was coming to the end."

"How did it happen?" asked his friend. "I just went down in the drink," was the reply.

Addressing Lord Dowding, the spirit said: "I was one of those foolish fellows who thought death was the end. Why weren't we taught this? That's what caused most of us to become Communists." Next, he spoke to Hannen Swaffer, telling him: "The boys are grateful for what you have done. Thank you. From many platforms you have tried to open their eyes. Go on with your crusading."

He was the last of the war heroes to speak. His friend, Captain Lindsay, told my husband, after the sitting, that the two of them often used to sit up till the early hours of the morning discussing Nietzsche, Schopenhauer and other philosophers. They had thought life a somewhat gloomy affair. How many young intellectuals, fed on materialistic philosophy, have gone through similar phases!

I cannot adequately convey the poignancy of this dramatic séance, brought to a close by Red Cloud's moving words of tribute to the dead heroes: "Greater love hath no man than that he lay down his life for his friend. These boys who suffered look to you to make a better world. Fight on, all of you: It's worth it to give hope to mankind."

* * *

To those who have never sat in a voice circle an explanation of the usual proceedings may be appreciated.

Voice séances are usually held in complete darkness or in red light. White light has a deleterious effect on physical phenomena in much the same way as it is destructive to photographic plates, which need to be developed in red light. Physical phenomena may be compared, in some respects, to the processes of birth, or to growth in nature. The development of the embryo occurs within the darkness of the human and

animal body; seeds require the darkness of the soil for the beginning of their growth. The physical phenomena of the séance room are effected by a temporary 'speeding-up' of the life force itself and this entails the necessity for darkness or red light. But neither the presence nor absence of light at séances is of real importance. The only true test is the evidence that is received.

The aluminium, or tin, megaphone used at a voice séance is called a trumpet. It directs, amplifies and conserves the power used to produce the spirit voices. It is connected with the medium by an invisible ectoplasmic cord. Ectoplasm is partly physical and partly ethereal. When made visible, as in materialisation, it is a white, vapourish substance which has been handled by many scientists. Spirit communicators materialise their vocal organs by using this substance. At the most successful voice circles, the dead are able to reproduce their own earthly voices. Those who knew the communicators before their passing, can recognise, not only the voices, but intonations and mannerisms.

At some voice séances, a single 'master cast' of lungs and vocal organs is moulded by the spirit operators. An ectoplasmic facial mask is also fashioned. The substance required for the production of the voice apparatus is drawn from the medium and sitters and mixed with purely etheric matter. The dead communicators all use the same ectoplasmic mask in order to be heard in the séance room. Since, in such circumstances, their own vocal organs are not reproduced, they prove their identity by the evidence they supply, rather than by the sound of their voices. At the same time, earthly mannerisms and characteristics of speech provide additional proofs of identity.

At certain séances, although the trumpet is far beyond the physical reach of the entranced medium,, an inflexion of her voice may be superimposed on the voice of a spirit communicator. Sometimes this is because the medium's psychic power is used to the best advantage where a complete counterpart of her own vocal organs is materialised by the spirit operators.

At a séance referred to by Arthur Findlay in 'On The Edge Of The Etheric,' the medium's physical larynx was used, and his voice projected, by a psychic rod, to the trumpet which amplified it. This was done to save the necessity of materialising separate vocal organs. It will be realised by the above examples that methods of producing direct-voice phenomena vary in accordance with the means at the disposal of the Other-Side operators.

When the power of the medium is adequate, the trumpet travels freely about the room, generally moving in the direction of the sitter about to be addressed. Estelle Roberts's séances are held in darkness, but wide bands of luminous paint, applied to the broad end of the trumpet, allow the sitters to follow its movements quite easily. I have never, at Estelle's sittings, seen the trumpet touch a person accidentally, or bump into any object as it travelled, often with the greatest speed, from one part of the room to another.

Spirit operators often display great dexterity in moving a trumpet through space. I have seen remarkable gyratory feats at different voice séances. The trumpet has travelled with the utmost speed to the ceiling, performed all sorts of rapid revolutions. Then, in a split second, it has swept to the floor with unerring precision. It would be impossible for anyone, however familiar with their own room, to manipulate the trumpet with the skill and rapidity of some spirit operators.

CHAPTER VI

ON WINGS OF LOVE

“If I do go for a Burton, don’t grieve too much,” wrote Bill Castello in his last letter to his parents. “We must be prepared to make sacrifices . . but for God’s sake don’t let the whole thing start all over again in another 20 years, which would make the whole thing so futile . . . Keep the Castello flag flying. My love to you both.”

This is an extract from the dead airman’s moving plea to his mother and father. To “Go for a Burton” is R.A.F. slang for one who does not return. But Bill Castello did come back! Through Estelle Roberts he proved his survival to his parents’ complete satisfaction and relief. Bill is one of the Servicemen who spoke at the voice circle previously described.

Lieut. Colonel and Mrs. W. E. Castello, of Kingston Hill, Surrey, received a telegram from the Air Ministry saying that their 22 year-old son was missing. Although the authorities advise parents not to abandon all hope for six months following the report that an airman is missing, Bill’s parents felt instinctively that such hopes would be futile in the case of their only son. Already they had endured much hardship, two homes having been blitzed within a few days - their third home has now suffered considerable damage - yet their own experiences faded away into insignificance in the face of the overwhelming tragedy of their boy’s death.

Flight Lieut. Bill Castello, D.F.C., was, on earth, an enthusiastic racing motorist. His zest for thrills carried him through many adventurous duties in the R.A.F. He survived campaigns in Germany, occupied France, Libya, Italy, Albania, Bulgaria, Irak and Greece. His admiration for the splendid heroism of the Greeks was unbounded. The citation for his decoration referred to the officer’s numerous operational flights and his ‘outstanding skill, courage and devotion to duty.’

It was following a raid on Hamburg in April, 1942, that Bill’s parents received the news that he was missing. The next day they visited his station, where they found a letter addressed to them marked, ‘Please post if I fail to return.’ It is this letter to which I have referred. The contents stirred them deeply, and their grief and sorrow was almost overwhelming. But they carried on bravely, as do so many other courageous parents who have suffered similar bereavement.

One day, after Bill’s passing, his mother had a remarkable psychic experience which

afforded her some comfort. Seated in an armchair in the living room of her house, she saw, the form of her son walk across the floor and take a chair opposite her own. He was in R.A.F, uniform and, looked quite natural. She knew that she was not suffering from an hallucination, for in the room he seemed, solid and objective to her vision, But she feared to speak or move in case these actions should hasten the departure of his beloved, figure. Then the form disappeared.

Not long after this experience, Mrs. Castello read a book which referred to astral travelling (experiences whilst out of the physical body). The same day she met a woman acquaintance whom she asked, quite casually, whether she believed in such occurrences. To her surprise she learned that she was talking to a convinced Spiritualist. On hearing of Mrs. Castello's bereavement, she related her own psychic experiences.

Was Bill present during this conversation? It would appear so, for later that day the same friend met Estelle Roberts, Whom she knew. Estelle described the spirit form of a young airman who had entered the room with her. "He says you have been talking to his mother and that she has been showing you his picture," Estelle informed her. This was true. Bill had 'broken through' and fully intended to reach his parents. He appeared again to the medium and begged her to see his mother. Estelle's heart was touched by his appeal, and so, through their mutual acquaintance, an appointment was made for Mrs. Castello to have a private sitting with Mrs. Roberts.

"How gullible are these Spiritualists!" the disbeliever may here exclaim. "Of course the mutual friend will have told the medium all about Bill." But the sceptic will have to dismiss this thought later and also bear in mind that the woman who knew them both was not on intimate terms, at the time, with Colonel and Mrs. Castello.

Unfortunately, when the day arrived for her sitting, Mrs. Castello was taken to hospital for an operation. She was intensely disappointed, and begged her husband to see Mrs. Roberts in her stead. Although Colonel Castello thought there "might be something in. Spiritualism;" since its truths were vouched for by the renowned Sir Oliver Lodge, he had hitherto felt no urge to inquire into the subject. But to please his wife, the colonel agreed to make what he thought would be a wasted journey. He set off fully determined not to give away any information to the medium. He went in a critical mood, not expecting to receive any evidence of Survival. He took the chair offered him by Mrs. Roberts, and handed her the pen with which Bill had written the last moving letter to his parents. The psychic link between the medium and the dead boy was strengthened when she held in her hand the object that had belonged to him.

From that moment there poured from the Beyond a stream of evidence which proved Bill's survival. The proofs were remarkably detailed and accurate. The boy's father later examined the notes he had made. After making every possible allowances for collusion - a hypothesis he had to face at the time - he finally

concluded that he had received evidence that could not be dismissed. Estelle Roberts referred to events of which she could not normally have known. Neither could she have obtained the information from living individuals. The colonel himself could not check all her statements at the time, but when he mentioned them to his wife she confirmed them.

The dead airman referred to the diary in which he kept a day-to-day account of every important happening since he joined the Royal Air Force. His father had read this many times since his passing. He had always wondered why there was a pressed flower between two pages in the section dealing with his son's activities in Greece. It suggested a romance; that was all. Through Estelle, Bill spoke of the flower and said that one day, walking alone, and admiring some beautiful blossoms growing near the Acropolis, he was stopped by an old woman. She picked a bloom and gave it to him, with her blessing. He was touched by the gesture and pressed the flower between the leaves of his diary.

Bill proved that he had been present in spirit form while the colonel had gone through his papers. He described all he had seen his father do. Estelle Roberts, a total stranger then, had never been inside his house. The information could not possibly have emanated from her. Some of the colonel's actions that the boy had witnessed while his father was engaged on that sad task were not even known to Mrs. Castello.

"Give my clothes away, they are distressing you" said the dead flyer through Estelle. Not long before the sitting, his parents had moved to a new house because their home had been destroyed by a bomb. "I cried like a child as I put away Bill's clothes," said his father: Bill also said at the sitting that some of his wearing apparel had already been given away. When the colonel told his wife of this statement he asked "That's not right, is it?" She replied that it was accurate: She had not told him that she had already given away some of Bill's clothes to a few people who were in want.

At this, and further sittings, Bill spoke of a 'red book,' a reference which did not make sense to either of his parents. One day, an inexplicable urge led his father to open a certain drawer, hitherto unexamined. There was the red book! It was a valuable document, for in it the airman had methodically detailed everything that concerned his racing car. The car had been taken to pieces when Bill enlisted at the beginning of the war. Without the helpful information contained in the book, the next owner of the car would have been at a hopeless disadvantage. With Bill's thoughtful gesture from the Beyond the car could now be reassembled with ease. The red book contained full instructions about petrol and lubrication and gave every, technical detail concerning maintenance.

It will be remembered that Bill urged his parents, at the voice séance, to "keep the flag flying." It was his favourite expression and he used it in his last letter to them.

Although his earthly presence has gone from the home, he remains, as ever, a dearly loved member of the family. Lieut. Colonel and Mrs. Castello received the comfort of knowledge in their hour of sorrow. Now, bravely and fearlessly, they face the future, fully aware of Bill's deep affection and his continued interest in them. But their son is also working hard in his spirit environment. His labour of love is a Self-appointed task. He is largely responsible for the organisation which, from the Other Side, is assisting Red Cloud to reunite the war dead with their mourning relatives.

The Castello flag flies high!

One of Bill's outstanding exploits, since his passing, is the remarkable fluency of his speech in the direct voice. He speaks so naturally that it is hard to imagine he is a visitor from another world. His conversations with his parents are intimate and human, just as if death had made no break in the family relationship bound by ties of love. And Bill, with a courtesy that must have been characteristic, waits until he has helped the others to speak, And, with the exception of Red Cloud, his is the last voice you hear at the séance.

One of our greatest night-fighter pilots, Flight Lieut. R. A. Stevens, was awarded the D.F.C. and bar, and, posthumously, the D.S.O. His picture hangs in, the National Gallery, for he was the model for Eric Kensington's remarkable picture, 'Portrait of a Night Fighter.'

Many tributes have been paid to 'Cats-eyes', Stevens, both before and after his death. One citation refers to him as a "fearless and outstanding night-fighter pilot." Another tribute says: "His courage, determination, thoroughness and skill, have set an excellent example to his unit." Newspaper articles refer to him as "the man who shot down, at least 14 Nazi planes in the London raids." Yet, by an ironic coincidence, this night-fighter ace met his death after daylight operations off the Dutch coast. In a tribute to this pilot after his death, Group Captain W. Helmore referred, on the radio, to "that prince among night-fighters." He said that when he saw the obituary notice of Flight Lieut. Stevens, he "felt as if a little light, that had flickered for a while against the blazing background of war, had suddenly gone out and left no trace."

But the personality of Stevens had not "flickered out," as the commentator imagined. I know this because I heard him speak to his wife in the direct voice in Estelle Roberts's séance room. The death of her husband was the second tragedy, within a short time, that occurred to Mrs. Stevens. Not very long before Flight Lieut. Stevens was killed, their two-year old daughter, Frances, passed on. The death of the little girl was indirectly caused by the war. It was the outcome of an explosion of an oil lamp which was being utilised after an air raid had caused the light and heat to be cut off in the house. Mrs. Stevens believes that the circumstances of the child's death gave her husband the incentive for his night-flying exploits. Frances was devoted to her father and pined for him when he returned to his duties after being home on leave. This fretting for her father also undermined the little one's health.

In December 1941, Mrs. Stevens was officially notified that her husband was missing, and the following week his death was confirmed. The official details were sparse: He had wirelessly from his aeroplane the fact that he was having engine trouble over Holland. The message went on to say that, if necessary, he would bale out. Then his wireless messages failed and nothing further was heard from him. As usual, "Cat eyes" Stevens' was alone for he had been encouraged to play the part of a 'lone wolf' in his flying activities because of his outstanding successes in this role. Then, news was received that the German Red Cross officials had found pieces of his plane and, nearby, an unidentified body. "Cats-eyes" Stevens had always objected to officialdom and would wax sarcastic about 'red tape.' He used to fly with a piece of red tape on his aeroplane, and it was this tape that helped to identify the damaged machine and confirm his death.

For a few months after her husband's passing, Mrs. Stevens remained in a state of unrelieved despair. Then, one day, a friend who was interested in Spiritualism suggested that she should have a private sitting with Estelle Roberts. At her first séance the tears of the bereft wife dissolved, for Flight Lieut. Stevens proved his survival.

There was no doubt whatever regarding the identity of the dead airman. He referred to domestic facts and details quite beyond the knowledge of the medium. Mrs. Stevens states that, at the beginning of the sitting, her husband was agitated and was full of regrets. He seemed to think that he had been neglectful when, during missions that necessitated his absence, he had often omitted to write. Mrs. Stevens comforted him. The dead man spoke of his reunion in the spirit world with his little daughter, Frances. He referred also to the child's twin brother, John, who was still at home with his wife. Then to her surprise he told her: "You will be going to get a medal for me now." She was not aware at the time that, three days before he was reported missing, it had been decided to award him a D.S.O. A few days later she received an invitation to go to Buckingham Palace in order to be presented with her husband's posthumous medal.

Towards the end of the séance, Stevens became less emotional. He described his passing, saying that he had felt a terrific crash, followed by a complete black-out of consciousness, until he awoke in the spirit world. He told his wife he was glad that he had not gone down in the sea, for he had a horror of drifting on a raft for days. Mrs. Stevens understood this comment very well. Her husband had often said "I don't mind being 'popped off,' but I don't want to be drifting for days at sea."

When, a few months later, Mrs. Stevens had another sitting with the same medium, her husband again communicated. He spoke with greater ease this time because he was in a calmer state of mind. He provided still further evidence of his identity and referred to his two children, one dead and the other still living. Mrs. Stevens could not understand why the medium spoke of her husband as "still flying." She was not to receive enlightenment on this point until a later date. When the airman's wife

attended a group séance in Brighton she again received further evidence of Survival from a local medium. She was given an excellent description of her dead child, Frances, even to the details of a dress she had worn. "She is "bringing you flowers," went on the medium. In her earthly life, the small girl had often brought her mother flowers from the garden.

The next psychic experience that Mrs. Stevens had was the most outstanding one It was her visit to Estelle Roberts's voice séance. "I do not want you to look back," her husband said, "but look forward to the time when we will be together." The wife declares: "My husband's voice was impressive. I did not expect him to speak as well as he did."

It was after this voice séance that Mrs. Stevens finally learned the meaning of the statement she had not understood at a previous sitting - that the dead airman was "still flying." A Mrs. Max Whiting communicated with her after reading, an account in 'Psychic News' of her experiences. She was unknown to Mrs. Stevens when she wrote, and told her that her husband, also in the R.A.F., had gone to a séance. Flight Lieut. Stevens, who had been a friend of his, returned and furnished irrefutable evidence of his Survival. Stevens gave his own name and even his nickname.

He referred to a droll incident which occurred to the two of them in the early days of the war. It was something that could not possibly have been known to the medium: Max Whiting asked the dead man what had actually happened when he met his death over Holland, he was told: "I tried to bale out, but my parachute caught in the wing and Jerry brought me down. That's all I know." It is worthy of record that a relative received from the Air Ministry conformation of this spirit message

Max Whiting told Mrs. Stevens that, he is aware that her husband helps him in his flying. "Cats-eyes" Stevens promised him at the séance that he would do so, and so convinced is Whiting of this fact that he carries his friend's picture with him on all his flights.

"I would have gone crazy had it not been for Spiritualism," states Mrs. Stevens. "Before I went to Mrs. Roberts I was in utter despair, and only lived against my will. She has been such a great help to me: now I feel quite different."

CHAPTER VII LINKS IN THE CHAIN

Many of us have established a very close communion with the spirit guides with whom we are associated in home circles and elsewhere. Experience has given us implicit trust and faith in their ability to guide and help us. These highly evolved spirits are not known and loved the less because they are unseen; by such of their earthly friends who are not favoured with the gift of clairvoyance. Yet sometimes Spiritualists are apt to overlook - not the co-operation of the guides - but the closeness and naturalness of their relationship with us. This fact struck me afresh

after Arthur C. Findon, then Editor of 'Leader,' and his wife paid their first visit to our home circle. They were brought by Hannen Swaffer. They were comparative strangers and, beyond the fact that we were aware their son had been killed, we knew nothing of their private lives.

Silver Birch is the Indian guide of our circle, which is known as the Hannen Swaffer Home Circle. Unlike Red Cloud, whose principal mission is to provide evidence of Survival to those who mourn, the work Silver Birch has undertaken lies mainly in the field of teaching. He has a wide vocabulary, and an eloquent tongue. Yet his profound wisdom is expressed in simple language, for truth is always simple. It is only the theologians who have made of religion a complicated subject. Because the teachings of Silver Birch are recorded in 'Psychic News' he is known and beloved by thousands of individuals living in all parts of the globe.

When Mr. and Mrs. Findon talked with this guide in our home circle, he offered the visitors consolation in their grief for the death of their son. The parents sought evidence of his survival. Silver Birch told them he would approach Red Cloud so that their boy could be helped to communicate at one of Estelle Roberts's voice séances.

Estelle naturally was not informed of the Findons' visit to our circle, nor of Silver Birch's promise to them. Yet on the same day that the typewritten record of the sitting was taken, as usual, to the office of 'Psychic News,' Mrs. Roberts telephoned my husband its editor. She told him Silver Birch had appeared to her three times, bringing with him a young airman who implored her to invite his mother and father to a séance. The medium said she wished she could adequately describe the expression on the face of Silver Birch as he led the airman to her. His countenance bore a look of gentle appeal that was irresistible.

Mrs. Roberts said she would be happy to give the dead boy's parents a sitting if a suitable date could be arranged.

Regarding the séance that followed, my husband states: "I never mentioned the parents' names to Estelle Roberts. Neither did I give any information about them. I knew their son had passed on, but I did not know his name. Nor did I know any of the names, except Arthur Findon's, given by Estelle at the séance."

This is what the Editor of the 'Leader' wrote of his private séance with Mrs. Roberts:

By Arthur C. Findon

The sitting, which lasted approximately one hour, had been arranged by Mr. Barbanel. Mrs. Roberts clearly stated she did not know who we were and had entered us in her diary as "two friends of Mr. Barbanell." She did know, however, that we had visited her on a specific mission i.e.; to see whether she could make any contact with one son who was killed while flying a plane over Germany August 1941. Neither my wife nor myself had ever met Mrs. Roberts before, and as far as I am

aware she had no knowledge of us.

I am not attempting to indulge in any picturesque reporting in making this record. I am merely sticking to the facts which emerged.

Mrs. Roberts very soon stated that she had with her a young airman whose description fitted our son, with the exception that she put his age at from 23-25, whereas in point of fact he was 27. It should be stated, however, that the boy always looked younger than his age. I should have stated that prior to her commencing. Mrs. Roberts took and held a fountain pen which my wife gave her.

It was not very long before she made an effort to pronounce a name phonetically as follows: "E – E – E – ER - ER"; then finally "Eric. This is Eric speaking." Then followed a series of messages chiefly addressed through Mrs. Roberts to his mother. The significance of the names will be found in the notes which follow.

He said: "Tell Jim that everything is very real here. He will probably laugh, but please tell him." Later, after assuring us that he remembered nothing of the fact that he was shot down, except that it was a great shock to be suddenly transplanted to another sphere, he said: "Charlie is here." A few moments later he also said that he was with Nellie and Mary and John. He also spoke of John as being very much younger than he. He said they were all very happy.

Mrs. Roberts then asked my wife: "Do you know anything about a ring of your mother's?" She replied: "No." The message then came: "Ask Auntie, she is older than you." Mrs. Roberts then said she was getting more names, and mentioned Mary, 'Ginger' and Louis. He also sent a message to Peter, which I took verbatim, as follows: "Please tell Peter it is very real over here. I am working with the boys, helping where I can. So many of us have arrived. Many are bewildered. Keep smiling."

I asked Mrs. Roberts to ask him if he had a message for anybody else. There was a long pause, and then Mrs. Roberts said: "He is trying to give me a name, but I can only get the letter E. He says: 'Give E all my love - my very best love, and tell her she must not be frightened.' He wants to know if she got his wallet back with the letters in it."

He then asked about his clothes and particularly referred to a brown tweed coat. He also said - Mrs. Roberts stated that he was treating this as a joke – "Tell Father to remember the slippers." (Note: In life Eric always called me 'Dad' never 'Father.')

I asked Mrs. Roberts if it was possible to ask him for our names. She gave Arthur without much hesitation and then after a lapse of some seconds attempted to formulate a name commencing with D, which became DOR, and finally DOLL. She asked if Doll meant anything. I told her that was my wife's pet name, and by which she was always called.

Among other messages received, there were two reminding us of anniversaries, one

in February and the other in May, and three other names, James, Henry and Billy, who he said were with him.

Finally, I asked Mrs. Roberts if he could give some intimate message to either of us, and, after a while, she said, addressing me: "He speaks of a watch, or clock, or small clock-watch which you gave him. He says you will remember."

I said I had no recollection of it. Mrs. Roberts persisted. My wife then reminded me that when my son joined up first I gave him a small folding watch-clock with an alarm, because he said he could never wake up in the morning to time. Then I remembered, but I believe I gave it to him before he joined the Service. It was immaterial.

Mrs. Roberts said: "He says that is the one." And then, addressing my wife, Mrs. Roberts said: "It is at this moment in a drawer by your bed." My wife stated this was so.

I have purposely omitted other statements or messages because they could have applied equally well to any bereaved mother and father who had lost a son in similar circumstances.

It must be borne in mind that the only reason for which Barbanell contacted Mrs. Roberts was to see whether she could get anything through by way of evidence of the survival of our son. If I or my wife or any student of these notes works on the assumption that Mrs. Roberts is a liar, a charlatan, or a woman who would not hesitate to trade on the emotions of bereaved people; if it is believed that facts concerning myself, my wife, etc., were given to her by Barbanell or Swaffer, then the whole thing must collapse like a pack of cards.

Barbanell assures me that he has given Mrs. Roberts no information, and I am certain that Swaffer would not know enough about our private lives to have passed on anything which mattered. Therefore, if it were a frame-up, Barbanell, or another agent must be equally guilty of almost unbelievable trickery.

If Mrs. Roberts had desired to make investigations into my son's past she could have gone to the cutting libraries of several newspapers, where certain newspaper cuttings concerning him may be available. I have contacted, in each case, the librarians, who state that the 'Eric Findon' envelopes have not been touched since he was officially posted as 'Killed in action' in January, 1942.

Incidentally, if Mrs. Roberts *had* had access to these cuttings one would have thought that she would have dragged in some reference to the facts contained in those cuttings. For instance, that he was both on the stage and films, that he was an international table-tennis player, or that he once attempted to paddle from Dover to Calais in a canoe, an adventure which was given considerable publicity at the time. But she mentioned none of these facts.

I will now state briefly who the names were in life which Mrs. Roberts passed on.

'Jim': My wife's brother. His uncle. Never called 'Uncle,' always Jim. Noted for his cynical outlook on life and probable scoffing of anything supernatural. This explains the message: "Tell Jim everything is very real here, he will probably laugh, etc. . ."

'Charlie': My wife's father. In earlier days my sons called him Grandad, but as both my wife and myself and every other adult always called him Charlie, he was eventually known and referred to as Charlie by the boys when they grew up.

'Nellie': My wife's mother. She was always referred to by the children as Grannie or Mum. Naturally we know her as Nellie, but this name was not used as familiarly as Charlie. Both Nellie and Charlie passed over a few years back.

'Mary and John': The former was my wife's aunt, very popular with both my sons and always referred to as Aunt Mary. John referred to as being very much younger was the name of our son who died very soon after birth.

'Ginger and Louis': At the moment neither my wife nor myself can trace these names. We are asking Eric's wife if she recognises them.

'Peter': The name of a boy (now in one of the Services) who was a very great friend of both my sons.

'E': Eric's wife's name is Edith. I do not know for certain, but it is quite possible he called her either 'Ede' or 'Edie.'

We are asking his wife about the wallet. His reference to a brown tweed coat is accurate. The coat is in a trunk in store at Brighton. The joke about the slippers I can understand. My wife bought us both a pair of bedroom slippers one Christmas. They were identical pairs, and we were often having friendly rows about whose was which. Actually my own slippers wore out, and when Eric passed on I took his and am still wearing them.

The anniversaries referred to are February - the death of Ben, our son who passed on during the last war (incidentally in his message Eric said that this was a sad anniversary). The other which he described as a happy anniversary in May is the birth month of his brother, Max.

The names James and Henry were known to my wife as uncles, and Billie was the pet name of her younger brother whose whereabouts we have not known for several years. We do not even know if he is alive.

There is the evidence without any trimmings, and recorded with the aid of notes taken at the time. I would like to make one remark about the names. I should think it would be fairly easy for anybody to sit down and write, say, 30 male and 30 female Christian names. If 60 such names were put into a hat, the odds against picking out the names I have detailed above one after the other in no particular order would be enormous. A mathematician could probably work it out. I can't.

In other words, in coming to any conclusion one is compelled to ask oneself if it would be humanly-possible for a person to produce a string of names such as I have

quoted, every one of which, with, I think, two exceptions, were not only recognised by both of us, but were the names of people intimately associated with our family.

Later my son's wife identified Louis (probably Louie, short for Louise) as a mutual friend, of whom they were both very fond. I did not know her. The 'Ginger' name is not recognised. My son's wife says she knew he had a wallet with his papers and letters in it, but has not had it. Surely he carried this about with him, and it was lost with him?

* * *

A few weeks after he wrote the words you have just read, he and his wife were invited to a direct-voice séance at Estelle's home. The editor of the 'Leader' afterwards wrote his impressions and his experiences at the sitting. Here is what he said:

By Arthur C. Findon

This was my first experience of a direct-voice séance. I hope it will not be my last. If I were writing this article for a daily newspaper I should probably tackle it from a different angle. I should have to explain in detail how I examined the room before the séance began and found no conjuring contraptions: how I handled the trumpet and voted it a very ordinary thing, and how I tapped the walls and prodded the carpet in a vain search for wires or what not.

I contend that if Estelle Roberts had, during her many years of Spiritualistic mediumship, resorted to the stage magic of Maskelyne, the skilled deception of a Devant or the clever professional chicanery of a Chung Ling Soo, she would have been exposed and ostracised from decent society long ago.

Indeed, it would require all the elaborate paraphernalia of the expert illusionist to present even a colourable imitation of the amazing phenomena I witnessed in that peaceful Surrey home.

What happened? Sixteen sensible, sober, wide-awake, clearheaded men and women sat in a circle in an ordinary sized room. Estelle Roberts occupied what you might call the 'chairman's position.' The room was blacked out and illuminated inside by electric light. Estelle went into a trance with the light full on. It took her five minutes or more to attain outward unconsciousness. When her heavy, sonorous breathing settled down to peaceful and rhythmic respiration, the light was switched off.

When our eyes became acclimatised to the blackness we could see the luminous paint spots of the trumpet as it stood erect on the floor at our feet. There was nothing frightening or eerie about the situation. We talked and chatted - and those of us who had never been to a voice séance before, speculated optimistically on what might happen.

We were not disappointed. In a minute or two the trumpet moved. It rose a few inches from the ground. There followed sharp knocks, as it contacted the carpet in a

sort of staccato “Silence, please.” I visualised a toastmaster calling a chattering crowd of diners to order.

The trumpet floats higher, shoulder high, I should say. There is tense silence - the silence you can ‘hear’ . . . then the voice of Estelle’s guide, Red Cloud, telling us in the deep, thick tones of a mature Indian that he was doing his best to marshall together the boys on his side who were so anxious to communicate with their loved ones sitting hopefully and expectantly in that small circle.

At last . . . “Hold on” . . . Red Cloud was giving us the signal for silence . . . a voice was coming through.

I am not going to speak of the messages except to make an observation, or so about the amazing case of my own son. And that in a minute. Rather would I attempt in a clumsy way to give you my reactions as I remember them.

Each voice that came through was different, both in tone and culture. Stanley Burgess, who died at Crete, spoke to his mother (who had come all the way from Northwich) in the accent peculiar to those who are Cheshire born; later came the soft, cultured voice of Stephen Cohen, who passed over in an Indian hospital and regretted that it was a ‘bug’ that caused his death, - “not a very soldierly, way of dying.”

Stephen spoke of his aspirations to have been a barrister, of his hopes to have been an M.P. . . . and he assured his; mother, Lady Cohen, that his studies on earth had not been wasted. They were helping him in his career in the spirit world. Lady Cohen, clearly moved, talked of private matters . . . Stephen gave her advice . . . it was all so intimate, so real.

Then another contrast – bluff, breezy Bill Castello, leader of the four dead boys, who, with Red Cloud’s help, are making these amazing contacts with the earth plane. His mother and father were in the circle. I believe this is the fifth time they have talked with Bill. So far as I was concerned it might have been fiftieth, so natural, so unrestrained and so spontaneous was it all.

Bill’s voice was very cultured, too. He gave me the impression of being one of those fellows who would be popular with every-body. Even when he chided his father for worrying about business affairs, he said it as though he were counselling a close chum – “Really, old chap, you must chuck it or you’ll crack up. What’s the good of worrying, anyway?” - or words to that effect..

Then came the experience which neither my wife nor I will ever forget. Red Cloud told us there was another boy whose parents were waiting anxiously for a message and who wanted to speak.

The trumpet, meanwhile had floated very near the carpet. Its mouth, so I judged, was only an inch or so above ground when I heard: “It’s not impossible . . . go . . . impossible? No . . . speak.” It seemed to both my wife and myself as though there

was a discussion going on 'at the other end.' Then . . . a voice: "Can you hear? . . . this is Eric speaking."

I was dumbfounded. Could this indeed be the voice of our boy who was shot down over Belgium when piloting a Whitley in the dark days of August, 1941?

The voice was low, a little metallic. I doubt whether I should have recognised it in the ordinary way. But, one had to remember, it was passing, through a metal trumpet over a foot long. One had to remember that even the radio varies the real voice of the broadcaster. I, myself, remembered how, when I first saw and heard myself speak on a Movietone news reel, I hardly recognised my own voice.

Anyhow, Eric went on talking. My wife and I asked questions, personal questions which meant nothing to the others and mean nothing to my readers. We had messages of love for his young wife. I was reminded by him, with what I imagine must have been a twinkle in his spirit eye, that he had been trying for a long time to get through, but that "newspaper men are hard-boiled."

He followed it up by quoting: "There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy." Soon he bade us goodbye and asked us to speak to him again.

I was amazed. Quite frankly, inborn, stubborn antipathy towards anything supernatural made me say to myself: "It is a hoax. It must be a trick. Such things cannot happen." Then, calmly analytical, I reviewed the matter from the practical standpoint. When Estelle came out of her trance and the lights were put on, I looked around that room again.

How could that trumpet have been manipulated? How could it, like the acrobat of the song, "float through the air with the greatest of ease," without some intricate system of wires or without being guided by a human hand? And if the latter had been the case, is it humanly possible for a man or woman to perform the 'floating' actions without making the slightest sound?

I am certain there were spells in that séance when the trumpet went hither and thither, the silence was so tense that the minutest movement of a human body, the tiniest rustle of a piece of clothing, or the faintest creaking of a joint could have been distinctly heard.

And even if some human, stealthy as a jungle panther, had borne that trumpet through its aerial trips, how is it possible to explain by material methods how the 'voice' was managed? For, have no doubt of it, the voice definitely emanated from the trumpet, as surely as the recorded voice of a singer emanated from the horn of an old-time phonograph.

Was it possible to have fixed up some sort of microphonic connection between Mrs. Roberts, or an accessory, and the trumpet mouth, which would have given the same effect? I cannot believe it.

It would have needed all the skill and knowledge of super-wireless experts to have achieved such results.

I am no fool. I have had what my dear boy truly called a “hard-boiled” experience of this world and its ways, and I should need my brains testing if I subscribed to any theory of trickery, no matter how scientific it might be.

I would prefer to open my Longfellow and read in ‘Resignation’:-

*There is no death!
What seems so is transition;
This life of mortal breath
Is but a suburb of the life Elysian
Whose portals we call death.*

That’s a finer and more inspiring thought than hidden wires, or ventriloquial hocus-pocus.

We went to Mrs. Roberts for enlightenment, not entertain. And Mrs. Roberts didn't receive a brass farthing from any of us for her generous services. On the other hand she shared her ration with us afterwards and gave us all a very excellent cup of tea!

* * *

That is how the voice séance impressed a man who has been trained to observe and record facts.

Now let me tell the story of an airman who, though he never saw his child in earthly life, exhibited a young father’s pride in his first son when he spoke at one of Estelle’s voice séances. Flying Officer H. L. Emden was killed on the second day of the outbreak of war, in the raid on Kiel Canal. When, through the trumpet, he announced himself as ‘Hal,’ he greeted his brother, who was amongst the sitters, as ‘Sonny.’

“Can you really, really, hear me?” he asked, almost as though it was too good to be true. Then he spoke to another relation, his aunt, saying: “I want you to give my love to my wife.” Volunteering the fact that it was six months since he passed over he stated: “I crashed in an aeroplane . . . I only know I crashed, and then - oblivion.” He was unable to supply any further details about his sudden death. So great was his excitement at being able to speak from the Beyond, that he found it hard to keep to his story. He even once called himself by his brother’s name, and called his brother by his own! But he calmed down, and when he was asked what he did in the spirit world he replied in clear tones: “I’m looking after my wife and baby . . . He's a lovely little fellow.” Asked to choose a name for the child he never saw with earthly eyes, the dead flyer replied, somewhat wistfully: “I’d like him to be called Hal.” He was gratified when told that the family had the same idea.

He thanked his aunt for all her help since his passing and went on: “I'm another war victim . . . I was not married very long.” When his brother asked him whether he was

happy, he answered: "Not exactly. I wanted to stay with my wife. I want to be near my son. You have been a real brick of a brother." He mentioned someone named Johnnie in the spirit world who had been helping him to speak, then again averred: "I want to be near my wife and boy." His brother said he would try to bring Mrs. Emden to a subsequent séance. "Thank you," replied the overjoyed husband.

Referring to his wife's confinement, he said: "She's got over it." He indicated that he knew when his son was born by saying: "It's about six weeks . . . If I could only have taken one of her pains away from her. Kiss the boy for me. . . . This is the first time I have spoken in the voice." Told that he had succeeded very well, he assured his relatives he would return again.

At the same séance, a 19-year-old sailor who went down on the ill-fated *Courageous* returned to his aunt, uncle and cousin.

He was Naval Airman Reginald J. W. Byrne. Announcing himself with a cheerful, "Hullo, I'm Reg," the dead boy was welcomed by a score of sitters, amongst whom he recognised the voices of his two relatives. First he said: "Uncle . . . where am I now? . . . I went down on the *Courageous* . . . Can you hear me, Auntie?" Again he repeated: "Where am I? . . . That's my cousin."

He went on to tell this cousin, Elsie, that her dead brother, John, a more experienced communicator, had helped him to speak. With a rather plaintive note in his voice, Reg said: "I wish Mum could come." He told the sitters: "I'm just a sailor boy. I thought I was doing my best. I was swamped. I got drowned. At least, I thought I did. But I am still alive. Tell still Mum I'm still ginger. My hair is as sandy as ever. They said I was dead, but I'm not; it's all so strange. We try to make you understand that we are always around you."

Next, he greeted Shirley Long, of the 'Sunday Pictorial,' who was there in connection with a newspaper series. "Hullo, newspaper man," he shouted, and went on to speak of individuals he had met since he passed over. 'Grannie Bray' was one, 'my pal Bill' another. His conversation was very human and natural. He seemed to be enjoying himself so much that when he asked "Do I have to go now?" the sitters begged him to stay longer. He spoke of some of the boys who had passed on who were with him, and Shirley Long asked if they were happy. "How can they be happy?" answered Reg. "A lot of them are upset because they didn't want to leave their wives and kids." He wanted his relatives to ask his mother to come and talk with him at a subsequent séance. With a final "Cheerio" to Shirley Long, he urged him to tell the world: "We can't die."

Red Cloud's comment, when Reg had gone was: "Just a little sailor boy - one who made the great sacrifice. In our estimation, these boys represent the greatest love of all. They laid down their earthly lives that you might live."

Next day, my husband interviewed the parents of Naval Airman Reginald Byrne and told them their boy had spoken at Estelle's voice séance. They were very happy and

produced a letter from the naval authorities describing how Reg and another sailor, named Roy Tolley, had launched a raft with ten other men. The raft would not keep steady and continually tipped up. Finally, they were all thrown into the water. They abandoned the raft and swam off in different directions. The communication stated: "Tolley saw your son in the water and called out, 'Hullo, Ginger' - his nickname. He was not seen again." Mr. and Mrs. Byrne also received a letter from Tolley. "I was with your son in the water," he wrote. "He was very calm and cheerful the whole time and grinned as usual when I met him in the sea. I am very proud to have known your son and hope that, if it is necessary for me to follow him, I shall have his courage."

Later, at a meeting at the Aeolian Hall, Reg added to the evidence he had already given at the voice séance. While Estelle Roberts was giving clairvoyance he told her: "My parents are here. I am going to point them out to you." Following his directions, the medium singled them out where they sat in the centre of the hall. She had no previous knowledge of their presence in the audience that night. To prove that she was really looking at the dead sailor, the medium gave a minute description of him to the delighted parents. She described the freckles on his nose and referred to his habit of running his fingers through his sandy hair. Reg also sent a message that night to his brother. Mr. and Mrs. Byrne publicly acknowledged that the statements made by Mrs. Roberts were accurate. They volunteered that they had never seen her before.

CHAPTER VIII

BEHIND THE SCENES

Because of the success Red Cloud has achieved in wartime with his voice séances, I thought that a statement by him on what happens 'behind the scenes' would be of interest. When Red Cloud was approached by my husband and myself, he said it would be difficult to convey what happened in a spirit world that had different dimensions, but he would do his best.

"There are some things I can tell you," he said, "but some are impossible. Let me put it like this. When a scientist is in his laboratory, and he is testing the various elements, he is very secluded and does not let others into his laboratory. Well, in this new group we have formed we are experimenting still. We are experimenting along lines of electricity and ether, that we may be able to accomplish the direct voice later on without a material body, because it causes a certain amount of interference and waste. Under those conditions, in the first instance, we must be careful in our experiments.

"I have my group. In it I have a scientist who was very well known in your world in his day. He has come in since I started this new series of voice circles, which you must admit are better than the old ones. Then there are some doctors and the four

boys. The scientist and I gather a certain amount of ectoplasm from the medium and a little - very little - from the sitters. Some of this we have managed to keep. That is difficult for you to understand because you have the idea that ectoplasm always must return to its source. This small quantity, such a fraction, we have solidified and retained. We draw on it when we are ready and put it into the trumpet when we are using the trumpet."

"Would it be correct to say," Red Cloud was asked, "that in addition to the ectoplasm, which has gone back to the medium after every séance, there is a small proportion which has been retained by you?"

That is right, was his reply. "It is so fractional that it is not missed. We have moulded it into a larynx, able to expostulate, so that sound can be transmuted in an understandable form to your ears."

"So you have actually constructed a model larynx," my husband said to the guide. "and kept it in stock, as it were, one that is not connected with the medium?"

"That is what I want you to remember," Red Cloud answered. "Now, then, we use electricity from the ether. We take rods from the magnetic belt and connect them with the larynx."

"What exactly are the rods?" he was asked. "Are they made of ectoplasm, too?"

The Guide said: "They are electrical. They are something like electrical waves with insulating tapes of ectoplasm over them, which we draw from the medium and which have to return to the medium."

"Is the purpose of the rods to enable the trumpet to move?" he was asked.

"No. Sometimes there is one rod, sometimes there are two rods. It depends on the conditions in operation, the condition of the body, atmospherics, etc. These affect the life-ray of electricity, as they do in your world, because we have to strike the vibration of your world."

"Is it the same kind of electricity that we have in this world?" was the next question.

"It is," said Red Cloud, "but the revolution of it is quicker until it strikes your vibration of electricity. When we have attached those rods to the larynx in the trumpet, the voices are struck on the electrical vibrations at the other end of the rods - not the trumpet end - and vibrate through the larynx, which converts them into audible sound in your world."

"At what stage does the projection of the voice take place?" the guide was asked.

"It takes place twice," said Red Cloud. "First, from the astral - we do not have to have a conductor for that, we use our own - then, it strikes down to a lower vibration, and then it strikes through the electrical rod into the mouthpiece of the larynx. Hence you get the boys' voices."

"So two distinct operations are required to bring the vibration down to earth's level

and then to make it audible?”

“Yes, for the larynx is inside the trumpet.”

“And where does the spirit speaker stand, at the trumpet or the other end?”

“The other end, sometimes right at the side of the medium.”

“Where the rod is connected to the medium?”

“Yes.”

“Then that electrical impulse travels up the rod into the larynx and so we hear the voice?”

“Quite right.”

“What does the spirit speaker have to do in order to make himself heard? Does he think, or actually speak?”

“In the voice circles, we have built, just outside the ether, a box, or case, large enough for a man to stand in. Sometimes you have heard them say they have been asked to stand in the box, haven’t you? Well, they stand there and we fix over their ears and their mouths an electric rod, and they strike on the rod through which they strike to the earth.

“But they often stand near the medium. It depends on how calm they are and on the kind of voice we want to put through. Some are more capable than others. You know that in your world you have speakers and speakers. But they do speak. You have to be a long time in our world before you conduct conversation only by thought. You have to use your lips to voice your thoughts - well, it is the same here. We certainly talk.”

“Why are a trumpet and rods necessary? Why can’t you have a larynx at the side of the medium, or build it up over the medium’s larynx, and let them speak direct into that?”

“Now, listen. That is just what I was coming to. I told you we were experimenting. In your world there is a man I know ...”

Here Red Cloud was referring to Sir Ernest Fisk, one of the world’s experts on radio communication. Sir Ernest, who was associated with Marconi in his pioneering experiments, has stated that he considers one day wireless communications with the dead will be achieved. Sir Ernest has spoken to Red Cloud and the guide said of him:

“We are experimenting along his lines. Eventually, instead of using the box, the electrical machine will be built in your world by which voices will be heard directly from the ether space. We shall then be able to manifest the vibration sufficiently to strike the heavier forms of ether of your world through wireless telegraphy.”

“And that will dispense with the medium?” was the next inquiry.

“Yes, later on, but not yet. You are aware that always there are voices in space. You

have proved that earthly voices and music can be picked up on certain wave-lengths. Well, it will come about. Tell him he is right. The time will come, just as your wireless came, but it is still in the experimental stage.”

“But why can’t you have a larynx over the medium’s and dispense with the rods?”

“We cannot at present. We would have to form certain electrical rods which might interfere with the grey matter of the medium.”

“What purpose does the trumpet serve from your point of view?”

“For one thing, you must have elements of conduction. We must have conduction to help hold the electricity together, something like a little cabinet to hold the ectoplasm, otherwise it would disintegrate. That is why I ask for water to be poured through the trumpet - it is a conductor.”

“So it is in cabinet form to condense and break down everything to make it audible to us?”

“Quite right. You appreciate also that we are dealing with the electrical vibrations of all the people in the room.”

“What exactly, as far as you can describe it, is it that you put over the ears and mouth of the people who speak, and why is it done?”

“It is done, first of all, to distract their attention from what is going on round them, and also to cause them to lower their vibration just a little to touch the rods sufficiently to express themselves clearly.”

“It is really the means of enabling them to concentrate on talking to the exclusion of anything else?”

“Yes, we do not want them to be put off by the others, or by any outside noise. You have external distractions; well, we have the noise of the universe around us.”

“It is a means of isolating them?”

“Yes, exactly. It is a substance used from our sphere and not from yours at all. It is a means of insulation by a substance which you cannot understand, a form of solidified ether.”

“It seems to me similar to the kind of apparatus that airmen use to communicate with one another.”

“Yes, it is similar. It is also a means of preventing the communicator from being interfered with by the conventional things of our world. You know the interferences and atmospherics you get when the rays are crossed by some vehicles.”

“So the communicators talk just as naturally as they would here when they get into the box?”

“Yes; except when they break down.”

“Does it require an effort on the part of the speaker?”

“Yes, and no. It is all according to the nature of the person and his ability to overcome self-consciousness. Every personality is different.”

“Is it largely emotional stress that makes them break down sometimes?”

“Not always, sometimes they become self-conscious without any emotional stress. Some are successful, like Henry Segrave; he has grown quite accustomed to it, like I have. But to some, when they hear your voices, it strikes such a chord in their memory that the emotion rises and they give it up.”

“Would you describe it as a difficult task for the average communicator to speak in the direct voice?”

“Yes, it is, but remember, it is only in its infancy. Men like Oliver Lodge are endeavouring with their earth knowledge to do what they can to help this subject forward.”

“How far are the speakers rehearsed beforehand?”

“We have to put them through their paces.”

“Do you cross-examine them beforehand?”

“Yes, but it is not done out of any disrespect or lack of love, but merely to make them practised. We put them on once or twice to see if they are capable of holding it. If they break down, we put them back a bit, but we always promise to let them come back and try again.”

“Do you rehearse the evidence?”

“Yes, but sometimes if the earth person becomes emotional that immediately has the effect of causing the voice to withdraw.”

“When a question is asked which the spirit does not answer, is that because that question has been unrehearsed?”

“That is true. They can sometimes answer spontaneously, it is all according to their personality. They are so keyed-up to get over what they want to say, that sometimes your questions make them feel they want to run back and find out the answers, and then it all breaks down.”

“Obviously they are not completely normal while communicating, keyed-up with the excitement of what they are going to say.”

“Yes, but it is all according to the personality of the communicator.”

“Is the duration of the séance determined by the amount of strain it causes to the medium?”

“Exactly, I have often said to you: ‘I must go away now.’ That is when the doctors come and beckon to me that it is time the medium returned to her body.”

“Why does the trumpet go down with a bang?”

“When we disconnect and withdraw the rods from the trumpet it has nothing to hold it up. The voice and the box are often at the medium’s side. You will notice the trumpet often ends there - in the box. Then the rods and larynx are removed and it comes down. It is just the law of gravitation.”

“How is the trumpet manipulated?”

“It is held up by an electrical ray.”

“Not by rods?”

“It is the same thing really.”

“Who actually manipulates the trumpet?”

“I do.”

“When Bill Castello is talking to his father and mother and the trumpet goes right over to them, is that you or Bill moving it?”

“I move it for Bill.”

“But Bill is not at the small end of the trumpet, his voice is still striking the rod near your medium?”

“Yes, quite right, that is the position. When the boys sometimes say: ‘Let us get it up a bit higher,’ they are all just giving a bit of power.”

“So the ‘transmitting station’ is by the side of the medium, and the loud-speaker is the trumpet?”

“Yes, that is a good way of putting it.”

“Your methods are a great improvement on the old ones.”

“Yes, all things must improve. Credit must be given to the pioneers of 50 years ago, but there has never been work like that you have had in the past 20 years. Everything must go on, if it is for the good of mankind. You do not think good men are going to sit down there and forget all about their life efforts, do you?”

“Do you get any interference at the voice séance?”

“Yes: You may wonder why I do not allow my medium to have them too often. I believe she has told you the condition of the astral world is chaotic. The result is that we find, very often, there are so many wandering round our world. That is something we have to watch out for. Many men, lying unconscious in hospitals, are wandering in the astral world. If they can get to know of a circle being held, they are just like normal beings over here and they endeavour to join in. And they could do so and talk just as easily as one who is really over here for good. That is one thing we have to be careful about. It is not deliberate interference, but due to their natural desire.”

“How are they attracted to a circle?”

“They just hear somehow. News travels here, too, and they all rush to see what is

going on, just like any man would.”

“How do you keep them out?”

“We have watchers. That is why your mediums should not work half so hard as they do.”

“And yet the demand at present is greater than ever.”

“Yes, but they should wait until the conditions settle down more.”

“Does the one communicating hear all that is said? Do you hear what is said?”

“I can, but not the others, only the one inside the box. They cannot strike through so clearly into your world and they only get a distorted view of what is going on, if at all. You get a word here and there, but not a great deal, if you are not in the box actually speaking. But I hear it all.”

“It all really comes down to a question of vibrations.”

“Yes, and the greatest difficulty of all is to strike the vibration between our rate and your rate, so that the link operates between the two at the right moment. That is tricky.”

“That is done by electrical impulses?”

“Yes, it is purely a scientific question. You may have noticed that sometimes the boys’ voices become slurred, that is, when they try to speak their words become slurred as they strike the lower rate of vibration, and it becomes sound without articulation.”

“Is that why we do not always get the distinct characteristic tones of the speaker, but there seems to be the sound of Estelle’s voice in the background?”

“That is due to the striking between the two rates. If you could listen from our world you would hear their own characteristic voices, but the medium’s characteristics are in the ectoplasm. It is impossible to cut that completely out.”

“Yes, I suppose it is inherent in the ectoplasm, in the larynx you build.”

“Yes, you cannot have it otherwise, except when I talk. I am in complete charge. After all, the boys cannot understand it as well as I do.”

“Is it right to call it a larynx, is that the most suitable description?”

“We call it the articulation box.”

“What happens to the larynx that is retained, the piece of ectoplasm that does not go back into the medium?”

“We take it away in a little case we have, because it is solidified, not in your sense, but in the etheric sense; that is, once again, a transmutation of matter.”

“With the direct voice, when the spirits speak, is that not astral projection?”

“No, the person has to be there in order to speak; nobody else can do it for them. It is

not actually his voice, he is there behind it, but I suppose it is a form of projection.”

We can understand that. It is no more the actual voice than a gramophone record of my voice would be actually me.”

“Yes, that is right.”

CHAPTER IX

WAR MYSTERIES SOLVED

In sudden and violent deaths, when unprepared spirits have been precipitated from their physical bodies, it sometimes happens that they do not at once realise they are dead. Numbers of war victims, perplexed because their loved ones cannot still see them, have to be assured that the reason is due to the fact that they are not still in their physical bodies.

Because of the special difficulties of spirit communication in wartime, there are some cases where mediums, perhaps not so experienced as Estelle Roberts, have wrongly asserted that an individual has passed over. This can happen when the etheric form of someone, whose physical body is weakened, becomes visible to the medium - and she assumes that the person has died. The sensitive has to judge whether the astral body she sees clairvoyantly is that of a dead person or one that is still attached to his or her earthly form. A medium should not jump to the conclusion, because the spirit body of a certain individual is not visible to her, that the person about whom a perplexed relation may be inquiring, is not dead.

That was the wrongful assumption made by two different psychics (I do not know whether they are fully developed mediums) who told Mrs. Robert Crombie, of Mornington Crescent, Hounslow, Middlesex, that her airman-husband, reported missing in the Battle of Britain, was not on the Other Side. Because she was not satisfied with what she had been told, Mrs. Crombie had wondered for over a year whether her husband was alive or dead. Estelle Roberts was asked whether she could give the anxious wife information that would settle her doubts one way or another. The medium immediately agreed to give a sitting to Mrs. Crombie. No other facts were imparted except the sitter's name.

When Mrs. Crombie heard that a séance with Mrs. Roberts had been arranged, she said: “I prayed I would have a sitting with Estelle Roberts. My prayers have been answered. Now, please God, I will know for certain what has happened to my darling.”

The first words spoken by the medium to Mrs. Crombie were: “I am in touch with a gentleman who has been missing for about 18 months - your husband. He went across the water to France . . . guns were firing . . . he was fighting, using guns. He was attached to the Air Force.” The sitter replied immediately: “Yes, he was an air gunner.”

The medium continued: "His age was about 32. He is definitely on the Other Side. He tells me you have two children and that you have been married about nine years." The air gunner's age was 31 when he passed over. The medium's other statements were all accurate.

Estelle asked: "Who was John, whom your husband called Jack?" Mrs. Crombie explained that John was with her husband in the aeroplane.

The medium said: "They are both on the Other Side - they crashed. You have been told that your husband is suffering from loss of memory and that he is a prisoner of war in hospital. He is distressed about all this and wishes to say that he is not a prisoner of war. He says he is a 'prisoner of death.' I do not know exactly what he means by that expression except to suggest a material separation. He says that you looked at his picture today and, begged him to come." The wife replied: "Quite right, I did so before I came here."

Then Estelle spoke of the airman's excitement at being able to communicate with his wife. "He mentions that David is with him," she told Mrs. Crombie. "Yes, that was his great pal," replied the sitter.

Repeating the air gunner's words, Mrs. Roberts stated: "Three of us are over here: David, Jack, and myself, Bob." She continued: "He wants you to know he is looking after you and the little ones, and that you grieve for him. His words are: 'It had to be.' He now asks that his love be given to Lily, who is waiting in the next room." Mrs. Crombie answered: "Yes, that is my niece waiting there for me." Estelle added that the dead man also wanted his love to be given to Mary, and Mrs. Crombie stated that Mary was her husband's nickname for her mother.

Next followed a series of messages that left no doubt about the identity of the communicator. He supplied the ages of his two daughters and told their mother that he had always carried a snapshot of them, as well as one of his wife. This was quite true. "As a matter of fact," Mrs. Crombie told Estelle, "I missed my snapshot and suspected that he had it with him."

The medium went on: "Your husband is pointing to your ring, saying that he gave it to you, and he is glad you always wear it. "Quite right," declared Mrs. Crombie. "I always wear it. It is my engagement ring."

When Estelle asked what she had been doing with the flowers by her husband's portrait, the sitter said that she understood the reference. She was very touched when the medium said: "He has brought you violets that he tells me he had before he went on his last journey. His words are: 'Here they are again on my first journey back, as on my last journey away.'" The husband said he had seen his wife put his photograph on the mantelpiece in the bedroom. Friends and relatives whom he had met since his passing were named by the air gunner. Personal advice about his wife's material problems was also given.

"You spoke to your little girl about some shoes," went on Estelle. "Your husband tells

me that last week was Baby's birthday; you bought her some shoes and you promised the elder one some on her birthday in April." "That is wonderful," replied Mrs. Crombie.

"He says that he heard you and wants you to get her some pretty ones," said the medium. "Now he is referring to her hair, saying: 'Don't let it get too thin.' She had short hair in his time and now it is long." Mrs. Crombie said: "I have had it done in two plaits just recently."

"He knows," answered Mrs. Roberts. "He is glad that you had his lighter; he mentions that he had two lighters. You had one and he had the other." "That is true," said the wife. The medium then spoke of a parcel sent by the gunner which his wife had never received. The dead man said that it was posted with a portrait of David. "He sends his love to you from Dave," Estelle went on. "He also speaks of Russ whom he has with him." These messages were understood by Mrs. Crombie.

The spirit husband wanted his wife to know he was often with her. To prove this he spoke of incidents in the home. They may be called trivial by some, but to Mrs. Crombie they proved that her husband still watched over his family. One moving message was: "He wishes you to kiss the children for him, and says it is a comfort that they sleep with you." Speaking of his passing, he said: "Please ask my wife not to grieve for me anymore, as I never felt anything."

When Estelle, stated that the air gunner had crashed over France, Mrs. Crombie replied that she had already been told this fact. "Why does he mention Pete, Sammy and Tich?" asked Estelle, and the wife's reply was that they were some of his friends who had now passed over. She promised that she would convey Pete's love to his wife.

"Your husband says that he was the youngest of his family," declared the medium. "He has met his two brothers and his mother. The two brothers passed over in the last war. One of them, Jimmy, is here today, and sends his love to Mary. Your husband doesn't want you to look back on the past except to remember the happy times. He is glad that you have sent the little one to school.

Estelle next said that the communicator was speaking of a person called "something Anne," but she could not catch the first name clearly. "That is Baby's name, Robin Anne," declared the wife.

"Now he speaks of a book the baby has just been given by Pete's wife," the medium continued. "She came to see you and brought several other things besides the book. She also brought something for the other child." The sitter answered: "That is quite correct." Again, to show that he was familiar with his earthly home, the dead man mentioned that the wireless had recently been out of order and he wished he could have put it right. He also averred that he had seen his wife altering one of the children's coats, and watched her arrange some daffodils.

Then, to prove that he was aware of his wife's thoughts about him, he referred to her

recent strong conviction that he had indeed passed on. He spoke of her sensing his presence with her. The spirit husband gave the nickname by which he and his dead friends were known – ‘The Three Musketeers.’ He asked his wife not to forget to give his love to Ethel. “That is very evidential,” said Mrs. Crombie, “because she is his sister and has been very good to me.”

At the end of the séance, these touching words were relayed by the medium: “Tell her I will always love her, and I will wait for her.” Mrs. Crombie replied: “I will always love him.”

“God bless her,” the dead man replied, before he said goodbye. Mrs. Crombie’s mind was at rest after the séance with Estelle Roberts. Her doubts and perplexities were cleared away. She knew by the wealth of evidence she received that her loved one was on the Other Side and that he would continue to watch over his family.

Another mystery involving the fate of a missing war victim was finally solved through the mediumship of Estelle Roberts.

Mrs. Rose Nicholls, a young woman who married soon after the outbreak of hostilities, was informed that her husband, Driver H. H. Nicholls, of the Royal Artillery, was reported missing in June, 1940. Like so many others she wondered whether there was any hope that he was still alive. Her doubts and anxieties were heightened by the conflicting evidence concerning her husband that she had received from the War Office, the Red Cross and two mediums.

Mrs. Nicholls told her troubles to Shirley Long of the ‘Sunday Pictorial.’ He thought that Estelle Roberts might be able to help her and a sitting was arranged. Deciding to make the sitting a test one, the journalist did not refer in his paper to the arrangements he had made. No details of any kind, in regard to Mrs. Nicholls were given by Shirley Long to Estelle, either beforehand or on the day, she accompanied him to the medium’s home. The inquirer was advised previously to refrain from supplying any clue which might destroy the evidential value of anything that transpired.

For this reason, she wore no mourning and no regimental badge. She was not introduced to the medium. The séance lasted for two hours and the results, afterwards, published by Shirley Long in his newspaper, were described as ‘astonishing’.

The first thing Estelle asked was whether the sitter could give her some article to hold; this would provide a psychic contact. Mrs. Nicholls therefore, handed her a small parcel. Only she and Shirley Long knew that it contained the civilian tie her husband used to wear. Because she had been warned beforehand to avoid giving away evidence, Mrs. Nicholls merely nodded her head to acknowledge the details provided by the medium at the beginning of the séance. The inquirer probably thought, at first, that it would be the safest method to refrain from speaking at all. Actually, the art of obtaining the most successful results at a séance is to be as

natural as possible and to encourage the spirit communicators in a non-committal way while, at the same time, refraining from giving away evidence. No reputable medium wants a sitter to provide 'clues' that would wreck the value of the proofs she likes to provide.

Estelle described the husband's last earthly moments at Dunkirk. He was in a ship, she said; it was bombed, some of them took to the boats, but it was over all too quickly. She gave the names and initials of Nicholls's chums, and some facts about a leave he had expected.

Then she added: "He is giving me the initials B.N. Now he is saying: 'Nicky, Nicky'. The sitter's silence was broken by these words. She ejaculated: "Then it must be true." Nicky was her husband's nickname for her. That name was the most important personal point, for nobody but her husband had used it, and he himself was always called Buddy.

In the evidence given by Estelle, and acknowledged by Mrs. Nicholls as correct, was included the statement that her husband looked about 30 years of age, although he was only 21. They had been married, said the medium, for two years, and a wedding anniversary was close at hand. There was, said Estelle, a peculiarity about Nicholls's arms and legs which had been a private joke between husband and wife. Mrs. Nicholls explained that her husband had very prominent veins in his arms, and that he walked with his foot turned inwards owing to an injury received at football.

The sitter was next told that she had been thinking of having a photograph of her husband enlarged, that she had given him an antique ring before he went away and that she had recently disposed of their tandem bicycle. All this was acknowledged to be true.

Still more facts followed. "Your husband is telling me that he will specially be with you in February," said the Medium, and Mrs. Nicholls responded that it was her birthday month.

Towards the end of the sitting came Driver Nicholls's dramatic proof that he had not left his wife's environment. "Your husband says that last night you spoke to him aloud," Estelle told her. "You said: 'Buddy, if you are really on the Other Side come through tomorrow and prove it. Then I will not doubt anymore.'" The astonished wife answered: "That is absolutely true: As I was going to bed I said a sort of little prayer out loud. Those were the exact words I used."

With a parting message of encouragement: "Nicky, Nicky, don't be unhappy. I will come back again. God bless you," the dead man bade his wife *au revoir*.

When the séance began Mrs. Nicholls had acknowledged her evidence by nods of the head, so determined was she that she would give away no clues. But, as the proofs accumulated thick and fast, she realised at last that her husband had indeed passed over. The strain caused by her doubts and fears disappeared. After this sitting she affirmed: "I am convinced now. I shan't worry any more. Now I know."

Leslie Oldham, of St. James's Road, Southampton, is a steward who has been torpedoed three times. His home has also been blitzed. He served on the Arandora Star when the liner was sunk by enemy action. He was a steward on the Avila Star before the vessel was torpedoed. For the third time his ship was sunk and he was left adrift in the Atlantic. But despite all these misfortunes Leslie Oldham still presents a smiling face to the world. He, whose physical body has three times survived the perils of war at sea, knows that survival of the spirit body is a fact. He has been a Spiritualist for some years.

Through the materialisation powers of Lily Hope, a New Zealand medium, some of Leslie Oldham's dead relatives proved they were still existent. On one occasion he was told by Sister Monica, this medium's guide, that it was part of her mission to assist those who were about to cross the bar. Oldham is given to meditation. Whilst concentrating he can sense the presence of spirit friends.

Two hours before the Avila Star was torpedoed, Sister Monica appeared to him in his cabin. Curiously enough, he did not, at the time, connect her appearance with the statements she had once made about her mission. He thought it merely an instance of psychic attraction. A little later he left his own quarters and joined four of his shipmates in another cabin.

It was while two of his friends were dancing to the tune played by a gramophone record that a torpedo struck the Avila Star. There was a terrific explosion and Oldham immediately went to the life-boat station and succeeded in getting the boat down, to the passenger deck. Because he had a deformed arm, a disablement received in the last war, the steward could not slide down the life-line to reach the lifeboat. Meanwhile, it became laden with passengers and crew, and an officer ordered him to get into another boat. This actually saved his life, for another torpedo then capsized the first boat and flung all its occupants into the water. Five lifeboats eventually got away, amongst them one that carried Leslie Oldham.

After 72 hours, three out of the five boats were sighted and picked up by a Portuguese cruiser which landed the survivors on the Azores. Oldham says that all the time he was in the open boat his dominant wish was to have a sitting with Estelle Roberts if he was ever rescued. When, eventually, he reached London, his wish was gratified.

Now, Estelle knew nothing about Oldham's shipmates, although she was aware that he was a survivor from the Avila Star. Yet she described his dead companions to him. First, she spoke of a man named Clarke, who was known, needless to say, as 'Nobby.' All that Oldham knew was that Clarke had been rescued after being at sea for 20 days, and that he had died an hour after being picked up. Through Estelle, the dead man said he had been buried at sea. To provide some proof of his identity, he mentioned two handbags which he had bought for his wife, and recalled the occasion when Oldham had accompanied him to help him make his choice.

‘Nobby’ was followed by a boy known to his shipmates as ‘Blackie.’ He had been rescued with Oldham and some others, but was left behind on an island because he was sick. He died after the others had sailed for England. The spirit lad declared: “Old Jonie was saved.” This was a reference to a shipmate named Jones, whom Oldham knew had been rescued, but Estelle Roberts could not have known the nickname, ‘Old Jonie.’ ‘Blackie’ asked the steward to write to his mother to let her know that all was well with him. Oldham promised to do this.

‘Blackie’ then described the fate of another member of the crew. “Ginger is here,” he said. Ginger was the nickname of Oldham’s cabin-mate. It was because Ginger was playing cards with a companion in Oldham’s quarters that the steward left to go to the other cabin where the gramophone was playing. “What were you doing when the ship was hit?” the sitter asked Ginger. The medium’s hands immediately went through the motion of dealing cards.

More evidence followed. When Ginger was excited he always stuttered. Now, through the entranced medium’s lips, he did so again as he said: “Thank you for helping me with the wireless.” Ginger had intended to take a course of wireless, and the steward had been teaching him morse. “It was a shame that you lost your accordion.” Ginger added. Oldham was very attached to this musical instrument which he frequently played on the Avila Star.

The ship’s cook also came back to express his gratitude to Oldham for having helped his wife. It was impossible for the medium to have known that the authorities had not been able to locate this woman because she had changed her address. Leslie Oldham was able, when he got to Southampton, to tell those concerned how to find her.

The last communicator was the ship’s purser. “You don’t need to shout to call me now, do you?” were his words. “Do you remember when the others used to throw water on me to wake me?” This was true. Oldham was the only steward who was able to arouse him from sleep.

It was a grand reunion of shipmates. All but one had sailed to a New World. “It’s fine over here,” was the simple statement made by simple men to their companion who still inhabited the world they had left.

CHAPTER IX

SPREADING THE NEWS

No medium has been a greater propagandist than Estelle Roberts who, for a score of years, has untiringly travelled the length and breadth of the land to bring her superb psychic gifts to the man-in-the-street. How many hundreds of thousands have witnessed her demonstrations of mediumship is hard to estimate, for she has visited nearly every large town in Britain. And wherever she has gone, there have been

enthusiastic audiences, some of whom queued for hours for the chance of a seat at one of her meetings.

What is the effect of it all? I have read hundreds of the Press cuttings which describe her propaganda meetings. Here are some headlines from three that I happened to see in close proximity: 'SHEFFIELD THRILLED BY MRS. ROBERTS' 'BIRMINGHAM IS ENTHRALLED BY ESTELLE ROBERTS.' 'MRS. ROBERTS STAGGERS BELFAST.'

She has proved that a foreign language is no serious barrier to her mediumship. 04e she visited The Hague and with the use of an interpreter gave successful clairvoyance to the Dutch audience.

It would take many books to quote the newspaper accounts of her public mediumship. Here is one example, the description given by the 'Belfast Telegraph' of her clairvoyance before 1,600 people in the Ulster Hall:

“‘Spell-bound’ aptly describes the audience when a psychic demonstration, probably without parallel in Ulster, was given by Mrs. Estelle Roberts, the noted clairvoyante . . . Her clairvoyance could scarcely have been more convincing. Pacing to and fro along the front of the platform with a battery of electric lights beaming, down on her, Mrs. Roberts brought message after message from those who have passed on to friends in the audience. Her accuracy of presentation was uncanny . . . In each instance the recipient in the audience recognised her vivid portrayal of friends in the great Beyond. Mrs. Roberts could scarcely have figured in more evidential clairvoyance, and it was obvious that the great majority were convinced.”

That newspaper tribute is characteristic of the praise Estelle has won all over the country. The newspapers, despite the reputation that journalists have of being 'hard-boiled,' admire and respect this medium, for she has always co-operated, where there has been a desire for serious investigation, as distinct from mere sensationalism. And because her fame has preceded her the thousands who have read about her, but never seen her, clamour to be present when she arrives in their town. The propaganda meeting, though perhaps 'just one more' to her, is a red-letter day in local history. It is an occasion, especially as frequently the speakers and the chairman are people who are well-respected and reputable, proud to be associated with her psychic activities.

It was largely the evidence that Estelle supplied to one newspaperman that led her to embark, just before the war, on the most intensive propaganda campaign of her long and distinguished career. He was Victor Thompson, then assistant editor of the 'Sunday Pictorial.' After six weeks' inquiry, he was convinced that Survival had been proved to him. He wrote a series of articles for his newspaper, describing his psychic investigations. This series aroused so much interest that Hugh Cudlipp, the Editor, concluded that Spiritualism was news!

In order that more of the public could witness the clairvoyance of Estelle Roberts,

Hugh Cudlipp, with the assistance of the House of Red Cloud, organised a series of large propaganda meetings, two at the Royal Albert Hall, London, one at the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, one in Birmingham and another in Sheffield. When the announcement of these meetings was published, the surprised Editor received 60,000 applications for tickets.

At the first meeting in Manchester, 3,000 people filled the hall, and 1,000 disappointed ones had to be refused admittance. It was necessary to use the services of the police to regulate the long queues waiting outside in the vain hopes of getting a seat. The superintendent of the Free Trade Hall stated that, since the day he had taken over management, there had never been so many applications for seats for any previous function. It amazed him to realise that the visit of Estelle Roberts caused greater excitement than the engagement of scores of world-famous artistes who had visited Manchester.

For the past week, he had been obliged to refuse daily 500 people who clamoured for seats. The telephone, too, had rung incessantly. Judging by the demand, he said, it was obvious that at least 20,000 people had wished to hear the medium. The audience of 3,000 who obtained admittance were not disappointed by the demonstration they witnessed.

You may ask: "What happens at these meetings? What is the effect on the audience? The first question can be answered by describing some of the spirit messages given by the medium at Manchester, and these are typical of her clairvoyance. I will answer the second question by quoting a letter written by a woman who received a test from the medium.

One striking message was transmitted by Estelle from a dead son to his sceptical father, who, in the end, admitted that he was forced to accept the evidence. "Wait a minute, Sonny! I will try to find your father," the audience heard Estelle say to the spirit boy. She announced that he looked sad and was not speaking very clearly. "He wants to help his Dad," she said. Then, catching a name provided by the spirit she asked: "Is there anyone here named Billington?" A man in the audience acknowledged that this was his name.

"You have a son on the Other Side," said the sensitive. Notice that the medium did not ask a question, but made a categorical statement. The parent agreed, and apparently the dead boy was so excited at his father's response that Mrs. Roberts had to calm him so that she might receive his messages more clearly. "Your boy is struggling hard," she told the father. "He says: 'I want my Dad to believe and know I am still alive. I am in the home. He doesn't seem to feel me there!'"

Then, the medium paused to ask the father: "Have you in your pocket something you brought here because it belonged to the boy?" With some enthusiasm the parent shouted, "Yes." Estelle went on: "He saw you do it. You said: 'If that attracts my boy, I will believe it.'"

“That is true,” replied the man.

“Now I was not in your home when you did it,” said Mrs. Roberts, “but your boy was, and tells me about it. I wish you could see him. He’s a strapping young fellow.” She indicated with her hands the height of the lad. She continued: “Your son says: ‘My Dad will believe you, lady, because you are a stranger to him.’ This comment made the audience laugh.

“Has he been over about two years?” she next asked. “Yes,” replied the father.

“Do you not realise that your son has been trying to reach you for two years?”

“No.”

“Your boys now says: ‘My Mum's here with him.’ Is she?”

“Yes,” exclaimed the mother, who was sitting next to her husband. Estelle provided more proofs, describing the boy’s rapid passing, spoke of an internal condition, his suffering and his high fever. She could also see him putting his hands to his head. “He used to do that,” said the father.

Estelle went on: “Your son found difficulty in speaking just before he passed on. You were with him. He tried to say something and could not.”

“That is true,” exclaimed the father.

“Why does he give me the figure 15?” asked Estelle. The parents could not understand this until the medium said: “Well, the boy tells me he must be between 15 and 16 now.”

“Sixteen next March,” exclaimed the father, who was then told by Mrs. Roberts that he had in his possession a small book in which his son used to write. And, in a drawer at home, he was told, there was ‘a small piece of mechanism - a clock or something like it.’ This was acknowledged to be accurate.

Estelle relayed the spirit boy’s message: “Tell them both I am often in the home because I want to be there with them.” He sent “big kisses for Mum” and for his father these words: “Say I am not lazy over here. I used to be told off about my laziness, but I am a good boy now.”

Addressing the father, the medium said: “Surely you don't think your son is dead?”

“No,” shouted the parent.

More evidence followed: “You have got another boy on earth - two in fact”

“Yes,” acknowledged the father.

“He’s got you this time!” said Estelle, rather amused. “He’s laughing for joy. He tried so hard and he says: ‘If they never get another message from me I am happy tonight.’” “She broke off to ask the father: “Has that helped you?”

“Yes, it has,” was the fervent answer of one who had come as a sceptic.

For over an hour the clairvoyance continued. "I am not calling up, the dead," the medium told the audience. "They are calling me!" Name after name was provided by the spirit communicators. Proof followed proof, driving out doubt and providing in its place the balm of certainty and the knowledge of ultimate reunion. Birthdays, anniversaries and dates were recalled to different members of the audiences whose dead relatives came in groups to be acknowledged.

"How can all this come from the subconscious mind?" asked the medium once, mordantly adding: "If so, there is a lot of subconscious mind here this evening!"

After each spirit description, the recipient of the message would be asked by Mrs. Roberts whether she could possibly have known any of the evidence. Always the reply came: "It would be impossible." A dead woman, giving her name as Munday, found her daughter in the audience and said, proudly: "That's my Helena." The woman answered: "It is marvellous," but Estelle replied: "No, it is not marvellous. It is just the natural law."

She then gave a long string of old-fashioned names to the same woman. All those were acknowledged to be correct, as was the spirit description of a man who said he was Eric Ransome, a doctor who attended her when she was young. Describing, to another woman, a spirit named Hobkirk, Estelle told her that her secret fear was groundless; the pain from which she suffered was not due to cancer.

An amusing incident followed. "Is there anyone here called Woolley?" asked Estelle. Two people acknowledged the surname. "Which of you is Mary?" she next inquired. Both were named Mary! "Which of you has a mother on the Other Side?" she asked. Both had mothers who had passed over. "Which of you has a little sister on the Other Side?" Both of them answered in the affirmative. The audience became more and more amused at this series of coincidences. "Which of you has an elderly gentleman in the spirit world named George?" asked the medium. The process of elimination ended with this question, for only one of them had a relative answering that description!

Estelle is never abashed before her large audiences. "I am either seeing spirit people or I am not," she told those present. "Some of you may think they are all accomplices I have planted in the audience. Well, I have given clairvoyance for 16 years, at least once, and usually twice a week. How much blackmail do you think I would have to pay?" Add a few more years, to bring this up-to-date, to the number Estelle quoted to that congregation of people, remember that no breath of suspicion has ever fallen on her psychic integrity, and you will realise the quality of her personal character as well as her mediumship.

And here is the letter I mentioned. Mrs. Doris Billington, of Roundwood Road, Northenden, Manchester, wrote after the meeting:

"May I be permitted to pay a grateful tribute to the wonderful mediumship of Mrs. Estelle Roberts? With my husband, I was one of the huge audience at her meeting in

the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, and, what is more important, we were among the fortunate ones to receive a message. Words cannot convey what the message meant to us. For two years I have longed and waited for some little sign of the survival of our beloved eldest son who passed over very suddenly and unexpectedly just a few days before his 14th birthday. I attended the meeting for the comfort I knew I should derive from it, but hardly expecting a personal message among about 3,000 people.

'When Mrs. Roberts called out our surname and proceeded to give my husband the most accurate evidence of our boy, even to the details of where we kept his personal belongings, you can have no idea of our feelings, because, not only were we complete strangers to Mrs. Roberts, but my husband, a great sceptic, had never in his life before attended a Spiritualist meeting. She told my husband how he had gone to his room and put something in his pocket belonging to our boy and described the article exactly. To say he was 'flabbergasted' is putting it mildly! We were both rendered almost speechless, and it was only when we got outside the hall that my husband remembered he had not said 'Thank you' to Mrs. Roberts.

"I wanted to shout aloud all over the hall and tell the people that Mrs. Roberts had worked a miracle in our lives. My husband cannot possibly remain a sceptic in face of such remarkable evidence, and for me, life seems so much lighter and easier, and the waiting time so much easier to bear. Mrs. Roberts is wonderful. May God bless her work everywhere."

This letter is not an isolated case but is typical of many that have been received after this medium's demonstrations. They are the confirmations of the reward for all the labour expended in public propaganda. They provide an incentive to mediums like Estelle. After all, she is very human and often wonders what the effect of her mediumship has been.

She arrives in a town a long journey. She goes to a packed hall. For 40 minutes, or perhaps an hour, she acts as a human wireless set for the inhabitants of another sphere of life. It is all magnetic and dynamic while the demonstration lasts. There is the warmth of human contacts, the drama of love being reunited across the chasm of death, the display of a variety of emotions - and then it is all over. The next day, or, as has so often happened, the same night, the medium goes home. The journey by night has meant arriving in the early hours of the morning. Little sleep has been obtained under these circumstances. There is some strain, for all the psychic faculties are by their nature very sensitive. The next day she has to rest. "What is the good of it?" the medium might ask. Letters similar to the one from Mrs. Billington supply the answer.

Estelle's triumph at Manchester was repeated at the Birmingham Town Hall. Although the tickets had been allocated months previously, four hours before the meeting was timed to begin a queue of people waited outside the hall on a cold December day in the hope of gaining admission. Hundreds more clamoured to get in, and once again the police were called in to regulate the procession of people. The

audience numbered 2,500 people, but the Town Hall could have been filled four times over.

Before the clairvoyance, Hannen Swaffer addressed the audience and disposed of the possible allegation of collusion. He challenged the reporters to interview any of the people who received a spirit message. They could make any inquiry they chose and they would discover that fraud was out of the question. Again, Estelle's clairvoyance was superb.

After two crowded meetings at the Royal Albert Hall, Mrs. Roberts successfully demonstrated her gifts to a vast audience at the Sheffield City Hall. "This gift is not mine," she told this audience. "I am but the mouthpiece for those in the Beyond. All I ask is that I be used to give a little hope to tired humanity in its sorrow and suffering."

This was the last of the series of meetings arranged by the 'Sunday Pictorial.' In less than six weeks, 25,000 people had witnessed our greatest propagandist medium demonstrate her wonderful psychic powers. These meetings proved that the man-in-the-street is determined to find out for himself whether Survival is a fact capable of being tested. He does not obtain his answer in churches where he must rely on faith alone.

The inquirer demands knowledge, evidence, proof of an afterlife. Only mediums of the calibre of Estelle Roberts can satisfactorily supply the answers to his questions.

CHAPTER XI

"SPIRITUALISM HAS WON"

'There is not a medium in the world who has received as I much Press publicity as Estelle Roberts. Again and again, national newspapers, with their immense circulations, have printed stories about her psychic powers. They have conducted investigations into her mediumship and sent reporters to her séances and meetings.

The reason for this newspaper attention is not hard to understand. Editors are interested in what they call a 'good story,' and it is only in recent years, largely because they could test it for themselves that mediumship has been found to be a 'good story.' Estelle Roberts, as the leading propagandist medium, with her challenging, dominant personality, has naturally attracted newspaper attention. The press always wants its news in a hurry. It requires a medium of great calibre and one who is highly developed, from the psychic standpoint, to be able to meet the challenging demand of matter-of-fact newspapermen. Reporters, because of their many and varied human contacts, are usually sceptical and generally cynical. They want to see and hear for themselves. They know their stories will be subject to rigorous scrutiny when they return to the office with them, and so they set a high standard in psychic matters.

Mrs. Roberts is one of the few, the very few, unfortunately, who can stand up to these exacting demands. Her services have been utilised by the press time and time again. From the newspaper point of view, the results have been most sensational. But Estelle has never permitted her psychic gifts to be exploited.

For her part, she has enjoyed the challenging skepticism of the average newspaperman, so long as the scepticism is honest.

Realising that the press opens a door through which psychic knowledge can reach millions, her crusading, propaganda instincts have always been aroused by the call of Fleet Street. I have just referred to the crowded meetings at which she demonstrated her gifts as part of the campaign organised by the 'Sunday Pictorial.' This newspaper has sent reporter after reporter to test her powers and to attend her séances - and never has Estelle failed to produce the kind of evidence that made newspapers eager for more stories.

I have mentioned that Victor Thompson, when assistant editor of the 'Sunday Pictorial,' starting as a sceptical inquirer, became convinced of Survival in six weeks largely because of his experiences with Mrs. Roberts. He began his investigations by attending one of her public demonstrations of clairvoyance. He found it impressive. His assignment was to report conscientiously and dispassionately what he saw and heard. "What I wrote would be published," he said. He attended one of Estelle's voice circles; he heard Red Cloud give a trance address.

Then, as a final test, he took, to a special séance, eight people, six of whom he knew to be unbelievers. Only two of them had ever been to any kind of sitting before. The others, friends from various walks of life, had been warned to speak non-committally at the séance, if they spoke at all. Victor Thompson was satisfied that five out of the eight were absolutely unknown to the medium, and he did not even introduce them by name. "Of the five complete strangers," he wrote, "one man and one woman received extremely evidential messages." The woman told him afterwards: "I came believing in nothing in particular. I go away convinced that I have had a long message from my sister who died years ago."

The male sitter said: "I had an idea before I went that it must all be thought reading. But that message from my dead brother couldn't have been got from my mind, even if telepathy is much more amazing than anybody knows. I am sure that my brother, who died in the last war, spoke to me through that medium tonight." Victor Thompson commented: "You see? That's what *can* happen to an intelligent, fairly sceptical inquirer after only one experience."

There were other evidential spirit messages and Victor Thompson summed up this séance by saying: "Only Spiritualism offers a 100% explanation whether you accept it or not" Six weeks of intensive inquiry on the part of this shrewd observer led him to write these words: "On the central issue of Survival the only satisfactory explanation I can find for what I have seen and heard is that human beings do survive death and

can sometimes communicate with this world. Six weeks ago, like millions of people today, I did not believe either of those things.”

This was a great triumph for Estelle, who, as usual, had placed her mediumship, free of charge, at the disposal of Victor Thompson. In this connection, I think it worthy of mention that the ‘Sunday Pictorial’ devoted two pages to a trance address given by Red Cloud on “When You Die.” This must be the only occasion that a national newspaper has given much space to a speech by a dead man.

When the war had been in progress, for five months, the ‘Sunday Pictorial’ started another, this time commissioning H. W. Shirley, Long to find the answer to the question: “Do the War Dead come Back?” It was not long before he was visiting Estelle Roberts. His second article described one of her extraordinary voice séances at which there returned a sailor who had served on the ‘Courageous’, and a flying officer who was killed in the first raid on Kiel Canal on the second day of the war. I have already referred to this séance. In the same article Shirley Long described how he confirmed the accuracy of a spirit message received in public by a woman who attended an Aeolian Hall meeting. It was from her brother, a ship’s carpenter and joiner, whose earthly life ended, when his ship, the Rawalpindi, was sunk after its gallant encounter with the pocket battleship Deutschland. The interesting part about the message is that, officially, this boy was reported ‘missing, believed dead,’ but so detailed was the evidence given by Estelle that the sister regarded it as proof that he had definitely passed over - and returned to prove his survival.

By far the most sustained investigation ever conducted into Spiritualism by a newspaper was the one carried out by the ‘Daily Sketch.’ It lasted for nearly three months, with stories almost daily, and the inquiry mainly centred itself around the mediumship of Estelle Roberts. The investigation was called, “The Truth About Spiritualism.” The announcement said: “No movement has made more rapid progress in recent times than Spiritualism. It is earnestly discussed by all classes. Its claims are now to be seriously tested.” This ‘independent inquiry,’ said the ‘Daily Sketch,’ would be conducted with the assistance of Estelle Roberts, the best known medium in Great Britain.”

The newspaper appointed an independent investigator, Mr. Harrison Owen, author and journalist of many years experience, who, for a long period, wrote in the ‘Daily Sketch’ under the title of ‘Man in the Street.’ The newspaper added in its announcement that well-known public men and women in all spheres of life would assist in the investigation.

The ‘Daily Sketch’ publicised this inquiry with advertisements in the leading newspapers, with placards on street hoardings, and with posters on London buses. It described the series as ‘one of the most momentous investigations of recent years.’ The questions the newspaper was going to answer were: “Are we being asked to believe in a pitiful sham, or are we in the presence of the mightiest truth the world has ever known?” It went on to say that if the answer was in the affirmative, “the

consolation it will bring to millions is beyond computation.”

In an article he wrote for ‘Psychic News’ the Editor of the ‘Daily Sketch’ explained why he started this inquiry. It all began with a casual remark made to him. “Have you heard of Estelle Roberts?” he was asked. Of course he had heard of her, he said. She was almost a neighbour of his at Wimbledon, for one thing, and he knew about the House of Red Cloud, and of her numerous public meetings.

As an editor, he considered it his duty “to keep an eye on all the changes in life, and no one can be blind to the growth of the movement generally known as Spiritualism. Long ago, my reading of the signs prompted the thought that this might be the religion of the future if it could add reality to faith.” He could not find the time for a personal investigation, or for reading the ever-growing literature on the subject. Finding that the name of Estelle Roberts apparently meant something to people outside the movement, he turned over in his mind the possibility of presenting Spiritualism in a new way to his readers.

The obvious course seemed to be a series of articles, but that was ‘a well-trodden path that seemed very unsatisfactory.’ Estelle might be asked to tell, in her own words, of things she had seen and heard and then he could leave it to his readers to draw their own conclusions. But that, he thought, was a ‘take it or leave it’ scheme which would look like so much propaganda. “No,” he wrote, “we wanted something more tangible, and visualised a situation where one man could be taken as embodying the mind of that supremely level-headed person, the man-in-the-street; one who could make the direct challenge on doubts raised in the mind and, in the end, give a commonsense decision.”

For that reason he selected Harrison Owen who, having no definite views either for or against Spiritualism, seemed to be a man with the right frame of mind for the assignment. “In the meantime,” the Editor wrote, “Mrs. Roberts’s interests had been enlisted. She was ready to provide material for the articles, but the earlier scheme rapidly opened out before us and it was with some trepidation that the news ideas were put before her. To our peace of mind she welcomed them.”

He outlined a scheme of a panel of famous independent investigators and ended his article with these words: “What lies beyond that I cannot say at the moment. Perhaps the last word will lie with our readers. We are out to try and find the truth; to answer the one great question, ‘Do the dead come back?’ If we can establish a definite affirmative we shall have brought a comfort immeasurable in its greatness to a world stressed by dim faith and conflict of body and mind.”

In his first article, Harrison Owen, who was called ‘The Seeker,’ said he was more than surprised when the Editor of the ‘Daily Sketch’ asked him to make this investigation. It was not the choice of subject that surprised him for, as he said “It is impossible to move about the world without becoming aware of the enormous increase of public interest in Spiritualism that has been manifested in recent years.”

He felt he was disqualified for the task. He had never written on religious subjects. He had been brought up in the Church of England, but for over 20 years he had not attended a church of any kind. "Like thousands of my fellow-citizens," he said, "I have 'got along' without the aid of organised religion." Up to that time, he had not studied Spiritualist literature, nor had he attended a Spiritualist meeting.

He described his first interview with Mrs. Roberts, of whom he gave this impression: "Those dark eyes are what first attracted attention, though later, as she walks about the room, gesticulating freely, but unaffectedly, one notices also her unusually small feet and hands - eloquent hands, with which she drives home a point or gropes eagerly for a word or shade of meaning." He opened his investigation by describing his first séance with Estelle, through whom he received a message from his dead father. The medium also revealed two initials of his name that he never used.

Then, the 'Daily Sketch' devoted practically a page every day to this inquiry, which covered all the facets of the medium's versatile gifts. Members of the newspaper's committee also described their impressions after a séance. Readers asked questions which Mrs. Roberts answered. Even a séance which Estelle held in a haunted mansion came into this investigation. Finally, Harrison Owen summed up. Of the medium's voice séance, which to him was one of the high-lights of the inquiry, he said that the spirit voices "carried with them a note of authenticity which not a few dramatists and actors would be able to reproduce."

The 'Daily Sketch,' as a pendant to its inquiry, took a referendum of its readers on the question, 'Do the dead come back?' It also held a competition for essays on the subject, both affirmative and negative. The result of what the newspaper called 'The national vote' was announced thus in its head-lines: "Our READERS' VERDICT IS - SPIRITUALISM HAS WON."

The voting was as follows:

Yes	52.75 per cent
No	46.33 per cent
Doubtful	0.92 per cent

The newspaper commented on the voting: "Apart from the narrowness of the majority, which left the result in doubt, almost to the end, the most arrestin features of the competition was the high quality of the entries." Next followed these words in black type: "It is worthy of note that many of those who took the negative view, nevertheless expressed definite belief in the ultimate survival of the soul."

Some earnest Spiritualists object to press publicity. They think it vulgar and unseemly. They forget that Spiritualism, in itself, is a propaganda movement aiming to convert the minds of all people to the reality of personal survival. Its object is to dry the tears of mourners, a task in which the Church has failed lamentably. That is why the pews are empty and Spiritualist churches are overflowing. Besides, it is

largely due to Red Cloud that propaganda for our subject has made such strides. The guide is, in my opinion, the greatest propagandist on the Other Side that Spiritualism possesses. It is not surprising that he has permeated his medium with his own enthusiasm.

Incidentally, it is largely due to Red Cloud that 'Psychic News' was founded. Indeed, the whole idea for the publication of the newspaper was conceived in Estelle's séance room.

Before the birth of 'Psychic News,' Red Cloud told us that Northcliffe, the most famous figure in journalism, was one of the spirit figures associated with him in connection with this paper's inauguration, and together they outlined its policy. They stressed that it was primarily designed, for the man-in-the-street. Red Cloud, imbued as ever with propaganda zeal - for true propaganda is only the spreading of knowledge - said that this Spiritualist newspaper should prominently feature proofs of man's Survival. If that policy were pursued, he said, he would see that evidence was forthcoming. He has never failed.

By allowing his medium to co-operate with national newspapers, Red Cloud has played a great part in helping to change the press attitude towards Spiritualism. Many years ago, newspapers treated the subject with contempt. They do not do so now.

One interesting fact emerges from nearly all these press inquiries. The investigator has usually become convinced. The Editor of the 'Sunday Pictorial' told my husband that the three journalists, who were made responsible, on behalf of his newspaper, for investigations into the facts of Spiritualism, all became convinced that Survival had been proved!

CHAPTER XII

WHAT THE MEDIUM SEES

What does a medium actually see when, from the platform, she gives public clairvoyance?

Psychic vision may be subjective or objective. When it is subjective, the dead are seen mentally, the medium using a kind of 'psychic eye' to discern them. When spirits are seen objectively, they appear to be as solid as living people. Both psychic senses function in the case of Estelle Roberts, although, at public meetings, she usually sees the dead as substantial, objective figures. Her gift of clairsaudience functions simultaneously. She can hear the voices of the spirits who address her, while, if they are close enough, she is able to watch the movements of their lips. Their speech has a softer tone, she declares, than the voices of living people, but she definitely hears what they say.

Few of us realise, when listening to spirit messages delivered from a public platform

by a medium, what a vast organisation has to be built by the spirit world before these messages can be successfully delivered. Mrs. Roberts has described what actually happens behind the scenes, as it were, when she is on a Spiritualist platform. Her psychic sight penetrates another dimension. She can see, in the distance, numbers of dead individuals waiting to establish their identity. At any one meeting there are, unfortunately, many more spirits than she is ever able to describe.

At first, the dead stand grouped together, not necessarily close to the particular people in the audience with whom they wish to communicate. Those on the Other Side are aware that they cannot succeed in making their presence known without the permission and the co-operation of the medium's guides and helpers. Only when a spirit is singled out by a guide does the dead person leave the group and go to the vicinity of the relative or friend in the audience to whom they wish to speak.

This action also indicates to the medium which person in the gathering is to be addressed. When this fact has been established the spirit goes and stands close to the medium. Mrs. Roberts is then able to obtain a clearer view of the dead person. At the same time, she can also hear clairaudiently what he or she is saying.

"Surrounding me on the platform," says Estelle Roberts, "are Red Cloud and other guides, as well as a number of dead doctors and scientists associated with my work. The duty of this group is to aid the spirits, to calm them if they are upset, and to help the communicators to reproduce their earthly clothes and physical appearance."

Some people wonder why a medium will describe a spirit as wearing clothes that had been worn on earth, or give a minute description of the way the hair is worn. They cannot understand why the medium supplies details of the dead individual's physical infirmity or defect. From their own mental images the dead are assisted by spirit specialists to reproduce these conditions, as well as their earthly likenesses, characteristics and clothes. But these signs are merely temporarily reproduced for purposes of recognition. When identity has been fully established, the defects drop away and the medium sees the true spiritual status and a appearance of the individual.

The dead attain radiant health in the spirit world. The young grow to full maturity, the old lose the purely physical signs of decay. Estelle has observed that, as individuals progress and evolve in the spirit world, they become increasingly reluctant to 'build up' the clothes they wore on earth. Once their identity has been established, there is such a rapid transformation to their true etheric status that the medium sometimes can hardly recognise the spirit as being the same individual.

In this physical world appearances are often deceptive. We cannot always accurately judge a person's age. When spirits show themselves objectively, Estelle Roberts has to assess the age at which they passed over by their etheric appearance. There may be the same margin of error on the sensitive's part as in judging an earthly person's age. Then, too, even with the full co-operation of the guides, it is not always an easy

matter for Estelle to judge the length of time a spirit has been on the Other Side. She must assess this, to some extent, from the spirit's aura or radiation. There are occasions when the brilliance of the light emanating from an evolved spirit will obscure the features and even the distinguishing characteristics of sex. This is often the case when a child has been in the Beyond for a considerable number of years.

In addition to the guides and specialists linked with Estelle Roberts in her platform work, there are usually a number of guides associated with the spirits who wish to manifest their presence at the meeting. All these experienced helpers form a protective circle round the medium. This action prevents any impulsive spirit from pressing forward and interfering with the delicate vibrations necessary for the accurate transmission of messages.

Estelle explains: "The communicating spirits are drawn into this circle and isolated from the others while they give their messages. Even with all this elaborate precaution, it is impossible to silence the shouts of those who surround the circle, clamouring for recognition." From the moment that Estelle takes the platform, numerous dead people try to attract her attention. But she is too experienced a medium to act upon their requests unless her guide has singled them out to communicate. Nevertheless, if Mrs. Roberts observes that a spirit is in obvious distress, she mentally asks that he or she be given a chance to communicate.

The clamour for recognition is often pathetic, but it sometimes has a humorous side. Once, in the babel of voices, Estelle heard a dead individual shout above the din: "Hi, Missus, give me a chance! The others have had a go!" Death, decidedly, had not changed the mode of speech of this spirit. But why should a cockney street hawker, for example, return with the accents of a Cambridge don?

Red Cloud always insists that the dead should prove their own identity. This is his rule both at private and public meetings. The guides in charge will help spirits as much as possible, but, except on rare occasions, they will not give their evidence for them. Even when groups of relatives return together, each must give his or her own proofs of personal survival. When long strings of names are repeated to the medium for transmission, every name has to be supplied by the dead individual to whom it belongs.

Sometimes, when Mrs. Roberts is doubtful about the authenticity of a spirit message, she will obtain confirmation from Red Cloud. The guides know immediately when a dead person is being truthful, or the reverse. Although, as I have said, it is usual for spirits to 'build up,' for a time, close to the members of the audience they have come to greet, there are occasions when they will manifest as far away as possible from their relatives or friends in the hall. This is not necessarily due to lack of psychic power in the vicinity. It is sometimes done deliberately so that the recipient of a message will not think the sensitive has been 'thought-reading.' It is done sometimes, too, because the spirit is aware that the medium is acquainted with the member of the audience for whom the message is intended. For obvious reasons,

it is only under very exceptional circumstances that a reputable medium will deliberately give a public message to a friend or acquaintance.

Once, when Estelle Roberts gave clairvoyance at the Fortune Theatre, London, a spirit manifested at the back of the auditorium, although wishing to communicate with the pianist, Who was close to the medium's platform. Had Estelle been aware that the spirit she described was associated with the pianist - whom she knew - she would have been loth to give the psychic description. Therefore, to get an important communication delivered, the dead individual resorted to this subterfuge. And even then, the message Estelle delivered was evidential.

Because the act of death does not immediately change a person's outlook or character, it can be understood why Estelle Roberts declares: "I sometimes see spirits who do not believe it is the will of God that communication should take place between this world and the next. I get dead people of all sorts of denominations coming to me and telling me I am doing wrong. Not content with that, they try to stop other spirits from communicating. I have seen priests come and take away people who are trying to get through to me."

Mrs. Roberts has witnessed many heartrending scenes on the Other Side when messages have not at once been recognised. She has seen dead individual break down with grief. But she states: "The joy they experience when success comes shows that they consider it well worth the effort."

It is interesting to note that when Estelle sees spirit people they always appear to her to be standing in the air. She has never seen them on the floor level. Even when they are walking, their feet are about a foot above the ground.

Sometimes, from the platform, Mrs. Roberts will supply the recipient of a spirit message with a string of names, even nicknames, which will press home the validity of the evidence. Giving clairvoyance at the House of Red Cloud, the medium once asked a man: "Do you know anybody who committed suicide?" The members of the audience were astonished when he replied: "Dozens of them!" Estelle's psychic powers then unfolded a strange story which explained his reply, for he was one of a hundred prisoners in Turkey during the last war. Only four of them, including himself, had survived.

The first of his dead comrades to communicate at this meeting was a man named Russell; he died of starvation and thirst. He brought with him a score of 'the gang,' as he called them. The medium mentioned many of them during her brilliant clairvoyance. She spoke of Margetson, Smith, Philpot, Sanders, Rex, Henderson, Curtis, Green, Topham, Bunker, Piper, Walsey, Mason and Abdullah, They were all recognised by the man in the audience.

Estelle was also able to recall outstanding incidents which had occurred to them while in captivity. She spoke of Knox, "the boy who was so mauled about." She mentioned a prisoner nicknamed 'Hot-Foot' because he used to do the 'Charlie

Chaplin walk.' There was Charlie, "the one they called 'The White-Eyed Kaffir.'" Another curious nickname, "Sour Sid," was also immediately identified. It was a remarkable experience for one who was a stranger to the medium to hear, in such a manner, the survival of so many of his old comrades.

It is impossible to express in so many words the poignancy of some of the reunions that have taken place between the living and the dead through the channels of public clairvoyance. When Mrs. Roberts gave striking messages to a crowded meeting at the Garrick Theatre, London, the moving passages between a dead boy and his mother made scores of the audience weep. No play acted on the stage of this well known theatre could possibly have surpassed the intensity of the real-life drama. The scene was not staged for the benefit of the audience; neither was it intentionally created to stir the emotions. The lad's messages came at the end of an hour's remarkable clairvoyance, proving to the recipients that life continues in an unbroken sequence.

The first to manifest his presence was a young airman who had been reported missing. Estelle gave evidence that he had passed on and comforted the airman's fiancée by repeating his assurances of undying love. Next came a seaman who had been torpedoed. "There was a black mist and then I awoke in the spirit world," was his description of his transition. Like the other war victims whose messages were relayed by the medium, he explained that relatives, already in the spirit world, had helped him to communicate at the meeting. They 'knew the ropes,' he stated.

A young soldier, 'Cousin Bob,' next proved his identity to a member of the audience. He returned with an airman friend. Their messages were followed by those of a man who had passed over a few months previously. His sister was in the auditorium, and to her also came messages from dead medical men and nurses. The spirit individuals were easily identified by the names they supplied and the remarkably accurate details that Estelle succeeded in transmitting.

Mrs. Roberts gave evidence to a man in such a manner as to convey only to him the full import and meaning of his dead father's communication. With no wish to pry, one could only realise from the father's final words: "I come on my knees to you and say 'God bless you,'" that forgiveness for an earthly wrong was asked for and freely given.

Then came the most moving communication of all when Estelle transmitted a dead son's loving messages to his mother. At the same time he pleaded with his father, who sat next to her, that he should accept the fact that it was indeed his own son who spoke from the Beyond.

First, Mrs. Roberts described the boy and gave his name, Fred. His mother in the audience, acknowledged the description, and the medium told her "You picked up his picture before you came here. You kissed it and said 'Fred, try to come and talk to me.'" The woman joyfully acclaimed the truth of the statement and welcomed her boy with loving words. The naturalness of their affectionate conversation was most

touching. The mother shed tears of joy.

To his father, a white-haired man who was slightly deaf the son explained the circumstances of his passing. "I just could not see what I was doing," said the boy. "Dad, I am alive! I did not know what I was doing. Please believe me. You question it." Estelle added to his appeal by describing the strange circumstances surrounding his 'unnatural' passing. The medium comforted the mother, who expressed the belief that if her son had stayed at home, instead of being rushed off to the hospital, she might have saved him. "No," said the medium, with assurance, "you could not have done any more." Then the dead boy spoke of his 'bike,' which, he declared, was now minus one wheel. "Oh, I say," exclaimed his mother, astounded by this additional piece of evidence. It sounded trivial, but to her it was charged with meaning.

Fred went on to speak of his Uncle George, his mother's brother, who was helping him in the spirit world. "What have you done with your son's books?" asked Estelle. She made particular reference to the last one he had studied for an examination. "I don't let anyone touch his books," declared the mother, while she reiterated her gratitude that so much proof was being vouchsafed her. And still the evidence of the boy's survival continued to pour from the medium's lips, punctuated, all the while, by expressions of joy and wonder from the mother.

Finally, Mrs. Roberts addressed the father who had been persuaded by his wife to attend his first Spiritualist meeting. Previously, he had been sceptical of Survival, but when Estelle asked him with simple appeal: "Father, what do you think about it now?" he replied: "I can't get away from it!"

And here, as a final example of Estelle's superb clairvoyance at public meetings, is the story of a stranger's experience at her first Spiritualist meeting.

Mrs. Du Bran, of East Sheen, South-West London, arrived at the Aeolian Hall three-quarters of an hour after the service had started. Ten minutes later Estelle Roberts gave her irrefutable evidence of her husband's survival. At that time, Mrs. Du Bran knew nothing about Spiritualism. She had never read a psychic book or journal. She would not believe her brother's statements that he received messages from the dead. Indeed, when he once called at her home with a psychic message for her mother, Mrs. Du Bran refused to disturb her parent with such 'nonsense' and tried to dissuade her brother from continuing his interest in the subject.

Nearly all her life, Mrs. Du Bran had been a Methodist who thought it wrong to 'disturb the dead.' When her husband became ill, and the specialist warned her, that he would not live more than a few more days, Mrs. Du Bran thought it her duty to inform the patient in order that he could 'make his peace with God.' Just before his death her husband said "Now I know there is reunion after death; it has been revealed to me."

'Six months later, on a Sunday afternoon, Mrs. Du Bran sat in her home reading the Bible. As she finished her chapter, she remembered her brother once telling her that

Estelle Roberts gave clairvoyance every Sunday at the, Aeolian Hall. A sudden urge prompted her to put on her outdoor clothes and make her way to the hall in Bond Street. She had no idea what time the meeting began, and when she arrived the service was half over. Without disturbing anyone, and practically unobserved, she slipped into a seat that happened to be unoccupied. The audience was listening most intently to Estelle's clairvoyance.

No sooner had the medium completed the message she was delivering, than she addressed Mrs. Du Bran, described her husband, and said that he had not been in the spirit world very long. At first, the newcomer could not believe that the communication was meant for her. She imagined one had to be a Spiritualist in order to receive a message. But the medium continued to provide further details of her husband's passing, saying that he died under rather tragic circumstances, at the approximate age of 60. "He is full of grief and sorrow," she told the stranger. "He wants to get back to you to put things right. He is unhappy."

After the meeting Mrs. Du Bran declared it was Estelle's statement that her husband was unhappy that impressed her. "If the medium had said he was happy", she averred, "I would have come out of that hall not even interested. I knew he could not be happy."

But the medium had gone on to convey the husband's words: "Tell my wife I failed her at the last. I am sorry I went out when I did. I am doing all I can from this world to put things right." He insisted that the medium ask his wife whether she forgave him for what he did.

"Yes, I have forgiven him," replied Mrs. Du Bran. Later, she explained that her husband, through kindness, had committed an indiscretion, which had in turn affected her. His worry over the incident had hastened his passing. When Mrs. Roberts said that the dead man was holding a letter, Mrs. Du Bran said she understood its significance. "He says," went on the sensitive, "he wishes he could write another letter in his life's blood to wipe out that one. You did everything in your power for him; and he did just the opposite for you."

Estelle said that the husband's head was affected before his passing. This statement was acknowledged to be true. While the medium spoke she stroked her head with her fingers, indicating that it was one of his mannerisms. "You suffered through that poor mind and its ignorance," she told Mrs. Du Bran. "But now you have given him hope. 'Tell her to be happy,' he says. 'I know how she has suffered. If I could only kiss the hem of her garment and undo all I did I would willingly do it.'"

When the psychic message came to an end Mrs. Du Bran volunteered: "What you have told me is absolutely true." The medium's words, delivered to a total stranger, had changed all her preconceived ideas about the hereafter.

CHAPTER XIII

“SERMONS IN STONES”

“I am part of all that I have met,” wrote Tennyson. How true are the poet’s words, for we are indelibly marked by every contact we have made and every association we have formed. The breath of each experience appears upon the mirror of our consciousness. Although invisible to the non-psychic eye, each of us has an aura which radiates from the physical body. The halo, or nimbus, of a holy person, so often depicted in art, is an impression of the aura.

The colour and quality of an individual’s aura can temporarily change when certain emotions are roused. Auric radiations are visible to some sensitives, who are able to pick up from them incidents and experiences in a person’s history. The fact need not necessarily be identified with Proved Survival. It is possible for a medium to receive certain psychic impressions entirely without the aid of the dead.

As so-called solid-matter is really a mass of radiations, it follows that inanimate objects, as well as living individuals, have their own range of vibrations. Material articles retain the impression of contacts that have been made with them. The ring you have worn, the watch you have carried, the book you have handled - these are marked by the impression of your personality. But the depth or degree of the impression you have left depends upon many different reasons. It will be realised that some psychics can ‘tune-in’ to the vibrations of an inanimate article and give an accurate account of the history of the object. They can also describe the experiences of the individuals who have been associated with the object

When an article has been owned by several people, those who have handled it the most are the ones who usually leave the strongest vibrations. But this is not always the case. A tragedy, or some great emotional experience of one of the owners, can leave so strong a vibration that all others become indiscernible to the medium. The psychic Delineation obtained by impressions received from inanimate objects is known as psychometry, and Estelle Roberts’s mediumship in this direction is highly developed.

At demonstrations of psychometry, members of the audience provide the stewards with different articles. The attendants give them numbered slips, and duplicates of these numbers are attached to the articles. The medium, naturally, is not given any information beforehand, does not know the owners of the objects, or any particulars about the articles that have been collected. Neither are the objects passed to the sensitive prior to the reading.

At one demonstration given at the Golders Green Spiritualist Society, the articles to be psychometrised included rings, watches, gloves, beads and necklaces. These were placed on tables before Mrs. Roberts. Announcing the number of the ticket, attached to a flat piece of stone chosen from the table, Estelle said: “I hope the person to whom this stone belongs knows its history. It has come a long distance. It was once

part of a monastery or temple. The stone is very old. I see with it death - the trampling of feet, and blood conditions. More than one person has suffered. Am I correct?"

The member of the audience who had provided the stone replied that these conditions were accurate, although the stone was part of an old castle.

It was taken out of the stonework," said Estelle. "Yes," replied the owner, "I removed it myself from the centre of the wall."

The medium continued: "Originally, there was an archway at the top of the wall. The building from which this was taken would be hundreds of years old. Many a battle was fought there. I see steel armour and helmets. I see a gap in the wall. Now the wall is being chipped by cannon. There are dead bodies lying on the ground. Nearby there should be a large stream of water." Estelle paused: "Have you also another stone?" she asked.

"That is perfectly true," came the reply.

Mrs. Roberts added that the two pieces of stone had been kept together. From the vibrations of the object she held in her hand, she could piece together the story of the second stone. She had received the impression at first of a monastery or chapel. Obviously, it must have referred to the other portion of stone, for the medium said "The second piece formed part of an ancient chapel in a different vicinity. I see that, at some period, royal persons stayed at the castle. One member even disappeared. Close to the stone's position was a battlement slit, used as a peep-hole, and also through it arrows were shot."

The owner excitedly replied: "I took that stone from a royal castle in North Wales which is reputed to be the birthplace of Prince Llewellyn."

Estelle next gave the history of another object chosen from the table, this time a brooch. "This brooch has been worn by two people," she said.

It has been pinned on a dark plush cushion. One wearer used to fasten it in a pretty piece of lace, which was bunched round the neck. Also I see someone studying very deeply. I sense a mind which considers everything thoroughly, a person who is just becoming associated with Spiritualism and who is now passing through an agitated mental, condition which is pulling in two directions!

A member of the audience replied that this interpretation was accurate. She said that the brooch belonged both to her sister and herself. Mrs. Roberts then asked whether she was aware that she possessed healing powers. "I have been told so," came the reply. The medium referred to the fact that the recipient of the message was in the habit of wearing the brooch at her waist. "When you bend down to fasten your shoes," she said, "you suddenly remember you might break it" The owner agreed that this was true. Only a week previously the thought had again struck her when she was fastening her shoes.

“This brooch has been in a drawer with a white glove laid over the top of it,” said the psychometrist “I also see on the cushion, where it has been pinned, some beaded work. Where is the little chain that used to be with it?”

“I have broken it,” came the reply.

Explaining that she did not know a great deal about jewellery, the medium said that she could state that the stone in the brooch was real and that it came from France. The owner said that she knew the stone came from abroad. Mrs. Roberts went on to say that the brooch had been lying against an ivory cross and had also been close to an old-fashioned silver locket “My sister owns the cross, and the locket is mine,” explained the owner. “Whose strand of hair has the brooch lain against in a small box?” asked Estelle. “My little niece’s hair,’ said the owner.

Reporting her impressions upon handling a watch, Mrs. Roberts stated that she received two conditions from the watch, which, she said, had been associated with troublesome times. One of its owners had passed over. It had been possessed first by a man, then by a woman, and lastly, by another man.

“It has not been worn for a considerable time,” declared Estelle. “I sense a wonderful character. The present owner of the watch is someone who is very patient and who, at some time, experienced two great shocks. Whose watch is this?”

“Mine,” answered a member of the audience, “and all that you say is perfectly true.”

“Do you know that the owner passed through a great tragedy?” asked the medium.

“Yes, I do.”

“Did you know that he appeared in court where someone was fighting for life and he gave evidence which was the turning-point?”

“I know that he appeared in court.”

“One owner met with a very bad accident,” went on the medium. “This watch is between 85 and 90 years old. Do you know the young boy who now wears it?”

“I do.”

“And do you know the lady who wore it on a thin chain round the neck?”

“Of course I do; I gave it to her.”

“Do you know this watch has been in a folded coloured handkerchief, close to a small clasp knife?”

“Yes, I know that.”

“What has happened to the coin that used to be attached to the watch?” asked Estelle.

“I have it now,” was the answer. “It is on the thin chain.”

The medium then referred to the fact that, when the watch was given to the member

of the audience, the glass was cracked and another one was consequently put in. Once, the watch was mislaid and was later found inside the covers of a book. "Before that," said Estelle, "it used to lie in a long square book. The book had a red cover."

"All that is perfectly true," said the person who had presented the watch for psychometry,

At another demonstration of the same gift, Estelle chose a ring from an assortment of articles. She described the great antiquity of the ring. The person in the audience to whom the article belonged denied this assertion. She had, she said, quite casually 'picked up' the ring at an unimportant little trinket shop in Islington. According to the medium's description, the ring was valuable and its worth would have been recognised by experts long before it reached the small shop. But Estelle insisted that the stone in the ring was very ancient, although the setting was modern. Go and check what I have told you," she advised the owner.

The article was accordingly taken to the British Museum, where expert opinion confirmed the accuracy of Estelle's psychic impressions

"You gave me a wonderful reading of a scarab ring," the owner, Edith Peck, wrote later to Mrs. Roberts. "I promised to let you know the result of my visit to the British Museum to find out when the ring was first in existence. You remember I told you I was under the impression the ring was modern. They confirmed your statement that the gold was modern, but not the stone.

"The stone belongs to the 'Middle Kingdom,' 1700 to 1800 B.C. There were, many made at the time, and they were buried with the mummies. The hieroglyphics at the base are lotus flowers. They had some sacred meaning at that time. The ring was a genuine scarab. It is wonderful you should get such a picture of the mummy, as I noticed several photographs in the Egyptian gallery like your description, and they were of the above date; the hair in rolls the side of the face was as you described. I think, had the stone belonged to a king, his name would have been inscribed at the base of the ring, but probably you are correct about the priest.

"What I should like to know is how it came to be in a little jeweller's shop in Islington. Your powers are truly very wonderful. I have listened many times to your descriptions of articles and was very thrilled that this time I was honoured with a reading."

Now had the owner of this ring not troubled to take the medium's advice to check her description, she would have been under the impression that Mrs. Roberts was entirely inaccurate. Her visit to the British Museum had been well worth while.

Psychometry is very useful and helpful in cases where an inquirer is unable personally to visit the medium. By forwarding an article used or worn by one who has passed on, the psychic can, from the emanations of the object, 'link up' with the dead owner. Clairvoyance, under these circumstances, can be very evidential and impressive. Even the sceptic's bug-bear, 'telepathy between medium and sitter,'

breaks down in these circumstances, as in so many other cases.

One day, my husband received a letter from a complete stranger, Mrs. Rachael Berry, of Owen Street, Burnley. "I am a widow at the early age of 24," she wrote, "I have lost my dear husband after sharing together eight months of happy married life. I am absolutely desperate to hear something about him, as I am sure it would help me such a lot to bear this heavy cross. I hope you will help me, as I am so desperately lonely. If only I could talk to him or have a message I would be so relieved. I loved him so dearly. He died two months ago at the early age of 26."

The letter, which was signed "yours in sorrow," also mentioned that the dead man had used a micrometer for his work which broke an hour before he had finished for the day. He never worked again.

Although my husband cannot usually deal with personal requests of this nature - he would be unable to cope with the resultant hoards of similar inquiries - he felt particularly moved by the writer's sorrow. He therefore wrote to Mrs. Berry and asked her to send him the dead man's micrometer, saying he would try to get a delineation. "This is only an experiment," he warned her, "and no results can be guaranteed?" A few days later, the micrometer arrived in a parcel containing other 'odds and ends,' as Mrs. Berry called them.

Estelle Roberts was asked whether she would psychometrise these objects. No details were provided and nothing was mentioned that would give her the slightest indication of the circumstances involved. The medium was merely informed that she might be able to render aid to a woman in distress. This was enough to elicit Estelle's ready, sympathy. She psychometrised the articles and sent a detailed account of her impressions. This record was then forwarded to a 'Psychic News' representative, who called on Mrs. Berry at her home in Lancashire. It must be pointed out that Mrs. Berry had not met Estelle Roberts, nor had they ever corresponded.

When the reporter had finished reading the medium's notes to her, Mrs. Berry expressed her satisfaction. She volunteered that she and her husband had both been employed at the same factory. One day her husband said to her: "I've bad news, I've broken my 'mike'. The micrometer had been in his possession ever since he started work as a young apprentice. His wife's efforts to comfort him were not successful. Later, on the same day as she mishap, Berry complained of a headache. At noon, his condition became so serious that a doctor was summoned. The sick man was sent to hospital, where his condition was diagnosed as cerebro-spinal fever. Three days after breaking his 'mike,' he passed on. The accident so worried him that, even during his brief, fatal illness, he tried to repair the damaged instrument.

The moment Estelle Roberts handled the micrometer she became conscious that the dead man, who, at the same time, showed himself clairvoyantly, had used the instrument and that somehow it was associated with his death. "He appears to be somewhat bewildered and resentful over his passing," said the medium. His whole

state is of one who did not wish to leave the earth, as he had so much to live for. He finds it difficult to settle down on the Other Side. He says that he has only been married a short while.

Mrs. Berry had said in her letter to my husband that they had only been married eight months - a fact that had not been imparted, of course, to the medium.

Referring to one of the packages forwarded with the micrometer, Estelle repeated that "the little box contained a carnation he had worn on his wedding day." Mrs. Berry confirmed this and other facts about his passing which the medium provided. Mrs. Roberts expressed the dead man's anxiety to communicate with his wife, to make her realise he was still beside her. "He keeps putting his hand to his head," stated Estelle. "I also receive the impression that he was hurt before his passing."

These accounts were accurate, said Mrs. Berry. The fever had affected her husband's head; he constantly put his hand to his head. While he lay sick, he repeatedly fell out of his bed and his face and hands were badly bruised in consequence.

Mrs. Roberts had obtained a series of names: "John, who may be called Jack, Lily or Nellie; Jim, Tom, and the initials 'R.B.'" The initials were the wife's - Rachael Berry. Tom was her father's name. He and her husband were very attached to each other. Jim and Lily were friends who were looking after the dead man's dog. John was a great friend who had passed on after Berry's death and whose body lay in the grave adjoining her husband's burial place.

"He says it is very close to an anniversary," said the medium in her notes. This fact, too, was confirmed by Mrs. Berry. The medium's referred to her husband's birthday. When the reporter read the medium's words: "This young man is not yet able to register his thoughts owing to his emotion; his great desire was to have been left upon the earth," Mrs. Berry fully understood. He had manifested far more successfully than she had expected, for he had been a Roman Catholic and rather opposed to Spiritualism.

Apart from assuaging an unknown woman's grief, Estelle's splendid psychometry had helped relieve the dead man's anxiety to reach his wife. At that time he needed her help and encouragement, perhaps more than ever. Whether or not he is more resigned to having passed over, I do not know; I have no wish to embroider the only facts I possess. But I feel sure that he will have learned that in the spirit world are opportunities for all individuals to follow their vocational desires and interests. The work he loved on earth could be continued with unlimited zest in his new life.