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The Betty Book (1937)

Stewart Edward White

Excursions into the World of Other-Consciousness
made by Betty between 1919 and 1936

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INTRODUCTION

While considering the most effective introduction to the material comprised in this book, I submitted the puzzle to a friend whose judgment I value. His letter so fittingly and completely answered my problem that I feel I can do no better than to set it down here.

“I should begin, in effect, somewhat as follows”: he wrote me. “This book is the record, condensed, of the excursions of ‘Betty,’ a psychic intimately known to me and of absolute integrity, into the world of ‘other-consciousness’ and of communications received by her from forces which I have ventured to call ‘the invisibles’. These excursions, made in a condition of trance or otherwise, began in the year 1919 and have continued ever since. They are recorded in the following pages with no idea of adding to the existing literature of automatic writing and kindred phenomena; but in the belief that, as embodying a workable philosophy of life, they may be of aid to seekers after spiritual light.”

THE AUTHOR

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PART I
INTRODUCTORY
CHAPTER I
De-Occultization

The history of all progress in knowledge is a 'de-occultization.' Fully half of the things we do daily as a matter of course would, even as recently as two centuries ago, have been considered magic, without explanation except as the product of occult forces and knowledge. The continuity of history is unbroken in that respect. If we should learn anything at all from the past, that one thing should stand out for us as invariable. The superstition of the past is the science of the present, the proverb of the future. The order of events is always the same. First a few people observed or did things which were denied or denounced vehemently by the old school as crazy or maleficent or supernatural.

Exact knowledge overtook these things and found them to be harmonious examples of natural law.

The uses of humanity absorbed them and they became commonplaces of existence, thoroughly de-occultized, adopted into the body of usual mental life. This has happened over and over and over again with unvarying regularity. One of the most fascinating of scientific byplays is to backtrack through history picking up at random marvels and miracles, stripping them of warping legend, and explaining them in the light of what we now know. They became not the less marvels and miracles, if you please, but de-occultized. It should be added that all cannot be so explained. The unsolved residue is not the - more or less - improbable for that. Perhaps our grandchildren's progress will show this unexplained residue as simple as we have found some of the miracles that dumfounded our ancestors.

There are two things that this history of de-occultization, as I have called it, has taught us. One is the extraordinary initial opposition that always meets the process. A combination of man's conservatism, dislike of being jarred loose once he has settled down to his satisfaction, a greater dislike of being proved mistaken, an intellectual pride in his achievements so far, and a rooted suspicion of the one who walks apart, have all contributed to this attitude. The principle of the telescope is so much a commonplace of today that the very children catch and accept the idea; yet Galileo was branded as a madman, imprisoned, and only just escaped martyrdom. So certain were the scientists of his time of their reasoning according to "immutable physical law," that they refused to look through the telescope! They knew already what they would see! Joseph Thompson reported a mountain with snow under the equator, and died of a broken heart under the weight of scientific ridicule heaped upon him. Science PROVED

by the “immutable law of physics” - as then understood - that, no matter what the altitude, snow could not exist at such a latitude: only it does! Darwin was fought with savage ferocity. Langley was laughed to death. Why the bitterness? If these things, and all the others were not so, why rend and tear in attacking them? Answer that as you will, it is the history of progress; just as de-occultization is the invariable result.

The other thing which this history has taught us is the very human tendency to ascribe the unexplained to “spirits.” And again we may well ask, why? Just because a table moves, or a strange light shows, or a pencil writes under our hand, surely there is no need of invoking the ghostly or the supernatural. These are facts, perhaps, and some of them may be due to the activities of spirits, for all we know. But if so, we can rest completely assured that they will eventually be found working along the lines of natural law, and not by means of the supernatural, in the literal meaning of that word.

In the meantime, even if some of these things are the results of spirit activity - as they may or may not be - we need not treat them as either spooky or sacred. After all, they are just natural phenomena, and someday they will be de-occultized, like all the rest. Then all at once they will seem as normal and commonplace as well, as radio.

CHAPTER II

Personal Experience

1.

The significance of this book is going to be its content. On the value of that it will stand or fall, both as a claim to interest and as a practical primer of spiritual hygiene. From that point of view it does not matter how it was produced, or what its origin.

But from another point of view it must present its credentials. Most of its teachings will be found, I think, acceptable by ordinary common sense; but occasionally certain things are stated on authority. What is the nature of that authority, and why do we feel that we may credit it?

2.

In the early nineteen-twenties a great many popular “psychic” books were published. A number of them had real value. A regrettable majority were more or less feeble and undigested accounts of alleged personal “communications.” These evidenced an extraordinary credulity on the one side, and an equally extraordinary ineptitude on the other, providing one accepted their major premise of origin. Most of them began with a Ouija board.

The procedure was almost standard. Two people - or a group - fooling with the thing as a lark or out of curiosity. It moves. It becomes coherent. It spells out “messages.”

That was the start, the “take-off.” What happened after that depended on the people involved. The subsequent proceedings ranged from the “communications” of pure spiritualism to speculative philosophy. Nine in ten of them were spoiled for any serious consideration by what might be called the awed approach that inhibited any commonsense editorial appraisal. This was a pity. After a time even those especially interested in such things became inclined to shy off from “another Ouija board book.” Nevertheless, I am inclined to believe that the Ouija board may take honourable place with Sir Isaac Newton’s apple, Watt’s teakettle, Benjamin Franklin’s kite and other historic playthings which have led to many great results.

This is such a book. It too started with a Ouija board, but it does not linger on that phase. The first experience with it followed standard lines. It would not be worth telling had it not an integral connection with Betty’s coming into the picture.

3.

In any research work it is always important to know the equipment of the experimenter. Before March 17, 1919, my own “occult” background might, I suppose, have been called average for a man who had lived an active life. That is to say, I had paid such matters very little attention; and had formed no considered opinions on them one way or another. By way of unconsidered opinion I suppose I would, if called upon to express myself, have taken my stand on the side of scepticism. This was because, like the average man, I referred all “occult” or “psychic” matters to spiritualism; which is also the savage’s method. And spiritualism meant to me either hysteria or clever conjuring or a blend of both. I knew that it had been ‘exposed’.

The literature on the subject was totally unknown to me, except for Hudson’s LAW OF PSYCHIC PHENOMENA, which I had read in college twenty-five years before. A few “queer” things had happened to me, as to most. I had had some experience with such phenomena as the swift transmission of news by savages across wide wastes of sparsely inhabited country. These incidents, and especially this transmission of news, I had been unable to explain by any theory that covered the whole circumstances. But I did not try very hard to explain. I was too busy. Such things did not especially concern me. I did not have to explain them; any more than I had to insist on a detailed understanding of a trolley car before I would ride in it, or a chemical analysis of a cloud of saffron smoke just because I happened by and saw it. Nothing had happened really to catch my interest.

4.

As with numerous others, our interest in the Ouija board began quite casually. On the date I have mentioned, some friends called on us bringing one of these with them. They had bought it as a toy, to try out, without belief that anything in particular would

happen to it. Somebody suggested that the heart-shaped indicator was a clumsy affair, so we substituted a small whiskey glass, upside down.

The occasion was derisive and gay, and pretty muddled. It did not impress me much, but I agreed to try my turn provided my opposite would agree not to fake.

The little glass moved, and without the slightest conscious volition on my part. That much I could determine. How far unconscious muscular action went, I could not for the moment decide. After a time whenever the glass moved away from me I let my fingers go limp and allowed the mechanism to pull them after it. It did so; and once or twice dragged the glass from under them. This was interesting. The force that moved that glass away from me was either an outside force, or my VIS-A-VIS. It certainly was not myself.

Here was a peculiar unanalyzable movement of an inanimate object beneath our fingers. The fact that it spelled out simple sentences of whose purport we none of us had any conscious inkling was an entirely secondary consideration. For my part my main attention was concentrated on the feel of the thing under my fingers. It had, it seemed to me, a peculiar thrill of vitality; but I fully acknowledged to myself that such an effect might well have been imaginative, following a strained attention. It also seemed to me that its movements preceded rather than followed even the slight unconscious muscular pressures; but that too could not be certain.

I am setting down thus minutely the details, not because they were unusual - for I suspect them of being about the average - nor because of any serious experimental value, but merely to convey a sense of background of what later developed, and to indicate our own mental attitude.

The 'messages,' as I say, did not seem to me of any importance whatever; and for their origin I did not search beyond Hudson's SUBCONSCIOUS. A few of them were pertinent and sensible enough, provided we were willing to admit the claim of outside intelligences; but they contributed nothing toward probability of these intelligences, let alone proof. There was not a scrap of 'evidential.' But once, in the middle of our laughter and buffooning, the glass moved with a sharp quick decision as though impatient, in striking contrast to its customary fumbling.

"Why do you ask foolish questions?" it spelled.

Those sitting at the board denied having anything to do with this: it was too apropos! Nevertheless we suspected them, and they suspected each other.

Next our attention was caught by the repeated spelling out of the name Betty. Now there was present a young woman nicknamed Betty. She was standing in front of the fireplace after a very brief trial at the board - and a somewhat scornful trial at that. We insisted that she was being paged and that she must try again. She was reluctant,

thinking this merely an attempt of those sitting to lure her back into the game, but finally yielded and took her place.

Immediately her fingers touched the glass it began to move in circles.

Around and around it went, faster and faster until she and her partner could hardly keep their fingers on it. So comically like a dog frisking in delight was it that we all burst into laughter.

"It's glad to get Betty," said we.

If any of us expected great things because it had what it wanted, we were disappointed. Under her fingers the glass moved with a little more precision, but the so-called 'messages' were much the same, the usual Ouija experience of what might or might not be our own unconscious action: a jumble of unintelligences, a few trivial messages purporting to come from deceased relatives and friends. However, just as the word 'Betty' had recurred before, now an interpolated sentence was repeated from time to time, without relevance.

'Get a pencil,' it spelled, 'Get a pencil,' insistently, over and over.

Betty had heard that there was such a thing as automatic writing, though she had no knowledge of it beyond the mere fact of its existence. Some days later, privately, she did 'get a pencil,' and sat with it poised on a sheet of paper, her hand resting inert and her mental activity reduced to a mere question mark. The pencil began to move just as the whiskey glass had moved on the Ouija board. After some hesitation she came to me about it, probably encouraged by my more analytical interest in the other evening's foolery.

The pencil moved very slowly, and it wrote curiously formed script, without capitals or punctuation, or even spacings, like one long continuous word. It was necessary to go over it painstakingly, dividing the words by vertical marks - when we had determined them. Sometimes we interlined more plainly, in our own hand, what we made them out to be. The result made sense.

Betty assured me that she had, consciously, nothing to do with moving the pencil. Furthermore, she said that she did not know the sense of what had been written until we had puzzled it out. As I knew Betty's complete honesty I believed her.

Now here was a new phase of interest added to the first. Here also, apparently, was manipulation by force outside of consciousness.

Furthermore, it was a reliable field of experiment. Nobody could be certain of the bona fides of a mixed lot of people out for a good time, but I was absolutely certain of Betty. There was no question as to one thing: that her hand was seized and used; and that the seizing and using was not of her conscious brain.

We agreed on a number of things besides this. The seizing and using was by a force outside her own consciousness; * no question of that. The force might be directed by her subconscious. Or it might be by some outside intelligence. That was what purported. It would be silly to adopt such a theory merely because of that claim. It would be equally silly to reject it without further experiment. It would be worse than silly to shy off from the whole subject merely because it was “uncanny” or “unnatural.”

* Not necessarily outside her own SELF, of course.

Similarly as to the content of the writing. It might well be Betty’s own. Or it might, as it purported, come from outside. How could we tell unless we gave it a chance? An arbitrary refusal seemed to us just as “superstitious” as a blind acceptance. Furthermore we could neither of us see how we could come to any harm, mental or otherwise, by such an examination, provided we kept our feet on the ground.

“Let’s give it a sporting chance,” said Betty, “Let’s give ‘them’ a chance to say what ‘they’ want to without cross-examining like shyster lawyers.”

CHAPTER III

The Development of Betty

1.

We worked, then, together at frequent intervals: I as the recorder and observer, Betty as the ‘station.’ The writing itself became easier. After a time the words were divided one from the other. Betty blindfolded her eyes, or looked away from the paper so that she might separate herself as far as possible from what was to come next. I tried to keep close watch of her attitude and reactions; with the resolve to call the whole thing off if, physically or mentally, this experiment seemed to affect her undesirably.

“We must keep open minded,” I warned her, “not only about the thing itself, but also about its effects. If at any time it seems to tire you or to affect your health or nerves, or make you fuzzy-minded, or any of the things everybody is always warning about, we’ll drop it. And we’ll quit cold if what it seems to lead to gets visionary, or doesn’t keep human, or tries to take us off our jobs in any way.”

We had, as I see it, one commanding advantage over average experience. We neither of us approached all this from an emotional angle. Most people do. The customary lure is that of hoped-for communication with the dead.

We had no such desire. We had suffered no recent bereavements. Our interest was of exploration. We wanted to find out, if we could, what it was all about - and why.

Up to this time the phenomenon itself had held our interest, but now the content as well began to attract our attention. I had heard and subscribed to the thoughtless

statement that “spirits” never uttered anything of sense or consequence. The product of this first automatic writing, while often fragmentary, often difficult, often groping, was never silly; and even in its incoherence it seemed to hold fast to a few central ideas. And these ideas were sensible.

For instance, there was a steadfast refusal to give advice or opinion on matters of our everyday lives. The argument seemed to be that everyday life is a series of opportunities for making decisions; that those decisions form character; that making another man’s decisions for him deprives him unwarrantedly of opportunity. That looked to us like sound common sense.

Another bit of common sense - or at least it seemed common sense to me – was the direct statement that the object was not primarily the development of ‘psychic’ power in Betty. That was to be of secondary importance. The main objective was, first, the development of an easier and surer method of communication; and, second, an expansion of her consciousness to a capacity of understanding things to be communicated.

That was a program to enlist any one’s intelligent interest. It was worth the formulation of what, in scientific procedure, is known as a provisional hypothesis, and its adoption ‘without prejudice,’ as the lawyers have it. The provisional hypothesis must be the existence of invisible intelligences. Their actuality must await, for belief, on the outcome.

2.

The automatic writing continued for several months, improving steadily in facility and coherence. Fresh material was supplemented each day by a brief review of principles. This, we were told, was to facilitate their absorption into our mental structure. Also certain simple exercises in bodily, mental and spiritual control were prescribed. In September we were told that soon the writing would cease. It did so.

Shortly afterward I was called away on a business trip. During this absence I happened to read a book entitled OUR UNSEEN GUEST, and on my return I suggested trying the method used by its authors. Accordingly Betty lay with bandaged eyes, and I placed my fingers on her wrist.

At once she slipped easily into a kind of freed or double consciousness. From it she reported various experiences. Her speech was at first halting and stumbling, her phrases fragmentary, as though she were having great difficulty. Apparently this was due to the necessity for running two consciousnesses at once. The normal, from which she spoke, was subordinate, it seemed; her real awareness being centered in a deeper consciousness, from which she reported back.

For a long time that difficulty was so great as almost to obscure coherence. It seemed to me that the automatic writing had been much better. Why abandon it just when it was getting good? But we followed on, as we had agreed between ourselves that we would, and by keeping at it, in due time - just as had the automatic writing - it justified itself.

The idea seemed to be that Betty was to be brought in touch, through the superconsciousness, with realities which she absorbed direct; and with ideas conveyed sometimes in words heard with the "inner ear," sometimes by mental impression. These things she transferred down to her habitual consciousness, which then reported them to me.

She constantly complained of the dilution caused by this transfer. What reached the paper was, according to her, but an unsatisfactory pale shadow of the actuality.

3.

Possibly the handicap of this difficulty was also felt by these Invisibles. Along in February, - nearly a year after the beginnings with the Ouija board - they began to experiment with a third technique.

Betty's voice quite altered in quality and timbre. Her phraseology, too, changed. Some third personality purported to be speaking directly through her.

Progress was exasperatingly slow. After long struggle a single word, sometimes a single syllable, would be explosively enunciated. Often an hour would be consumed in the delivery of a few short sentences. But, as in the other two phases, facility did follow a long patience.

That, in brief, is the story of Betty's training in technique. In the appendix will be found what we have been told, and what we have guessed, of the way it operates.

At present there is often considerable fluency, so that I have trouble keeping up with the transcription; on other occasions there seems to be difficulty. Sometimes the direct voice speaks, at others Betty herself reports word by word as though taking dictation, and again she describes her impressions and experiences in her own way. Sometimes if difficulty arises all three methods are tried.

I might add as an interesting small item that often, when I make a mistake in writing down a word I have mis-heard, I am instantly corrected, although Betty herself is lying below the level of the writing table, on the side opposite my pencil hand, and with her eyes blindfolded. 'Attitude of mind' I once wrote down, and was instantly stopped in mid-sentence. "No, no!" interrupted Betty, "ALTITUDE of mind."

Of course we realized that the choice of these methods probably depended on what was to be got over. Yet we must have some curiosity as to why the elaborate pains and patience?

“What we want is, not merely facility, but a trained intelligent co-operation,” they told us in effect, “Only thus can we command invariable reliability.”

Nevertheless, we argued, others have succeeded at this sort of thing without such training. We instanced several examples. They agreed.

“But attested phenomena of a spontaneous or sporadic character,” said they, “are produced, or made possible at all, by a condition of extreme flexibility. The flexibility, and utility, of unconsciousness is soon lost. It is difficult to stress this sufficiently. Plasticity and pliability are essential, splicing both the higher and lower consciousnesses. Rigidity permits no impress. Therefore, one of two things is necessary; either unconscious* manipulation, or trained intelligent co-operation. Between the two lie all the failures.”

* i.e., invisible manipulation of a totally unconscious station.

This was satisfactory as a general proposition.

So there we were, apparently ready to set sail. We had begun to understand what was meant by ‘intelligent cooperation.’ Betty was to be fitted for an introduction into the realities of another consciousness, - that of these invisible intelligences. She was to go to them, instead of their coming to her. It was described as a ‘lessening of density,’ a ‘change of specific gravity.’ The matter was more complicated than that, but the statement expresses the gist of it. Basic concepts were to be added to hers, new perceptions were to be developed. In a word, her equipment was to be expanded. And as intelligent co-operation presupposes participation, her consciousness was not taken from her in the customary deep trance. That does not mean she remained conscious as you and I are conscious. She was unaware of her physical surroundings, - she went ‘somewhere else.’ - but in that somewhere else she retained her faculties of thought. She was not put out, drugged, put asleep. She was transferred.

Even in what we have called direct communication she was merely placed one side. She expressed this in various ways, ‘I must not listen’: ‘I must carry this across without looking at it.’ Occasionally, but rarely and only for certain exact accuracies, she goes so ‘far away’ - as it seems to her - that apparently there remains to her only a shred of consciousness. But that shred is always there, and through it the approach to ‘intelligent co-operation’ is always possible.

4.

By this time our original interest in the mere mechanics of the thing had given way to an increasing respect for the teaching itself. It was forward moving and logical. It was systematic. It possessed a depth of kindly wisdom. Above all its suitability to our own needs was uncannily accurate. In general it was clear and consistent. Occasionally, to be sure, some of the fragments of indirect approach to a large subject were vague to us

for a time; but always we found that, sooner or later, they fitted together. Gradually we came to have confidence that this would come about whenever we ran into mists, and invariably the confidence was justified.

Indeed, so profoundly satisfying was the material itself, that while of course, the question of its origin remained important, that importance became secondary. It was conceivable that all this might be a product of Betty's "subconscious." If so, this experiment was bringing to light a trend of thought distinctly foreign to her usual consciousness, and outside her remembered experience. If this were so, and if by this simple technique we could make this unsuspected part of herself available, why then we would be very foolish not to use it.

In the succeeding pages I shall speak of the Invisibles as distinct individuals, though discarnate. This seems to be the easiest thing to do, and it has the merit of expressing my present belief. I do not insist on this view for others; nor even urge it. The value of the thing offered must lie in itself, regardless of its source. It may originate In Betty (in which case she is more of a wonder than I had supposed): Betty may by this mechanism tap some wide source of wisdom, some reservoir, some 'universal mind': or in this state of divided consciousness she may fall into harmony with the stored or accumulated experience of humankind. I do not know; and anybody is free and welcome to adopt any hypothesis that appeals. But here the thing is. It did not exist before as a formulated whole, either in our minds or in any of our reading: it came - and is coming - in the manner before set down. Those are the facts. They may be explained as you will, but they exist.

The following pages were assembled about a year and a half after the beginning of the whole experience. The material that had come by then comprised a little over four hundred typewritten pages. This was by no means all teaching. A great deal of it was personal; and a great deal more of it was devoted to experiments in acquiring technique and in Betty's development. Consequently for general consumption it was becoming increasingly necessary to separate the teaching and correlate what we had into some sort of logical sequence. We realized perfectly that it was only a beginning, and a fragmentary beginning at that; but we had found that even that much had given us a new outlook and a fresh grip on life.

Furthermore, the few friends who had followed the experiment also appeared to have found it strengthening and inspiring.

And now was the time to do it. One thing at least I had learned in a life of explorations in strange countries: If first impressions are not set down while they are fresh, they are lost. Striking things become familiar commonplaces. The old timer no more thinks of mentioning them than he would think of mentioning the fact that houses have doors. All this first stuff might be tentative and only a beginning. Still, beginnings must be

made; and for those approaching the subject anew, as we had approached it, precisely the beginning that helped us would probably, help them. It might be, as our Invisibles said, only preliminary; only a Primer. We have to have primers in a primary school.

That was over fifteen years ago. Since then we have added nearly fifteen hundred pages to the record. And from this perspective we can see that our judgment was good. The later material has indeed the profounder significance and illumination. In the light of that illumination it would be possible to rewrite my earlier compilation. We comprehend better now what the beginnings were about, how they fit into the whole scheme, which is even yet slowly disclosing itself. But would that be wise? These first four hundred pages brought us to a certain point from which we passed to an understanding of the rest. Our progress was wisely conducted. It seems reasonable that the same stepping stones, in the same order, that offered us a foothold may serve others as well.

It is wonderful exploration, a whole new country. The trails are dim. Perhaps sometimes we must back track. But they seem to be leading somewhere pretty definite. A shout across to those on other tracks encourages us to believe that they all converge.

CHAPTER IV

Proportion

1.

When first I confronted the task of putting those four hundred pages in some sort of logical sequence, I was appalled. There was no logical sequence. The method had been, apparently, to deal with a dozen different subjects simultaneously, adding to each haphazard and at intervals. That, at the time, seemed unnecessarily baffling. Later we gathered that this had a reason. It must be remembered that the ideal was of 'intelligent co-operation,' and to this end Betty's own mind was never placed completely in abeyance. Consequently, if the interest of the subject under discussion sufficiently aroused its attention, then there was always danger of its running off on a tangent of its own, adding its own ideas or conclusions. This we called 'coloring.' To avoid that, a subject would be carried on for a time, and then abruptly dropped. Later, perhaps weeks later, it would be resumed. In the meantime a dozen others had been introduced and partially carried on.

"How shall I begin?" I asked helplessly.

"The balanced proportion, the balanced ration of life is the first thing to impress on the world," said they. "Balance is the big thing to emphasize. The world is crippled now because of its withered spiritual faculties."

There should be, they explained further, a certain working proportion between what we call the material and what we call the spiritual. If that proportion is overbalanced ON EITHER SIDE trouble always results. By attainment of the right proportion we shall in one way or another gain all the things worthwhile in this life and the next. In fact, the whole problem of successful living can be expressed in that one simple formula: attain actively the proportions of life. "The rounding out of proportion is the foundation of everything" they told us. As a general proposition that sounds broad and simple enough. But when we approach the problem in search of detail, then we find ourselves in face of the greater mysteries. How is the proportion wrong, as to the world; how is it wrong as to me? How is the balance to be struck?

"You have enfeebled the word 'God,'" they said. "The world has grown ashamed of the spirit. It mortifies it just as the old ascetics used to mortify the body."

This thought is not new, perhaps, but it needs freshening and interpretation. The balance happens to be tilted on one side now: but it was tilted on the other, and it may be so again. "Religion too often ignores the material and so repels the vigorously human. That balance should be restored, for the proportion is wrong there too. Weld lovable, humorous, vigorously practical human life with spiritual dictatorship, an inward sense of proportion. Welcome and accept all natural human instincts, all the savoring of life, but permeate them with the vitality of the spirit. Those who savor even the highest forms of life without this permeation of the spirit will stagnate, sink backward, imprison themselves in matter. With them the spiritual sense becomes atrophied."

There is no doubt, to epitomize their further remarks on this subject, that the main trouble with us now, in this age of science and what we call hard-headed thinking, is just that lack of proportion which atrophies our spiritual awareness. And there is equally no doubt, knowing mankind's tendency always to overdo in reaction, that our main future danger is likely to be a swing back to the narrow, un-godlike, inhuman 'spirituality' that mortifies the flesh, passes blue laws, neglects plain business, and lets the world go hang.

Therefore while our Invisibles lay the most stress where it belongs, on the present spiritual inertness of the world; they are also continually warning us that only by a hearty mingling in all worldly matters, a complete sharing of physical life, a whole-souled attention to our own business and our relations to people, will we, or anybody else, ever get anywhere. Over and over, in many variations of form, they repeat this injunction. "Take up more and wider interests. Grasp the joy of living. Mingle more with people," they admonish again and again. I must confess that the common sense of this, coupled with their refusal to direct or advise on any detail, went far toward enlisting my attention in the beginning.

So then the first proposition of all is very simple: the balance, the proportion of spiritual and material is out, with the overemphasis at present on the material. But what are we going to do about it? It is all very well to say "let us be more spiritual," but how are we to accomplish it? A vague, expansive, indefinite resolve to be a source of light never got anybody anywhere. All life is a practical affair to be gone at in a practical fashion. That is just as true of the spiritual as of the material. Day dreaming or vague enthusiastic mysticism gets us nowhere.

That is something we must come to realize; that is what repels the average human work-a-day man when you say spiritual to him. He is instinctively a practical man, dealing with life in a practical way, and his intuitions as to that are perfectly sound. If spirituality is in reality an integral part of life, as the Invisibles tell us so definitely, then its development and use must be a practical matter that can be worked on just like any other desirable ingredient of life. With this the Invisibles agree:

"Keep the emphasis on the usability and practical application of the teaching," they said. "Necessarily in order to redress the balance we have to stimulate the spiritual side; but the aim is not the development of psychic powers. To the world the interest will reside in practical application to everyday life; a thing it doubts as to the most of spiritual development. The natural tendency is to seek psychic powers rather than practice human living. All truly spiritual teachings have been acknowledged as truth, have carried within themselves the conviction of truth; but always they have been put aside as unattainable. We are trying to give a commonplace working plan to make them attainable. The gap has grown wider and wider between ideal and achievement because of one-sided education, lack of cultivation, and even lack of acknowledgment, of the spiritual being. We try to give a graded instruction from kindergarten up, to convey a method of arousing and stimulating and strengthening spiritual faculties dormant through generations of neglect."

2. MAKE IT SO.

Before proceeding with this graded instruction, however, it is absolutely essential that we realize one thing fully: THE NECESSITY OF SOMETHING BESIDES INTELLECTUAL RECOGNITION OF TRUTH. Let us consider this carefully, for its application is on every page of what is to follow.

We must not only read and understand: we must DO until we absorb into the substance of ourselves. There is in that the difference between the athlete and the person who has read the rules of the game, the art critic and the painter who has struggled with pigments. We must not only see that it is so: we must MAKE IT SO. This is not knowledge: it is development.

"Do not merely file the letters we send with instructions and advice," went some of the earliest automatic writing. "Read them over and ask if you are acting on them." "Put

most of your energy into doing a few simple things advised, instead of trying to grasp too much at a time. Do not get the attitude of 'yours received and placed on file.' We want you to go only as fast as you can develop. Otherwise we would be taking you from useful things of the world into a no man's land of idle speculative dreaming. This is far from our purpose. Your surface mind would go through surface evolutions which would have no growth or corresponding demand from within. You must use and exercise our teachings, not merely acknowledge them as interesting. Mankind has always accepted so comfortably the revelations of the chosen prophets of the world, and has as lightly fulfilled its obligations by acknowledging their truth and dismissing them; ever looking for something new before they have acquired or digested the old."

"Your progress is in your own hands. We can do little but watch you gain necessary strength before we can help you further. That is the law. We can only act as the complement to the act. Of yourself you must drag yourself at least near your idea, so that you can reach it in moments, before you go further. Otherwise it is just a shallow intellectual thing.

There is no substance at all in pure intellect. It is just a very fine shadow. The simplest achievement is so much more important. Pure intellect is aloof, unrelated."

"Mere intellectual recognition of a truth is merely the empty vein; the real force is the volition, the pulsing life-giving fluid of utilization." **

"We can widen your vision, we can give you the impetus, but then we must leave you to manifest or retrogress. If you could know how anxiously we watch the seed, how yearningly we strive to continue the stimulation! But we are not permitted to carry the growth itself. That is in your hands. Truth MUST manifest itself in action. No step ahead can ever be taken until the fulfillment of what is revealed. We say again, revelation MUST be manifested in people's lives before more can be given from this side.

Slow growth is the only reality. All other recognition is but the intellectual acknowledgment. Your wealth, as we measure it, is the power you gain to become in solid reality what at first you have been merely experimentally."

"We repeat: we cannot emphasize too frequently the fact that mere recognition of occasional truth is not good enough. You must soak it up, live in it, let it permeate you, let it control you before it is yours. Nothing can be achieved merely by conception. This book is absolutely useless if taken merely intellectually."

"It must be done, not under our manipulation, as it were, but in full strength and purpose of your human faculties. These alone can act successfully on your physical world."

3. THE NECESSITY OF EFFORT.

The thing we are to strive for, then, is a recognition of the spiritual forces about us; a contact with them; and through that contact the establishment of a more balanced proportion between the material and the spiritual. Does that sound mystic and vague and fuzzy? It is only a general proposition; and we can lay it aside and come back to it with what will be fuller understanding. It is just a point to take off from.

The first step in this process, we were told, consists in establishing conscious contact with the spiritual forces about us. And, like all first steps, it is the most difficult. It has the disadvantage of being something new and unaccustomed. It has the handicap of seeming to be groping and intangible until we have found for ourselves a handle by which to seize it. And above all, the 'first dead lift,' as they call it, must be accomplished unaided. Once the process is started we will get help in abundance according to our capacity to receive, but we must by our own effort break through.

"In everything you do the amount of success depends on the amount of energy you put into it," said the Invisibles. "The force we bring into the world, let us call it inspirational force for the sake of giving it a name, comes from a combination of conditions created by the person himself. We can only take advantage of that combination. Once a person of his own force establishes it, we can act on it. The initial step is your work. This force is, roughly speaking, emanations from you which meet complementary forces from this side. We utilize what you unconsciously possess. You were born with wings: why prefer to crawl through life? You acquire exactly in proportion as you arouse yourself to take."

"It is just by determination and faith that you accomplish the first dead lift. That manifestation with yourself and by yourself, you must get before you will gain any response. That is what people do not realize. They don't put any strength into it, and when it will not work at once, they go the other way. You must get that strength for yourself."

4. CONTACT.

The thing at which we are aiming - access to the great ocean of spiritual influence - must, for lack of a better term, be called spiritual contact and permeation. The term is inadequate. But assume for the moment this hypothesis, simply as a working basis: that we are living in, surrounded by, a finer more powerful substance. You can call it what you please - ether, electric field, or spiritual vibrations. When we are pervious we are permeated by it and obtain from it various elements of expansion and growth. But ordinarily in our world-absorbed consciousness is no chink or cranny by which its influence can enter. We are like people swimming in a sea completely encased in diving suits that admit no drop of the life-giving water. Only on comparatively rare occasions when we are off our guard, so to speak, do we permit ourselves even unconsciously to be reached by it.

But this contact or permeation CAN be brought about by a definite process of personal volition. Consider this carefully, for it is most important - this idea that we are capable of enlarging our VOLUNTARY capacity to receive.

The first essential of this volition must be a genuine energy of desire. We must WANT to reach out in harmony with spiritual forces. That WANT, that desire is essential, and it is all that is essential, as a point of departure. We are perhaps at first doing this only with our heads, but later it Will unite with the rest of our beings, what we vaguely call our hearts, our souls.

However, the mere undefined desire is only the taking off place. If it is to send us anywhere we must have some indication of the direction in which we are to go. What is this spiritual contact like, and how are we to reach for it?

Possibly a faint notion of the process may be obtained from analogy. Most people proceed through life 'busy with their own thoughts.' That is the way, ninety-nine times out of a hundred, you will find yourself if you go out for a walk. The teeming inner life of your mental activities holds you, so that you are cramped within yourself and things outside are half noticed or perhaps not noticed at all. Now stop short and let things about you into your consciousness. You will be surprised to find how many actually have had no existence in you. Birds' singing for example: a moment ago you literally did not hear them. The line of trees on the hill: you sensed vaguely that they were there because you were staring straight at them, but the cast of them against the pale green sky behind, the light on their leaves, the curious molten look of their foliage in mass, those things simply were not. You saw the fields perhaps, but you did not sense them. The EFFECT of the landscape, whatever it might be, was shut out because you were occupied within the narrow confines of yourself. Until you voluntarily threw open your spirit to wider influences than those of yourself, they could not claim you. By this shift of attention I do not mean a detailed intellectual appraising of the surroundings, a cataloging, an enumerating of features and species and lines of composition. That is another, a special job. I mean simply the expansion that is the result of the shift from a busy mental concentration within to a voluntary wide opening to influence from without. That in itself is a form, a simple form, of spiritual contact.

The appreciation of beauty, in the sense of a surrender to its influence rather than a critical analysis, is another example both of what I mean and of a simple spiritual contact. "It is the biggest uplifting material thing you possess," said the Invisibles. "Some may find the hidden spark in a jewel, others in a temple drum or a Buddha. Beauty is a great and quiet teacher." But what I am asking here is that in your response to beauty you notice the difference between the out-going expanded feel of you, and the indrawn close-huddled concentration of ordinary affairs.

Another example you can find, perhaps, if you are a lover of dogs. Sometime when you are walking with them, you look up at them wagging busily along down the trail ahead, and for a moment you stop thinking about things. "Good old pups," you say to yourself, and with that phrase is a distinct out-expanding feeling beyond your ordinary boundaries. That is a minor instance; and I throw it in as one casts a fly on blank water. It may convey a glimpse to somebody.

Please note, I am not trying as yet to give any complete formula or directions for spiritual contact; I am merely trying to convey the feeling of expansion and wide-heartedness, of getting outside one's self.

Once one has recognized the feeling I mean, one goes after it consciously for the joy there is in it.

If this analogy is clear, then we are ready to begin the kindergarten.

CHAPTER V

Elementary Steps

1. RELAXING.

Most so-called occult instruction seems to begin with relaxing. It is good practice, whether one believes in the ultimate result or not, and one finds it surprisingly difficult to cease all tension, not only in the body, but in every thought of the brain. It is at first a man-size job; and paradoxically enough, one is likely to find one's self shortly in a state of tension trying to get rid of tension! Nothing marvellous immediately follows. But it is essential, and is the first simple exercise toward the control that will eventually result in the spiritual contact and absorption. Betty's first instructions, through automatic writing, were concerned only with this point.

"Contraction," they pointed out, "results in concentrating and condensing on the physical."

The job becomes much simpler if you just bear in mind one thing: the key to it is imagination, not will. Nobody ever successfully willed himself free from tension. Rather picture to yourself the condition as though it already existed. For instance try thinking of your legs as heavy, and then successively your arms and your head. Picture your face as smiling faintly, but do not actually smile. See that your breathing is regular and slow, and with each exhalation think of your body as sinking heavy and inert.

"You must let go absolutely," said the Invisibles, "as though you were falling through space. After relaxing absolutely, hold the condition as long as possible; but as soon as it becomes a strained condition of mind, abandon the effort and start over again. By degrees you can hold it longer and longer."

At first all this should be practiced lying down; later you will find yourself able to do it anywhere and at any time. It is rather a fascinating game - and disconcerting to find how your left shoulder will tighten up just as you get your right leg straightened out! It is, incidentally, of immediate practical value in that it is physically refreshing.

The removal of mental tension might seem more abstract and difficult, but actually the technique is just as simple. In fact we apply it a thousand times a day without knowing it. For every time we turn our full attention upon sense impressions, merely as such and without regard to their significance, our intellect pauses.

“Empty the foreground of your mind,” said the Invisibles. And the first step in doing this is to replace our usual intent intellectual foreground with a casual sensory one. Little discontinuous sounds, passive and placid vistas, - anything not too actively stimulating - these are ideal for our purpose. Under their influence our usual headlong intellectual and emotional Impetus quickly subsides, leaving the mind like a calm lake.

Once the mental rush is checked in this way, space is created in which to take the next step. We must now reach out, - SPREAD out is more descriptive - not yet with any definite idea of contact with the spiritual world, but toward that wide-hearted, expansive, outside-yourself feeling of which I have tried to give a glimpse.

“It is not easy to gain a perception of this process; nor, after we have got the hang of how it feels, is it easy to go on with it faithfully and with conviction.” The results grow in us from so feeble a beginning that they do not reach even our watchful consciousness for a long time. That is a period of faith. If we are not convinced that it is going to work, we can at least refrain from a conviction that it is NOT going to work.

We must foredetermine success, but above all we must not EXPECT anything. Our job is to thrust out the busy thoughts of the world we live in, to relax physically, and to strive with a real desire for that wide-hearted receptivity of which we have had a glimpse.

At this point two warnings should be emphasized. First, it must be thoroughly realized that this relaxation does not mean utter passivity. “Now that you have learned to relax, you must study the degree of relaxation,” said they. “There is such a thing as too much abandon. Your force becomes inactive. The thing to strive for is a subtle combination of relaxation and a certain subconscious will power or determination. Keep in mind subconsciously all your faculties, but empty the foreground of your mind. The passivity is not that of the spirit but is entirely physical and intellectual. Maintain yourself forcefully, NOT TO COMBAT BUT TO HAVE STRENGTH TO RECEIVE. What you contribute of spiritual readiness measures the strength you gain by contact.”

The second warning is, DO NOT STRAIN. The moment stress, or expectancy is allowed, that moment the doors swing shut. Instead of absorbing the subtle effect of your

landscape, you are cataloging, or analyzing or hunting. When you find yourself in this condition, cease from all effort and allow your attention to drift to other things. Let the traffic of your mind proceed for a few moments. Then begin anew.

“Keep the body relaxed, but free, and stimulate the spirit to respond with a great and rising wonder similar to that inspired by the overwhelming beauties of nature. Unstopper your imprisoned spirit; let it rise blithely and naturally. Enjoy yourself.”

2. ASPIRATION.

When we have gained the ability to do these two simple things, without strain, without effort, above all without stiff concentration of mind - that is, relax physically and mentally but with a spiritual alertness beneath that makes our inner selves feel wide open, as they feel wide open when we consciously and absorbently and uncritically look at something beautiful - then we can go on to the conscious reaching for spiritual contact, or “The absorption into your heart of the reality.”

This is so foreign to our everyday habit of thinking that it is a little difficult to express. It is one of those things we understand only after we have worked into it. The essential beginning is that we must DESIRE a fuller life, whether we know what it is or not. The practical beginning is to get our machinery assembled, as we have described, and then to experiment with it until it works - as it surely will if our desire is genuine.

It took more than a year of hammering away at this desire concept before we felt we had really grasped it and could use it. They described it in a hundred different ways. “It is a genuine aspiration, not an intellectual curiosity,” they told us, “a yearning aspiration, almost like the attraction of needle and magnet; something above that can almost be recognized as a complement of what exists below. When this recognition, this genuine aspiration is established, then you have your spiritual impetus. It is humble but unwavering, not an arrogant demand. It is in reality a great natural instinct which life there (here?) generally inhibits. It is just a law. When you liberate certain gases chemically, they seek their chemical affinities, just so you liberate your spirit and it automatically follows the law. Do you see the difference between this and letting go all holds and waiting for somebody to lift you up? The latter is enervating and quite useless.” “The energy with which you demand of us will be the measure of what you will get. IT IS NOT SO MUCH THE ENERGY OF DEMAND AS THE SHOWING OF A FORCE THAT CALLS ITS COMPLEMENT. It is the energy of measure for measure, given and received!”

“Do this continually, hourly; when possible, even momentarily lifting your thoughts out of and holding them free. We use the phrase ‘lift your thoughts’ conventionally. In reality ‘spread your thoughts’ would have been more accurate. This permeating spirit is not so much above you as outside you; but near you, surrounding you, within touch if you would but believe it. Reach out, not up. When you expand thus with your heart, or

think horizontally, or whatever you want to call it, you come in contact with this spiritual substance, for the reason that if you go beyond your boundaries you must enter it. If you find this hard to grasp, just make a mixture of energy, feeling of desire to get on, of the intense happiness and outgoing that beauty gives you.”

This is a slow process, and many times it will seem foolish to you, and the hope for any results will appear fantastic. Remember that it must be not only a gradual natural growth, but also often requires stimulation to overcome arrested development of dormant faculties. Do not anticipate results. Take the rewards as they come; and there are such rewards at every step. The first mere physical relaxation brings physical rest that can be got in no other way; the open-hearted feeling when acquired is a pleasure and a mental and nerve refreshment in itself. For the moment be satisfied with that; and get the habit. In time you will be able to do it “hourly, and even momentarily.”

One more warning repeated before going on to the first effect of establishing this spiritual contact. DO NOT STRAIN. “The moment you try to create, to pump UP, to reach for definite things, you are in grave danger. You may get almost anything. Better to stay asleep on earth, far better. You will never get anywhere if you are thinking of what you are going to get. In that case you would be just a curiosity seeker. It is deadly hopeless to try that. You will be led into a blind alley and left there. That is done with so many people!”

“Belief in the attainability of higher powers is a legitimate ambition, but they must be grown into faithfully. The amateur method of seeking growth or spiritual freedom is by a terrible concentration of mind, but this must be replaced by expansion of the heart.”

“How can I bring to you strongly enough this first principle? It is to expand in spirit, not intellectually. The spirit is usually like a desiccated fruit inside the brain. Let your spirit soak up in a simple and pleasant fashion until it is a fitting mate for your brain. Lay bare your problems to the influence of the great expansion which will bring your solution. This is the only real channel which will bring permanent wholesome psychic influence. It is the safe and open highroad. There are other ways, of course, but they are exploration.”

3. AUTOMATIC ACTION.

But if we are not to strive for any definite results, I hear you say, what can we expect to happen?

Take it on faith for a moment that from the world of the spiritual that is part of us, and should be a balanced part of us, comes an instant almost automatic response to any genuine contact. This seems to be a law of wide application.

It might be described as spontaneous action of the spiritual functions, as they are developed, very much like the action of the heart in our physical bodies. “When once

you get hold of anything of this sort so it is inside you, at once it begins to work automatically, so you don't have to fuss with it. There is, pertaining to each level of life, what might be called involuntary action. It is like digestion in that it works automatically to produce results within its particular sphere of influence or zone of action."

Incidentally this automatic action seems to be a law that follows all effort, putting forth of volition. Whenever a thing is desired enough to cause an outgoing of determination, automatic action begins. Thus on each act of will depend many things. That is outside the scope of our present discussion: but later in these pages the working of that law will recur many times: so it is just as well to get the idea now.

At this particular point we are concerned with it only as it assures us that the moment we succeed, however feebly, in gaining spiritual awareness or contact, a kind of chemical action takes place; we are getting results of some sort, growth has begun.

As to what, definitely, this automatic action produces must be left until later. For the moment it is enough to know that, while the first dead lift is ours, we are sure of aid in accordance with our effort once the first small establishment is made.

CHAPTER VI

Later Development

1. HABITUAL CONSCIOUSNESS.

Even if we practice spiritual contact only once in a while it can become a wonderful experience - one that will bring a unique peace and understanding. And in the crises of life it can give support and illumination unimaginable. And that is not the complete picture.

To catch a glimpse of greater possibilities let us return to our illustrative country walk. You will recall the feeling of expansion, of getting outside one's self, of widened being, when we stopped to include in our consciousness the influence of a beauty hitherto held outside by our preoccupation within. There is no doubt that the pleasure and benefit of our walk would be greatly enhanced could we MAINTAIN that outreaching expansion, could we CONTINUE to see and admit within ourselves the influences outside. But we don't. We hold it for a minute, and then something reminds us of something and our busy brains are off like dogs on a scent. The trouble is that our established habit is against us.

When we paused at my suggestion on the hilltop we opened ourselves to the outside by a conscious effort. When that effort was withdrawn we dropped back automatically. We did not have the habit of keeping open to the outside. This we must acquire if we are to

admit naturally, continuously an influence we have enjoyed only for a moment. Otherwise the instant we relax vigilance our thoughts and emotions will seize on us and drag us back with them into their busy little cozy lair.

And exactly the same is true of the more complete contact we have been talking about. If we are satisfied with just trying it on once in a while, most of the possible benefit will be lost.

“It is an HABITUAL SPIRITUAL CONSCIOUSNESS they are after,” Betty reported at one time. “The gaining of this does not mean straining or striving; it is more a matter of how frequently you think of it, just live it calmly and comfortably. Walk through your days as a creature with folded wings, conscious of the possession of another element and the ability to enter it. When worries and world annoyances come, you can rise strongly and determinedly, spend a few moments in calm, and at once descend reinforced to the object in hand.”

“The thing is not to settle down into yourself, but to be always dependent on the companionship of your spirit, that seems to be just above the surface, like a mooring, or buoy. The soul has to live in the body, ordinarily; but in this way you make your body live with your soul.”

Over and over in varying and sometimes picturesque forms this idea was presented to us. HABITUAL consciousness of the spiritual association must be gained; HABITUAL living in wide heartedness, receptiveness, must be compassed; HABITUAL appreciation of the necessity for, and hence living desire for, this spiritual contact must become normal. When it becomes a mode of life, then we have gained the thing constant in ourselves.

“The only way to build it,” said they, “is to make it a workaday ordinary kind of affair of which you are aware all the time about your business. If you want to get anywhere, you have to take this philosophy home with you, and dress it, and eat it, and breathe it, and motor down town with it. When you are able to do that you are ready for something more. At present anything more than what you have would overflow into merely an intellectual appreciation.”

In other words, to sum up, we must not only understand intellectually what spiritual contact is, but we must “make it so.” We must not only “make it so” occasionally, but we must gradually learn to make it a more and more consistent habit.

But there is another, and very essential, consideration. We must not only make a growing habit of spiritual contact: we must also keep it natural and vital. Such things have a fatal tendency to slump into a kind of mechanical ritual, conscientiously and laboriously performed for the good of the soul. Better far to seek contact less often and keep its eager and spontaneous freshness.

“The moment you begin to think about it too one-sidedly,” said they, “you become self-conscious. What are you going to do about it? Why, go where you can’t be self-conscious; or else get another idea of some sort in your head. Nature is one way: sunsets, stars, moonlight, frogs at night. You can’t be self-conscious then. Snap go the bonds, and you are all right. There is another way: through a thing you love, even if it is only a horse or a dog or a plant. But it can’t be done by just saying you are going to do it; any more than you can just tell a man to talk French.”

As time goes on we will be able to reach for contact more and more often without “disciplining” ourselves too much. But at first “it is not easy to be loose-skinned and natural. There comes a reaction-a danger.”

And above all we must dodge the idea that this training is going to make Superior Beings of us over night. “Months of successful effort must elapse, until you are steeped, saturated, permeated with the fluid strength of spiritual contact. At first you are struggling in a kind of blind instinct to gather strength, but without being able to see what you have achieved. Keep your faith in the vitality of effort. It requires mastering before you feel the repose, the assurance of strength and progress.”

“The only relaxation is in accustomedness.”

2. STABILITY.

Little by little, as we succeed in making spiritual contact habitual, we may expect to come into possession of a quality they sometimes called stability.

Stability, as a word, seems to have been accepted through lack of a better. As used by them, it connotes something more than the usual meaning of steadfastness.

It represents, rather, a definite positive quality within, which forms a constant to which we can refer ourselves; a core around which our active lives can be organized; an anchor to windward in times of stress. Betty’s approach to this idea was by the usual roundabout method of symbolic experiences.

“I’ve got to climb and to work - a ladder - steep, hard work,” ran one of her early reports, “and it’s got to be done enthusiastically and lightly and vigorously and with steadfast purpose. I feel like a hod carrier climbing a ladder. As long as I don’t feel the weight and the climb - what is it when you feel adequate to a thing: you have a tremendous load, but your enthusiasm makes you unaware of it, so you don’t feel it and are eager to do it? I know what it is like: it’s like the reason the pressure of the atmosphere does not crush your body. That is what you have to be if you are not to cave in, get crushed.

“Such curious work, such queer work. Certain processes that are like exercises, unproductive in themselves but necessary for strengthening.

That is what I am doing: acquiring I don't know what. This is an effort at sustaining a condition. You don't know how much steadfastness of effort it takes. I explained how you had to keep up a certain pressure in order not to collapse. That's what I have to do. It must be done or we'll never get anywhere, we'll always be dabblers. It is like the stakes you drive to keep plants from being blown around and broken. That is what they want us to make. Until we have it to support us, it is all too unstable and uncertain.

"I drove a big immovable iron stake. That was my contact. Having secured myself to that, I built around it, quite wide and loose, a thing which concealed its rigidity. It seemed to symbolize stability with malleability. We seem to have to play little games like that. You must have something to which to refer yourself: first as a stake in water swirling about; then as planted in sand; and then as a fixed point in space. It doesn't matter how you symbolize it, but YOU MUST HAVE SOMETHING CONSTANT IN YOURSELF."

"They're all trying to break it down," she cried on another occasion, "and I can't hold it together. It's like a reservoir always in danger of being broken down by pressure from without. If it were to break down you would lose everything in it, and it would be almost impossible to rebuild. Failures are very bad. Just when I was thinking about strengthening the walls and feeling full of confidence in my ability to keep it from caving in, pressure was put on it from without; and in spite of the fact that I ran around shoving here and shoving there it all crumbled in. It was heartbreaking. It all crumbled in and all the annoying things, the destructive things, the detrimental things came whooping in. The reason it caved in was because I was working with little materials instead of maintaining a tremendous pressure inside the reservoir. If I had done that I could have more than equalized. Instead of holding up the walls with my feeble earth strength, I ought to have concentrated on filling with my own spiritual inflow. You cannot hold against pressure from without in detail or in spots. You must maintain the whole level. This is an attempt in various ways to make me realize that the pressure must be from within outwards. What we must work for is the feeling of inward force and pressure which is what we call the inward spiritual consciousness. Until they are perfectly sure of stability they are afraid to go on."

The applications and uses of this quality spread out fanwise in every direction. It is through them that this philosophy attains much of its significance and value. But that is a large subject, and one which must be left until later.

CHAPTER VII

Personal Experience Again

1.

Enough of the text has been given in the preceding chapters to convince the reader that the stuff is direct, simple and logical in expression. Take the section I called MAKE IT SO. I have set down its sentences without change, and in exactly the order they were given. But those sentences came to us almost literally one at a time over a period of a year and a half. They were scattered here and there in a mass of material on a dozen other subjects. They had to be dug out and placed one after the other in Juxtaposition; and when that was done, we had a complete short essay, properly formed and proportioned.

Mind you, there was no Juggling in all this. On each occasion I put down on its appropriate card in a card index the fact that something had been said on the make-it-so idea, with the page number. Or on automatic action, or the substance of thought, or whatever. Then when the time arrived for compilation I simply extracted each reference, in its original order, from the main body, and copied it down. I did this mechanically, without editing or "interpretation"; and I confess I was amazed that what had heretofore seemed to be brilliant fragments made so considered a whole. This make-it-so section represents twenty-five entries on the card index, ranging from page 1 to page 390 of the record!

This method, of carrying forward a great many subjects at the same time without clearly defining any one of them, was rather confusing. Just as we began to glimpse some sort of sense in what at the moment was under consideration, that subject would be dropped flat. The apparent inconsequence was maddening: the fragments were interesting and inspiring. "Virtue," we were told one day, "is not an end in itself, but a measure of growth," which remark condenses a great deal of wisdom in a few words. Sometimes they were beautiful in phrasing, "deprived of the brooding beatitude of country-hearted things," for example. But for a long time we groped. Only after it occurred to us to assemble together on one sheet of paper all the scattered entries on one card, did we find that we were in possession of a series of interrupted sequences. Then the basic logic of the whole began to reveal itself as through a thinning fog.*

* In the delicate job of extracting the sequences from the mass of material, and in keeping them in logical order, my brother, Harwood White, of Santa Barbara, has been of great assistance.

This was in itself a remarkable phenomenon; or at least so it appeared to me. But as a method it was baffling, and laborious. Sometimes, pretty impatiently, I asked myself

the question you will ask yourselves: why did they not state what they were driving at, in logical order and in so many words?

One reason I have already touched upon. It is worth repeating. They wanted to state what THEY were driving, at. They wanted no contributions or dilutions from Betty. Such contributions - unconscious of course – were inevitable if a subject was defined enough to arouse her interest. Then it would be impossible to determine what was original matter and what resulted from association of ideas in the station's own subconscious. We called this "coloring." It could be best avoided, it seemed, by attacking the subject in these brief darting raids from different angles. For a fuller discussion I must again refer you to the appendix.

Parenthetically, that portion of our experiences that had to do with development, as distinct from the teaching, was largely aimed at the elimination of this coloring. The mind of the ordinary sensitive is, by the very fact of sensitivity, peculiarly prone, under almost any stimulus, to seize upon a content of its storehouse mind and gallop off with it down to its logical conclusion. If one is naturally "psychic" one may easily and promptly get something extra-normal. But there will be with it an awful amount of chaff for a few grains of wheat. The better and more rugged the physical health, the easier the contact; the better the nervous and spiritual control, the less likely a runaway into irrelevancies. The effort with Betty seemed directed toward these things, and NOT toward the development of "psychic power." The thesis appeared to be that only by an emphasis on everyday living could anything approaching habitual reliability be attained.

In this effort, interestingly enough, the "Invisibles" asserted that they were groping, were experimenting, just as much as we were! They tried several schemes which they abandoned after short trials. This necessity of experiment, it is worth repeating, was because her technique was to be exactly the opposite of the usual procedure. Ordinarily, you will recall that we were told, the communicating intelligences came all the way to the translator, and so became more or less dulled and confused by the "denser" earth conditions. The idea was to reverse this, to train in Betty an ability to go all the way to them, to enter THEIR conditions; but at the same time to function in her own sufficiently to report back, as translator, what she there acquired.

"We do not want to be very strong on this side," said some of the very earliest automatic writing, "because it is part of our scheme for you to do your share. It is an experiment to avoid the difficulties of relaying messages so far. The idea is constantly to DECREASE THE DENSITY between us to be penetrated, instead of trying so hard and so uncertainly to penetrate it. We are now near your element, but must slowly and painfully lead you to ours in order to hold uninterrupted and trustworthy communication." The process was groping and consumed months. It was fascinating to

me, as a bystander. Much of the time they seemed frankly puzzled themselves as to what next to attempt. "The variations we try," they told us, "are like the combinations of a camera with its focus, stops, speeds, time of day, and so forth."

"The things Betty sees and experiences just now seem foolish," they explained certain incoherences, "but she is being used at random in experiment on many different kinds of forces." "I had a feeling of being experimented on," said Betty herself another time. "The whole feeling was of preparation, like an empty house that people were moving into."

"Sometimes we almost feel as if this system had insuperable difficulties and that you will never have the patience to continue," they confessed on another occasion, "Its suitability, however, seems to balance the objections."

"What's the trouble?" I asked.

"We need more force," they stated with great emphasis. "The forces which we generate seem to dissipate, owing to some lack of proper conditions or attraction at your end. Leave us to experiment. We need more careful diagnosis."

"You seem discouraged," I remarked.

"We are not discouraged: only puzzled," they disclaimed. "It is like any problem. Don't get discouraged: we will find a new angle of approach."

"You think we are all-powerful," they told us again, "but we are not. We have to grope as much as you do, and can only hope in the groping toward each other to meet."

"I have read of other stations who do not seem to have all these troubles," said I.

"Involuntary mediums are good only as long as conditions suit them, they answered this. "A voluntary medium with control of her own mental condition would be invaluable. This is the hardest possible way, but it is the surest, most permanent and trustworthy. The others are brilliant experiments, flashes. They succeed now and then, and are very spectacular, but they have awful failures to nullify them. They are hazardous things. You may get something, or you may become a nervous wreck. This is a steep way but a safe way. We do not mean to say that other methods may not get more brilliant or even better results occasionally. But there is no method that can give you quite the same splendid feeling of power and stability; because only with this do you tap something. In this state you get the actual condition of the thing first, and then slowly the commonplace word that fits it. When we finally succeed, our progress will have certain mechanical conveniences that have always been lacking in spasmodic communications."

I called attention to the authors of THE SEVEN PURPOSES and OUR UNSEEN GUEST as examples of great fluency, coherence and apparent accuracy, but

“spasmodic” in the sense of spontaneous. They agreed but continued to maintain their point.

“Their experiences were in the nature of phenomena,” they said, “We want with you to demonstrate the possibility of communication as a sort of laboratory work that can be done by anybody through patient experiment; just as electricity or any other natural force may be used. They had the requisite character, training and mating. Then in addition the connections on this side interested in the work made their selection a natural one. They came nearest the requirements. The phenomenal method is possible to many if there is sufficient concentration on this side. However, the law of action and reaction indicated that there should be an equal effort on both sides. Great concentration on one side only is possible for but a limited amount of time. It could be indefinitely sustained could it be equally distributed on both. As yet we have been dependent on a phenomenal and rather untrained gift, instead of an understood and carefully regulated mechanism.”

“Why,” I asked, “did you not tell us all this in the beginning? We could have assisted with so much more intelligence.”

“If some of these methods had been stated in the beginning,” said they, “they would have made you self-conscious and inflexible. Your clamouring for intellectual satisfaction was at times very hard to resist, so we dodged you and evaded you. Only by blindfolding you could we lead you our way.”

Another angle of the same subject was well expressed much later, and though it is a bit of a digression, it seems worth insertion here. It was one of the few instances when a definite personality named himself as the source of the philosophical material. I will transcribe literally, as a further matter of interest as to the form in which we record these things.

BETTY: Someone named Willard (fictitious name here).

WILLARD: I am working for the whole scheme, and am interested in its followers, too.

MYSELF: We are interested, too, but we are greatly in the dark as to what it is all about.

WILLARD: Curious thing, that: and a great drawback in getting the most desirable intelligent workers. The stiffness of the humanly educated mind is a great problem to overcome. It is like a spoiled child. The constant humoring of this self-assertive side, the keeping it quiet enough to communicate with the real person within is what makes the whole thing so difficult.

That is the crux of the whole difficulty. Heaven forbid that I should decry the human brain, but it should be proportioned. The eternal self must be developed as a fit controlling power. In trying to act DIRECTLY on the highest - call it organ - possessed by man, his eternal spirit, we are constantly interfered with by the more developed, the

more easily developed side of him which clamors, INSISTS on translating every instinct into its own language and limiting it to its own experience and comprehension; insists we shall go no farther than the facile ready-made symbols its world education sanctions. We have to ignore it as much as possible, keeping it quiet by systematically baffling its efforts at restriction. Meanwhile, under this anaesthetic we work directly, stimulating the enduring part, trying to develop it. It should be the dominating part of man.

When this has been developed to its proper proportion, then the intelligence will have its innings again. The intelligence is an essential part of the whole, but it simply must be quieted down and made flexible in any way possible, in order that we may give insight beyond its comprehension.

I am trying to give this side of it in order to satisfy your natural intelligence as to this thwarting process. Let the big organ develop naturally and take control. See if the whole man will not be better proportioned.

I just had a notion I might be able to get this over to you a little more clearly. Get it?

MYSELF: As I understand you, for a time you purposely thwart the curiosities and workings of the mind in order to apply development work directly. When the eternal side has been developed up in proportion to an equality with the intelligence, then the latter will be turned loose again for the purpose of understanding what it is about.

WILLARD: Yes; but expressed in terms of your substance rather than mine.

The main idea of the whole thing is that the thwarting process is in order to develop beyond the comprehension of the brain, not to bring the enduring organs merely up to an equality with the brain: to work away beyond it, assuming at last control of the brain. The brain then becomes a functioning part of the general organ, which then enables comprehension. When it is adjusted to its proper proportion, then it will, later, be the channel for manifesting the level of development to others. We over here cannot work through the brain very well because of its great educational and perceptive restrictions. Don't be so OFFENDED in your intellect. Give us a chance. We won't do more harm than present your precious intellect something for it to work on for the rest of its natural life. Leave it in soak and keep it flexible, and we can go on.

It's BOUND to be satisfied later. When this becomes the leader of your intellect, it MUST immediately react on it; it MUST, just as the blood goes through your body to nourish all the parts. I thought maybe I could make you see the point; it's always a great stickler. That's why I came.

Working only in the limited knowledge of the brain is slow business. It takes generations to develop new respectable symbols.

BETTY: They let him in because they thought he knew how you felt.

WILLARD: Do you get the idea now? Beyond what you can understand, explain by the brain. If that is what we want to get to you first, how COULD we get it through your brain without the slowest of evolution?

MYSELF: I can see that as to the individual. How about getting it to the world? You have to use written symbols of the brain for that.

WILLARD: To get some things to the world you must yourself get the thing many times multiplied. No strength otherwise. There must be a large submerged foundation for the lighthouse. It is too puny at present to give out; too puny to be bountiful.

MYSELF: That all sounds reasonable and satisfying. But how can we best co-operate, if for a time our intelligence is supposed to go stand in a corner? Is it a matter of contact alone?

WILLARD: Let it go for the present with the development of your region of feelings, susceptibility, - AGGRESSIVE feeling. Let it go at that. That is the other side of the scale from the brain function. But there is a difference between the sloppy, sentimental, emotional thing commonly known as feeling, and the feeling of strength and stability that is absorbent of wisdom.

BETTY: (confidentially) You see, we haven't any words around here for it.

Maybe there are some, but they don't come. I'm very bad on words, because they get so far away.

WILLARD: The more you live in abandonment of the heart, the nearer you come to it.

2.

But there is another reason, beside the danger of "coloring," why these subjects were approached simultaneously and bewilderingly - from so many different angles. This has to do with the difference between our way of mastering a subject and theirs. That difference is summed up in a single statement. Betty was reporting, as is often her custom, instead of being used directly as a translator.

"I said to them," said she, "that progress must be easy for them because they could see things and the reasons for them, and what it is all about; but they answered that I was wrong. The way of our senses is first of all to see clearly what we are going to strive for.

But the way of the perception of the spirit, the way they go at things, is first of all always a struggle toward a clear perception of what has been but dimly sensed. What they struggle for is only seen clearly AFTER it is attained. Each attainment then provides the strength for further effort toward something again dimly sensed. That is the difference between their way of progress and ours."

“Never mind your clarity of perception of it,” they said on another occasion. “That necessarily comes after you have maintained conditions for a long enough time to establish them.”

This method of keeping the logic of a subject obscure until one by one the details and component parts have been absorbed into the system of life is very well subserved by the fragmentary kind of communication. It is in reality again a part of the “make it so” idea, without which there seems to be no value.

CHAPTER VIII

Elimination

1.

Two things cannot occupy the same place at the same time. If we are to take in something new, we must make room for it.

That is self evident. We make room by putting something out. And that something at once tries to come back in. Which means conflict.

We find that all along the line. Even the simple matter of physical relaxation is full of it. We are forced to vigilance in excluding small tensions of the muscles. As fast as we make one behave, another is on the strain. And that keeps our attention anxious, which is not a state of relaxation at all. The situation is emphasized when we attempt mental detachment. Vagrant fancies snatch at us, and before we know it we are galloping off down a side alley of speculation that has nothing to do with what we are after. We are forced to a process of selection and elimination.

There is nothing especially startling about this. We are doing it, more or less, every hour of our lives. We are continually selecting what we want to do, or must do, from all the things we might do. But we do it, mostly, without either due thought or skill. We have of it little understanding or technique.

Such a haphazard muddling through perhaps does well enough for ordinary affairs. But when we embark on a program of expanding consciousness, we were told, we should have something more definite. Our job is to take in spiritual awareness, and somehow we must make room for it. Otherwise it will have a hard time bucking the competition of well-established habits.

“You must free yourself in order to become aware of the self above yourself,” said they. “This is gained by daily breathing space of association with the spirit.”

“It does seem,” ran one of our earliest automatic writings, “as if you on earth scramble so much. Cannot you move serenely about your affairs? It is an engulfing quicksand,

your world. Do not mistake me: I am not approving of hermits. I only ask for an effort to live in the world and of the world with a free soul and sensitive spirit.”

“There is no use trying to do anything if you have a lot of little fishhooks in you all around that keep pulling at you,” said they, much later. “There is no use trying to do anything until you get rid of them and assert your independence; it is hard to get these barbed things out.”

“There’s so much leisure of mind and soul and time for your attitude toward people,” explained Betty, “none at all for getting things two cents cheaper at another store, and all those dinky-dinks. It’s like the difference in size between the figures on a moving picture screen and the human beings in the front row. I argue that I can’t live in a material world without doing many little things; and THEY argue that that is just what we are sent here for, to find out what things are worth doing and what are not. They have great respect for material labor and necessities and such things; but they are only so important. They are not asking me to do what the big idealists have done, like Buddha or Confucius; throw humanity aside and walk with fixed gaze; but they ARE asking me to approximate that freedom. It’s a case of focus as near as I can come to it. You must change your focus so that all the little things near you will not look sharp and important.”

2.

We were willing to agree as to the desirability of this, but evidently the Invisibles were not satisfied with that. They wanted us to realize not only its desirability, but its importance, and they held Betty to the subject. Again and again they showed her symbols of various kinds that stressed this. Here is one.

“The way they are showing me seems so difficult and painful - the skeleton dragged from the living body,” it was Betty reporting, “They are showing it to me and saying, this is the real structure. All the rest, your flesh, your clothes, your belongings, the motor you ride in - but they said carriage - you just pile on yourself. But after all there’s your real structure that has to carry all the unnecessary stuff. Yet nobody wants to walk around in his skeleton. But you can entirely clothe it in something better than all that smothering stuff. Funny way to explain it!

They keep saying: here’s your skeleton. How are you going to clothe it?

They seem to think they’ve freed me from the old stuff, and that now what I’m to do is put on my new body appropriate to my new life. My, that other stuff looks clumsy, piled up all around, looks like Mrs. Tanner’s* stuff. It’s repellant. It positively nauseates me. I wouldn’t like to get back into that! As they take it away I feel so naked and cold. It is rather terrible to have it taken away; almost acute suffering. Oh, wait! I don’t know what I’m going to do. I don’t know where to begin. Oh, my! - there’s a little something

gathering about me, rather thin and filmy, not formed and finished. I don't think that was a nice symbol. I don't feel as much at home as I did in all that nice warm cozy Tanner stuff.

I'm all new and self-conscious and still a little cold. - Yes, I see what you mean. - These strange exercises just separate me before my eyes; take out parts of me and set them aside; and discard the rest. I don't suppose in this life I'd ever free myself without all this play and mumming.

* A very wealthy acquisitive woman.

"I slipped-back. I always get back into those smothery things. They show it first in one form and then in another. But these smothery things are all so warm and human. You can go on living in the smothery things if you want to; and there's no direct harm and no judgment held against you for it. Then why all this effort in this life? The answer is: it is inexorably true that it has got to be done sometime, that great passionate shove has to be done sometime.

Each one must struggle and free himself; there is no escape; it is the law; and the longer you procrastinate and delay, the harder that struggle is going to be and the softer and more unfit for it you are going to be. It will be a terrible state, suffering, discouragement, blackness if you delay. Delay bears too heavy interest. That is why all this exhortation for this life, why they don't wait until we go over there.

This life is that tearing out of your skeleton, and when we are not doing it here, now, we are making it so much harder for ourselves later. This is our crucial moment of struggle right now. How blind and stupid to say wait for such things until we get over! That is what your incarnation here is your test.

That is what they have been trying to tell us for nearly a year now. We can take the easier way, but it delays the game and makes it harder. Use every ounce in you, for you are bound to slump and get soft again. Go into it with the idea that you will never relax. So important always to try! They keep going back to the skeleton again. All this determination and effort is your skeleton; and your body is the nice kind loving relations with people, and the beauty of life. That is plenty soft enough without the satin stuffy things. I wonder what I thought I was here for, anyway! Here's the remarkable part: in spite of all the austere spine stiffening, right along with that, there's a blitheness that is marvelous. There is a wracking intensity; but when you have received it and acknowledged it, they just come right up - it's jolly, so jolly and cheerful and vigorous.

They wrack you, and at the same time give you strength gaily, so gaily you could crack jokes about it. All the good people on this side who preach at you depress you without giving you strength. That's the difference. I'll take my struggle now, thank you. It is

hard enough right now. I don't wonder they are anxious to come back and tell us. It must be ghastly to be over there and see the people you love here sinking down, down, putting off the struggle, laying up all kinds of trouble (laughs).

I'm so puzzled myself, you see. I'm groping toward activities - I just take all these activities - my old smothery body, and by taking it off and standing in my skeleton and feeling the need of a new body and taking the substance of a new body and putting it on - why, I've created that thing, I've made it come to pass. That is the kind of thing you do over there.

You do not merely talk about things; you think of them in substance and create - I don't know where I'm at, which is substance, which is shadow.

Here I am building out of this substance; it's so much more real than the consciousness I have every day. All I know is that the body is like a yappy little dog, very insistent about itself. - I'm getting very tired; it is so hard to get it back to you. - I'll lie still and review it. I don't like these records you write. I have my records here. They are just dropping me back in their impolite fashion. (Laughs) I begin to like my body better when I get near it; I don't call it names at all. It's got a little poison oak on it, but otherwise it is not so bad. I'd be pretty dam sorry to come back and find it wasn't here. You don't know how piffling words are when you work in substance instead. They showed me so plainly the seriatim process in their symbol. First the physical pain of extracting the skeleton, then the removal of the smothery things with my longing and regret for them; then the positive nausea at them; then the chill and need of a new body; then the growing interest in the substance of thought, and in the eager planning of the details of the new body. Then came the knowledge that the new body cannot be built perfectly all at once, that you can go on improving it from plane to plane."

In this manner, then, was built our acknowledgement that elimination was very much an integral factor in the new job we had undertaken; as much of a job in its way as "proportion" or "contact," or the "dead lift," or the "stability." And, it was borne in on us, it also had a definite technique. Haphazard and rule of thumb would not do. Naturally we wanted to know what it was; and its prescription was promised us; but before it could be given we must first comprehend an entirely new concept.

CHAPTER IX

The Substance of Thought

The concept we were to understand before we were to be instructed in a workable technique of elimination proved to have an importance far beyond that. Its influence was to be basic. Once fully accepted, as an actuality, - or as a provisional hypothesis - its influence must permeate all that follows.

And now, for the first time we must take the word of our invisible intelligences for a categorical statement. Heretofore the philosophy has been a reasoning and a reasonable one. Now we must be prepared to accept or reject EX CATHEDRA utterances; as one would accept or deny a traveller's statement that in Utopia are beasts with purple wings. We can believe or not believe, but we shall have no basis for choice, except our confidence in those communicating, and the coherence of what they communicate.

Yet that is hardly a fair statement. Ordinary physical science postulates certain hypotheses in order to explain facts. Said hypotheses are pure assumptions, without an atom of proof, reasoned out as probable, and adopted provisionally because facts fit them. They furnish a taking off platform.

In that spirit let the most skeptical of us follow the Invisibles; in their statement that thought works in and on a definite material substance.

"Without fussing about explanations," they stated emphatically, "keep in mind SUBSTANCE OF THOUGHT, definite, tangible substance. You know the power of thought in your world. Now extend, magnify, give a greater scope to its actions. The law is the REALITY of this substance. The great power that is in your hands is the recognition of this, and the setting in action, - setting in chemical action - of the thought substances, which are bound to create according to their species, their kinds."

They urged us earnestly to accustom our minds to this idea, using a variety of figures to emphasize it. They told us that the workings of created life as we know them are in reality parts of this substance working in different combinations.

"You are capable of creating," they went on. "The practical application of this in everyday life is to watch carefully, guard your thought chambers. Allow full scope in all directions until they begin to create undesirable, dragging or belittling things. Then destroy these misbegotten things without looking at them by flooding them, overwhelming them with the raw material for a new and better structure. At once, without delay, replace the undesirable combination. Repeat this operation continuously whenever barnacles collect.

"This confused halting account contains a mighty formula for growth and beauty of mind."

That first statement interested me at once, and I proceeded to sidetrack the discussion. This generally happens when I begin to ask questions. The Invisibles seem to have prepared very carefully what they are trying to get over; and questions mix up the plans. Especially as they tend to attract the translator's attention and so are likely to arouse her storehouse mind, with the attendant danger of coloring.

“In order to clarify,” I asked, “Is the sort of work by way of construction a fiction writer performs actually dealing with this tangible substance of thought?”

“Yes, exactly,” replied the Invisible, “Only suppose you could breathe something more powerful into your characters and actually make them live. That would be thought from a higher plane.”

That seemed a little too extraordinary, so I went on. “Assuming that I could do so,” said I, “do I understand that such entities created from the substance of thought would be independent beings, with power of even limited free will, for example?”

“My sentence was misleading, not satisfactory,” was the answer. “I am fearful of making misstatements by fragmentary revelation. What you create does most certainly go out; but remember; not unobstructedly. Others are creating too. It is a very complicated subject.”

“Has the result of this creative thought, this combining of thought substances, then, an objective reality on that side?” I asked.

“Some are so weak they hardly live and move,” explained the Invisible. “I see all sorts of them. The lowest kind is the sheer-force kind, that spends itself like a rocket and falls dead. It lives only a brief stimulated career.

Other kinds of construction, that you build with lots of flame, and by thinking also with your heart, are self-sustained and have real life and live on.”

I was still a little fuzzy on the main issue; so I asked a leading question: “Then it might be possible for a human being of the highest genius to create such a thing, ‘that lives on,’ and it might become eventually an entity with a free will?”

“No,” said the Invisible. “You are getting ambitious. It is too difficult and involved to give you a satisfactory fragment. But we wish we could talk on your ambitious question. That touches the wonder of immortality. Be convinced that the flame you utilize in constructive thought does not die. It does go on.”

That was all for that day. At our next trial, as is their almost invariable custom, they attacked the subject from another angle by putting Betty through an actual or symbolical experience. It is often difficult to tell one from the other; though when it matters particularly they always inform us.

“They’re showing me a substance and teaching me how to use it, the law of attracting this substance and condensing it,” she began. Then ensued a long pause at the end of which she freed her wrist from my grasp and took my hand. “I want to see if I can get that substance around you - if I have the power to control it,” she explained. Then another interim of perhaps ten minutes.

“That’s all of that for today,” she said at last, “ I lost my nerve on it. There’s nothing so terrifying as the unknown.

“There is an enveloping substance you can attract and surround a person with. He cannot feel it and he is powerless against it in the sense of breaking away from it or getting out of it or thwarting I couldn’t understand what I was putting on you, and the moment I clamored to understand I got frightened. It is a great power of some kind. It seems as if first you are enveloped with it, and after that I could magnetize it with thought.. For instance, having enveloped you with it, I could say: ‘This substance will gradually seep into you, permeate you, relax your nervous system.’ And by replenishment I could keep you from ever shutting out - being impervious, nerve bound. In that case it would be a healing kind of thing - I think it is possible to direct it in other ways.

First you envelope in it; and then you put any kind of thought you want into it. It would have to be very carefully handled - a terrible power! The strange part is, it looks as though I might be able to smother evil with it.

“It is a very powerful thing; you can’t fight against it your resistance is almost negative. That part worries me. There must be some resistance possible in some way; there’s some modifying law Perhaps I’d better leave it today.”

That was all. By this time I had learned that when a subject was dropped, the abandonment was deliberate and in order to avoid the danger of coloring. The next attack was by a symbolic example of actual creation in the substance of thought. They showed Betty - or symbolized in pictures to her, - a tract of land (representing, perhaps, a field of potential effort and development). Here is her running report:

“It’s wilderness work; conquering natural forces,” she said after some preliminary description, “It is chaotic and wild and purposeless, great wasted dormant strength, and I am to do something about it I am beginning to see things: flowers and things.

“It is building, and I don’t understand it Wait - It’s too difficult to tell you. This is very, very hard. Oh, I feel so helpless I don’t understand it, it’s too difficult.

“They’re trying to make me know how to go to work at this continent, and I don’t understand it It’s the labor question I can’t understand. I can’t do all the work there myself, any more than I alone could build this place. It’s a tough nut! I’ve got to find out about that, it is BIG! All my relations with other people are there somehow Up to now it’s been solitary.

“Well, suppose I have a grand big plan, granting that I’ve had a dream and made a scheme, and called out the thought substance; how am I going to form it? Too important to get this wrong You can’t just sit back and get labor to do it But you’d have to!

“I’m making it out of myself somehow. It feels like hard physical work that is done by sweat and toil and energy. It’s like breaking down cells in your body, pouring them out of you, making a deposit of concrete construction. Then you rest and accumulate more force, and then you make another projection and deposit of work.

“It isn’t such hard work after all. It becomes a satisfying function. It is very painful now; almost anguish That’s the way it goes. It is analogous to physical toil Worlds are all built that way, physical and spiritual. Get rid of any idea of ‘Let there be’ stuff. There isn’t any let-there-be process of creation or building. I should say not! They put me to work all right! They say I’ll get used to it. They keep pulling it through you, this substance, as through the eye of a needle You transmute it.

“That’s funny, that’s very funny! I’ve made a start on that continent! I’ve got SOME work done. I can see it.

“I can’t see why I do it alone. I can’t see why somebody can’t help. There’s something I’ve got to do first before I can get help. What is it?

“It’s much easier now, much easier. I can draw it down and get hold of it and shape it, and then step outside of it. Oh, yes, it’s quite nice now. It’s a pleasure to do it now.

“Here’s another difficult point: There are a number of people hanging around me as if they might help, if I only knew what to do. I’ve got to figure that out. It looks more like calling out than hiring labor. Depends on your ability to summon, inspire, coagulate, there’s a bigger word for it; leadership idea; an attracting power with a big altruistic idea. That’s construction over there: that’s how you get people to help you.

“It was so hard at the beginning because it served only individual purpose. It seemed to have been quarried by brute force for individual purpose. There’s a lot easier material I can use when I can rise to obeying some law. Pioneers are necessary; you’ve got to have them; they do big work just fighting their way.

“That is progress. The main thing is to get the feeling of work, hard labor spiritually. It is especially hard as I am combining two elements; I suffer physically from the spiritual effort.

“I never thought about toil over there. Of course, that’s the first principle of construction. But how you do toil spiritually: and if you don’t toil; you’re no good. You RENDER yourself somehow It’s too new to me; I’ll say it better next time.

“It seems, vaguely, as if you have to begin on the rock pile, the hardest kind of work, what corresponds to actual physical toil. You exhaust yourself on it; but as you go on, learn how, - I hate to use words so foolishly, but I can’t find others. - As you go on, harmony lifts all the hard part, and you work just as hard without the suffering part of it.

“My continent was all wild and woolly. I saw it like a map, saw it big. There were masses of stuff that I knew were forests, and big wild rivers with snags. It seemed such a hopeless mass for me alone. I felt so puny. I saw lots of lovely flowers. They said: go ahead and make some sort of plan about it, no matter how poor to start with. That is your measure. I said: the first thing I’ll do is to shape myself up a home site, just one little piece that I can manage out of the wilderness. And then I grunted and groaned and felt as though I was being torn asunder; and then it got easier, and I found that a sort of clearing had been made in one little corner. On my piece a sort of right-angled fence was made, an impression of boundary. It surprised me, I didn’t know I was doing it. It wasn’t an interesting thing to do; but I had to start somewhere.

“I saw my continent from above as from an airplane, a chaotic, powerful, untamed thing.”

This striking figure they left with us for some time; and when next they took up the Substance of Thought the application was in a direction we are not now prepared to follow. What we wish to emphasize here is the help this concept gives us in visualizing the necessity for elimination.

CHAPTER X

The Technique of Elimination

1. ALTITUDE OF MIND.

This conception of the Substance of Thought gives us quite a new point of view as to the necessity of elimination in the mental world, as well as in the world of action and the world of material possessions. We agree readily that in the latter we ought to pick and choose and reject. But the mental world is not so defined. Thoughts are so impalpable, so fleeting, that it is hardly worth bothering about them. Presently they will vanish of their own accord; and nothing will remain.

But if thoughts are actual things, more or less enduring; working in an actual substance; why then the matter becomes too tangible to be lightly dismissed. We are forced to some action, immediate and definite, to keep our mental premises from becoming all cluttered up with undesirable thought-forms as unpleasant in atmosphere as any other garbage or offal. We are eliminating substantial things - things of substance - in whatever medium.

How to do? Let me repeat a passage before quoted:

“Carefully guard your thought chambers. Allow full scope in all directions until they begin to create undesirable, dragging or belittling things. Then destroy these misbegotten things without looking at them, by FLOODING THEM,

OVERWHELMING THEM WITH THE RAW MATERIAL FOR A NEW AND BETTER STRUCTURE.”

Often when we gird up our loins to fight a thing we lend it strength by the very opposition put into it. The FLOODING OUT idea is one to get. “It is very like any growth in the world,” say they, “People spend their time fighting things, when if they would only spend their time growing they would just naturally shove these things to one side. There is only so much room in a given space. If you grow and fill it up, everything automatically gives way. That is the way plants fight.”

They elaborated the idea a little further, on another occasion, by means of a symbol, as is often their habit.

“This is it,” said they. “The lower forms of even human life allow bodily dirt, decay, even vermin; and sanction them as a necessary part of living. But we know better; we’ve got beyond that and will not tolerate them. But we are in the same state spiritually. We allow all these bloodsucking thoughts, all these waste-matter things to share our spirits with us, simply because we think they are a necessary part of living. But they are not. As soon as we are strong enough to cleanse ourselves and keep ourselves cleansed of them, we can stay on the higher phase as a matter of course. It is just decent living.

“In keeping physically clean we do not worry about vermin, nor even think about them. We get rid of them simply by living a certain kind of life. They don’t exist for us. There is no set opposition in them; we simply act in a certain way and they are not. Likewise it is not a case of avoiding consciously any specific thoughts. It is an attitude of mind.”

That is the way I wrote it: but the words were hardly down on the paper before I was corrected. It must be remembered that Betty, through whose mouth the words came, was lying blindfolded on my other side.

“No, they set me right, ‘ALTITUDE’ of mind. It is keeping yourself on that level, and remembering all the things that belong to it and practicing them.’

2. ATTENTION.

“The whole thing is a matter of Attention. All sorts of things are always swarming around you as thick as can be, but unless you give them your attention, they can have no point of contact with you. Anything you give your attention to is magnetically yours. So the only way to reorganize yourself is to regulate your attention. That maintains your altitude of mind.

“This sort of attention is just exactly the same as looking at things. It is only the things you look at fixedly that really register.”

“If you had to copy a thing you would look at it long and hard; a glance wouldn’t do you any good. So if you want to become anything, you must keep looking at it, not just vaguely and generally, but fixedly, so you can reproduce it. That is Attention.

“I wish I could find a bigger word than attention; it is so important.”

In the external as well as the mental world, the same principles obtain.

“They’re not asking me to give up all the little dinky-dinks I have to do,” said Betty at one time. “They don’t care WHAT WE DO, it’s HOW WE DO IT.”

“The thing you do does not matter,” they agreed. “If it is humanly desirable to cut up bits of paper or do anything small and silly, go ahead and do it in the most efficient way you know how; but in doing it keep full sail ahead. The trouble with you is you try to haul down your sails and use them as floor cloths. You put draghooks in your spiritual part, too. It is out of all proportion, it’s the wrong way round; it’s a nuisance. That is how you damage yourselves: not by the things you do but by the way you do them. Why hitch up a great big powerful machine just to mow the lawn? And the mowing of the lawn is important, but utilize attention and power only in proportion.”

“As you get along,” they told us apropos of something else, “you will find that there will be a whole new set of taxes on your Attention, and they will be much simpler and nicer. You pay there (on earth) a hopeless and exhausting lot of taxes on Attention. You are always hedging and squirming among things, paying taxes on your freedom.”

“There seems to be some sort of regulation,” commented Betty, “So you don’t have there all these nasty little taxes, each of which takes a little drain out of your attention. Collect myself; that’s it. In the next step I am going to collect myself. All these little taxes are so disintegrating .”

“Roughly speaking, the idea is this,” they went on, “Everything you turn Attention to, you spend on; pay a tax on. You go in for lots and lots of little things. It is like having all your fortune in five and ten cent pieces. You ought to have more beauty of proportion to it. That is not saying the five and ten cent pieces are not all right: the world is full of interesting little things. Spend as much as you want on them, don’t stint yourself on them in the least; but first you must have the big things assured. Get your proportions and then see what you can afford in the way of little things. It is just a case of what you can afford.”

“They show me the big things and the little things, the big things and the little things, over and over,” said Betty, “I mustn’t cut up all the big things into little things. That’s the freedom that is ahead. First be rich and generous with the big things, then play with the little things.

“They show it to me in so many different ways. Now they are making confetti out of some such beautiful material, and you lose all the lovely design. It’s such a pity! I long to piece it together again.

“Oh, they just made a terrible picture of the tax-paying thing. I know what hell is; it’s being forced to look at mistakes! Oh!

“You see this tax business Oh, dear! (distress) I’m trying to tell you about it, but I am so miserable! They just drew out my life blood, a little bit from each thing I am, a little bit from each thing I do. Horrible! I won’t forget that! Bloodsucking little things.”

“Now we show you the condition,” they concluded, “take hold of it. Construct your plan of action. Take hold with boldness. Fortify against yourself, your weaker self. Breathe life, determination, enthusiasm into this plan. Hold your forces cleanly vibrant, not enervated with diluting thoughts. The main danger is apt to be loss of stamina. Maintain your vigor. Your gauge of strength is your concentration on your spark of enlightenment. Fan it into a flame. That is what you work with. You cannot let that die, or smolder. Keep fanning it; that spark is your spiritual energy. Watch your foredetermination, particularized foredetermination, not just hazy. Work over it carefully as you would over an architect’s blue print. That is vitalized thinking, a creative thinking. There’s substance to it. Make a start of materializing to yourself, analyzing, grasping, taking hold of materials at hand, and fashioning something out of them. Thought is the material, but not speculative thought, positive building. It seems to be all grasp, taking hold of the few things you’ve got, and grasping them and holding onto them, and by and bye, you’ve shaped something. You can have them now. Just the mighty strength to take, the imagination and idealism to see them and reach for them. Constantly uphold the tradition of an unconquerable spirit.”

CHAPTER XI

Do It Now!

1.

The customary trend, in the great majority of such experiments as ours, is toward either straight spiritualism or the development of so-called ‘psychic powers.’ But in our case both these aspects were ignored. Basically our effort was to be directed, they told us, toward an AWAKENING OF CONSCIOUSNESS. “The nature of it,” said they, “is the abolition of barriers, the breaking down of the walls obstructing spiritual vision.” They had no time for wonders or personal identifications. Certain ‘psychic powers’ might develop; but if so, they would be as incidental to the main job. So pointed was this refusal to concern us with what, after all, is the most natural of curiosities, that I

broke through the programmed trend to ask a question; and, what was even more unusual, I got a reply.

“Are merely personal communications deterrent to your scheme?” I asked.

“They only develop a certain futility, if continuous,” was the reply.

“The conditions on both sides are so inexplicable that satisfactory communication seems sometimes to decrease instead of progress, owing to discouragement, or dissipation – scattering - of concentration on really important subjects. There is great difficulty at best. Discretion must be used, and it must be in the hands of masters, experts. Much trouble and muddling results from indiscriminate communication.”

All this was taking place, you will remember, during the wave of popular interest in psychics just after the close of the war. This, our Invisibles acknowledged, was helpful, but its aspects were not entirely satisfactory.

“There is too much emphasis on the ‘Spirit’ aspect,” they told us, “and too little on the individual application of what it all means. There is too much interest in the mere fact that friends still live about us; overlooking what they come to tell us. Your own growth is what matters. We cannot hope to touch each other often; any more than can any friends living in different places. The thing that counts is our daily aspiration.”

“The point is that the natural tendency is to seek psychic powers rather than practice human living. There has been an over-balance of attention on mere personal identification, which is necessary if balanced by stability and direction of effort toward spiritual perception. Otherwise, if spiritual perception is not developed, nothing can be given after identification is established. Do you see more clearly the practical application of our instructions?”

“Your cautious skepticism dragging back on your intuitive recognition of the truth was your main attitude in the beginning. A certain attitude of fair play in allowing us an uninterrupted voice to develop our argument led to the success of the communication. Fearlessness and confidence in your own power to reject if the communications became less convincing also aided in success, in happy combination with the interest of both of you in exploration.”

2.

Satisfactory and sensible, we thought; as far as it went. But I had another question, and it seemed to me legitimate and natural.

“Agreed as to the importance of all this,” I stated, for the sake of argument. “Why the hurry? We are supposed to have all eternity before us. Why should we ‘fash’ ourselves with it now? It takes considerable of a sustained effort, if it is to amount to anything. It involves a radical change in the point of view. Life is full. For the average man, of

sufficient maturity to take this in, routine and habit are pretty well established. He is fairly well content with things as they are. That is his natural life on earth. On the other hand the spiritual life is the natural life after he dies. Why not postpone all this development to what would seem to be its natural season and environment.

For once I must have hit upon a vital question. It brought not merely a reply: it opened up a whole new subject for most emphatic insistence. And, like all other cardinal subjects, it was presented to us recurrently, at odd times, until it was molded into the main body of the teaching.

The gist of it was this: that this spiritual quickening, this conscious contact, must take place at some point in our evolution. The sooner we attain it, the better. It can never be entirely postponed to "its natural season and environment" (my idea). In one form or another, to one degree or another, every human creature must and does, during his normal earth life, attain SOMETHING of spiritual contact. Otherwise he is completely sidetracked; 'lost,' I suppose it might be called, in the old Biblical sense. That is most often merely an unconscious function of living. But if he can get it consciously and voluntarily, it is infinitely more effective.

Furthermore, - and here is the real answer to my question - the "natural season and environment" is NOT wholly in our next state of existence. There are in this very earth life certain facilities for beginning which are lacking in the next state of existence. We can begin then, if we want to postpone, but it is going to be much harder. Failure to take advantage of our opportunity here means difficulty and bitterness later. "Delay," said they strikingly, "BEARS COMPOUND INTEREST, which you must pay."

The urging of this point became at times almost frantic.

"Arouse yourself," they insisted, "It is worth your greatest effort. Once started you cannot choose: you must take all or nothing. You will get as far as your own yearnings carry you. You must not fad. We cannot let you now. We are mightily and intensely pledged to your success. All of my strength goes into this plea tonight to arouse you from your world lethargy. Fix firmly in your mind the things to cling to in times of danger threatening your purpose. The first is grim determination to succeed; and the second is a great heart hunger which is the call of love. These will be your strongholds. Could I lash you to my own frenzy of purpose, I would for your own salvation. We cannot always come with the force of this evening, and I want these words to burn into your soul, to be your obsession and your ruling passion. A tremendous stimulation it should be to you. Power wanes, and I want to leave you at my highest pitch of urgency, calling to the deeps of you to answer the great duty you have been chosen for."

Evidently they now appreciated the importance of giving us some rationale, some notion of what it was all about. "I will try to tell you something about the aim of all our efforts," we were told a few days later, "Imagine if you can a world in which truth is one

general and something we will call blindness is the opposing general. These two simple factors one must choose between. There are no neutrals. We are frankly for or against and hold our positions by the force of the effort we put forth. The great struggle is not only to conquer our opposing forces, but to reclaim and form them into fighters for the truth. It is more of a game than the mere overcoming, for we are after the plunder of human souls to salvage. This, of course you know, is the A B C of our work.

“Now what I want to tell you is that when you come here it is more difficult to make the voluntary choice than you can imagine. It seems that you would unhesitatingly choose the side of truth, but it will be almost impossible for you to do so unless you have made yourself an agent or disciple while on earth.

“Why are you all so afraid of the truth? Why do you not look it squarely in the face? You want samples of what I see to illustrate your fear; well then, - have you thought out or taken stock of your first principles? What are your most valued possessions? Begin there: love, health, time, etc., to mention a few. Decide which they are and observe how you are guarding them, cultivating them and acknowledging them your treasures. You throw your pearls before swine. It is the usual procedure.

“What I am trying to lead up to is that we are striving to MAKE YOU AWARE in your present life of what you really desire. The free choice is yours, only choose; do not muddle along until unconsciously you have fashioned habits which are your paste jewels. The time will come when you must abide for a while by your choice, and your treasures will be ashes in your hands.

“This is the best I can do tonight to show you why I insist on preaching to you. I should like to be able to say it better, but the main thing in any form is to have it reach you.

“Your life is more selective than ours they explained another time, “and so you have a greater chance to waste yourselves,” as well, of course, as a greater chance to develop ourselves along certain specified lines.

“We grieve most over the poor in spirit who close their hearts to our life. They fear effort and struggle, when all you have really to fear in your life is blindness and stagnation.”

“It is funny,” said Betty wonderingly, “they don’t look so black on this side, the people who try to escape and have bad luck - opium, drink, why! even anarchy! - it sounds dreadful to say that! They haven’t stability, but they are trying! The ones who look black are the hermetically sealed type who are not trying.”

I pointed out again that in reality the great bulk of mankind does not consciously reach for spiritual association; but that a spontaneous and indirect growth nevertheless does take place.

“It does, slowly, by processes of which we are unconscious,” assented the Invisibles, “but it is conscious utilization that makes awakened, whole and living beings of us.

“Do not mistake the idea,” they went on. “You can fight through the incentives of world ambitions, through all the lower order of things to the attainment, and thus to the comprehension of the futility of that attainment. But it is a slow and laborious method. It is a terrible way, for there is so much danger of quenching your spark completely. But still it is a way of fighting through. It is for one type of mind: some HAVE to go that way. Egoists always have to go that way, people undeveloped on the spiritual side. Thus they gain insight.”

“Interesting,” put in Betty, “I can see the long line of world things they accomplish.”

“They are quite useful,” pursued our friends, “if you grant that that form of life is the most desirable! That’s the point.”

“I can see the egoists,” said Betty, after a moment, “Some of them are living in a world of self-delusion, satisfied because they’ve almost stifled their inner spark of freedom; others force their way through to a heart of bitterness; some stay at a curdled stage; in others a powerful kind of chemical separation takes place in preparation for the throwing off of poison. These are the most hopeful, - they’re on their way. I should say the others would have to do it over again. They’ll have another chance; but a harder one. Next time they’ll have the self-delusion, but the effort will be without gratification. I’m not sure about that.

“I wonder what the curdled ones will get? I don’t know. I’m coming out, and I would like to know, too. I’m so sorry for them.”

There is generally no necessity of working from the earth end up instead of from the spiritual contact down, they agreed later, though it can be done, and usually is done. The process is both slow and imperfect. It is spiritual contact that does the work in either case. Only by spiritual contact, however slight, does anybody ever get anywhere. “It is your personal participation in the whole scheme of things, your heritage of responsibility. People who do just that, but in simple faith, get a kind of contact, an unconscious adjustment. It is not of a very high order, not very active or productive, but it has a simple kind of guardianship. It is better to struggle and strive, and get the power of your effort. However, that’s where you start, by contact with the spiritual, an outpouring of faith, worship, demand, indulged in as often as possible. Then, you must strive to create an image of what you were intended to be. And these two, even in your most disconnected moments, should maintain your life. That contact, when gained, puts all your machinery in motion.”

“It is strange how we always work from this end” (the earth end) was Betty’s comment, “The whole of the universe is written with clues of the other way. That is the reason for

beauty and grandeur; they are just a clue as to where to go for your instruction, as to what to do with life. Instead, we set up our own little standards. They are all right; but we leave out the supreme.”

“We can begin there, and work down through laws; or we can begin down here and work up through failures and misfortunes. Some people have to do it that way. The danger of working from this end upwards is that you shut out the possibility of looking beyond your own standards.”

Conscious, voluntary spiritual contact, then, simplifies our problems and speeds us on the road of progress - and not only in the future life, but also right here and now. Every day that we delay we are both laying up trouble for ourselves later on, and diminishing our present efficiency and happiness. So from every point of view it would seem better to make the start now.

“It would be such a pity if we didn’t,” Betty concluded a talk on this subject, “so stupid if we didn’t! It is the difference between a very ignorant person and a cultured and spiritually educated one. I want to be spiritually educated.”

CHAPTER XII

The Spiritual Body

I had still another question, which was considered pertinent.

“What,” I wanted to know, “are the definite results - aside from refreshment and expansion - to be expected from this system of spiritual hygiene?”

This evoked another concept of the sort I have called *ex cathedra*. Like the substance of thought idea: and like that it can at least be accepted as working hypothesis. It is of the reality of the spiritual body.

There is, of course, nothing new in that idea, in and of itself. Many systems of religion or philosophy postulate an ‘etheric,’ or ‘astral,’ or ‘prototype.’

Like most other people I had accepted the notion as a more or less fanciful symbol.

But our Invisibles apparently did not take it this way. They spoke of it as an actuality.

That, in brief, is the thesis presented to us in answer to my question. I asked another.

“I may be literal-minded,” said I, “but I am going to ask whether this spiritual body as you describe it is a symbolical statement meant to convey a concept, or whether you mean it literally as you describe it, as a material thing.”

“It is **ACTUALLY MATERIALLY THAT**,” returned the Invisible emphatically, “in its own condition of health and development. It is flesh and it is blood. It may not be the same kind, but it is as real, as warm, as living as your own.”

After about half an hour of silence one day later, Betty answered my unspoken question as to what it was all about.

“I am trying to perceive and understand bodily substance over here,” said she. “It is fibreless, but definitely cellular. I don’t know what those words mean: I don’t know enough about construction. I have a definite body and not a vaporous or fuzzy one either. It is a finer rained substance than flesh. It is not fluid, but mobile. It is more Sensitive, more easily acted upon; and at the same time more indestructible, more durable, more self-protecting. You would recognize in it a refinement of matter, a little understood etheric combination. I’m getting dizzy.”

“Abandon in faith,” The Invisible helped her out with a formula of their own.

“Fibrous separation,” began Betty, then gasped and choked.

“Careful,” warned the Invisible.

“It is a pulsing, living body purified of organic frailty,” she began again, “durable, flexible, susceptible of more powerful action through susceptibility of sense.”

“Now hold fast! Press on! I want to carry this through!” urged the Invisible.

“The sense radius is greatly extended. It is a definite entirety, only unfinished, like a nucleus open only at the top.”

“Tethered by bodily sense, this is the best we can do to give you a perception of the spiritual body,” the Invisible concluded.

“It is a perfectly good body,” put in Betty, “but it is so uncomfortably new. I’m a little cold, too. It didn’t seem that way before, but now I seem so unclothed. My flesh is like a garment around me now,” she said, stirring to life, “I don’t see what I could do without it. Before it seemed all right, so I guess I must be coming back. I know I’m coming back. I feel fibrous; was that it?”

“I don’t understand cells; that’s just a name to me; but the other body had definite construction. It seemed to contain something in cells that were a different material, a different combination than what was outside the body. But I can’t tell that very well. I just know I was completely organized with a body.

“What material should you say will power is made of? That is stronger and more durable than matter. It grows in strength. How is it constructed? Goodness! How limited science is! It looks so kindergarteny from here! There are all these different substances, definite substances, and nobody recognizes them except as abstractions. They are just as real as they can be: I see them distinctly. I wish I had a little better equipment to work them. If I knew physical laws scientifically in my own world of matter, they say, it would be much easier to make symbols of the spiritual law. I am so ignorant and they have to circumlocute; and that makes it inaccurate and vague.”

At another time we were given a glimpse as to the essential nature of this spiritual body. The talk had been on the subject of its development.

“So few people have any ground plan,” said the Invisible, “They can’t make any form for you because they haven’t any. That is what character is, SHAPE.”

“So many people moving slowly by,” Betty reported, “how curious! how very funny! They look like a double kind of image, with faint outlines - like X-ray pictures. They have translucent bodies, shadows of bodies, as their human bodies; and I see them plainly only according to the cores they have grown. Oh, poor things! poor things! It is like an X-ray photograph, and some of them are just gelatinous; they haven’t anything in them; almost no skeleton. What an awful way to see people! You do pity them so! It must be so despairing to be without it!

“I call things all wrong, get them all mixed up. I don’t know what to call it, - I called it a skeleton but it is a shape, a structure, a body. It is terrible to be without it.

“These people are so painful to me; I just suffer for them; it is like the physical tension of watching paralytics shuffle, a kind of anguish to your own health; so that you must help. What do I do to help? If everybody could see how they look, these poor things. A few pictures like that would help people so! Why aren’t you taught this way when you are young? Why aren’t you shown like this the reality of the spiritual body? Spiritual body to most people is Just an ecclesiastical term.

“This way of seeing people is like those confusing maps * where they color the water and leave the land blank. It is reversed. The intangible unfleshed things, honor, character, confidence, all such things, should be visualized with a shape, a substance.”

* Charts.

“I should like to ask,” I interposed, “whether this is an illustrative picture merely, or is that the way you normally see human beings from that side?”

“That is the way our lenses actually perceive you,” answered they, “we cannot see you, as you see yourselves, without your physical eyes. Our eyes are for the enduring different kind of body. Our eyes make real to you the intangible qualities which you call spiritual. Only strainingly do we perceive the material.”

“You have said that you could see the material when it was worth the effort,” I reminded them, “Do you do that by some sort of external mechanism analogous to our microscope; or by an effort within yourselves?”

“Very nearly as you make the effort to perceive spiritually,” said they, “by sympathetically entering your environment aided by memory records. Very badly said.”

“I get a notion,” I resumed, “but once having thus entered our environment, do you see clearly physical happenings, as a ball rolling across a floor, for example?”

“The farther you get away from a sound, the fainter it becomes. Some of us can still reshape ourselves actually to participate in your lives. Much can be done by practice and comprehension of law. Others have no further desire to repeat experience, and even fail in communication because of inability to co-operate - I don't get the words right - fail in communication because they disregard the proportion in which you live, the superior visibility of the flesh, of the world.”

“Now please let me get back to my emplacement,” said Betty, who was getting tired.

“Remember there are shapeless people and structural people,” said the Invisible.

“I'll never forget the gelatinous lot,” Betty assured them.

NOTE: See appendix for record of experiments demonstrating the actuality of the spiritual body.

CHAPTER XIII

The Spiritual Realm

Before proceeding to take up more in detail the results we may expect from conscious spiritual contact, let us pause a moment to fill in a little background for this spiritual body idea.

Apparently some part of Betty, call it whatever you like, has left the body lying on the couch and has visited and reported back from other states of being. I am picking my words carefully in order to keep within what appear to be indisputable facts. That SOME part of her has left the body has been sufficiently proved to us by her reports of distant actual physical things of this world. I say some part of her; and you can call it her clairvoyant sense; or her acuter consciousness; or herself; or whatever you please.

The possibility of this having been proved in verifiable fashion by her reports of distant and physical things, it is but a step further to postulate that some part of her did leave her body and enter another level of consciousness. It does not matter much what the theory is, provided the reported experiences fit accepted truth.

In entering this higher level of consciousness she has been held, up to now, rigidly to two purposes; development of accurate reporting ability; and perception of the specific scheme of truth the Invisibles have determined to impart. Seemingly, it is not part of their purpose, or at least of their present purpose, to try to give us knowledge of their method of life. The idea, the insistent idea, is to give us a knowledge of what should be OUR OWN METHOD OF LIFE. Questions as to conditions over there they answer sketchily and a little impatiently. They tell us we are not yet enough educated to comprehend fully what they might tell us, and that we would interpret it into our own earth concepts. The result would be a distortion: and they prefer not to distort.

Nevertheless, in some directions, we are slowly getting a faint conception of their state of being.

In spite of the experience that it is better to let the Invisibles make their communications in their own way, without throwing query across the current, it was sometimes impossible to resist the temptation to ask questions.

“Was yesterday’s surmise that Betty was to begin life there while still living this, correct?” I asked one day.

“Most assuredly,” replied the Invisible, “There is certainly truth in it. Do not separate the two lives in your mind. Realize that the power to overlap is yours. The expansion of her spirit will enable her to live increasingly our wider freer life, while still retaining her outgrown body. This body we will utilize as a funnel to pour into the world more life-giving perception.”

“To what extent will she live your life?” I persisted.

“She will become increasingly aware of our life, but not part of it,” was the reply. “As we have said, she has her own part to perform. Until released from that she will not be free to enter our life, as you seem to mean it.”

“I’m aware of it without taking part in it,” put in Betty, “because I’m tethered.”

“She will approach and comprehend our conditions,” went on the Invisibles, “as she acquires strength to do so. There is no limit set, but our conditions must be grown into, not merely looked at with any degree of understanding. It is all gradual acquisition and growth.”

“It is very simple,” said Betty, “I couldn’t understand anything unless I’d grown to it, for the reason that I’d be blind to it: exactly as a baby is blind to things it does not comprehend, even though it is looking straight at them.”

“Well, will she be able to see and recognize you?” I insisted.

“Cannot say how much profit there’d be in reproducing our former selves. Rather it seems more pertinent to let her feel our companionship until she assumes our form and recognizes us as we are now,” was the reply.

“That’s what I mean,” said I, “Will she be able to see your present and real forms before her own death?”

“Impossible!” said the Invisible emphatically, “She will see the border, - how clearly we cannot yet say; but further than that it would be too boundless and incomprehensible.”

“What do you mean by the border?”

“The border is the farthest point of exploration possible for humans to reach. She may extend it. It is not a definite boundary.”

"I don't see any spheres," said Betty after a moment, "But an open country without roads. You go as far as you want to make roads for yourself. Some people sit down and don't go any farther because they don't want to make roads. They're there because they want to stay there. That's all I know. I'm tired and puzzled and stirred up, and I'm coming out."

In the course of this development she made various excursions, apparently, which had to do solely with the development and on which her comments were haphazard. They were not intended to convey anything coherent; nevertheless I took them down. There are quantities of them; but I will quote a few almost at random, not with the expectation that through them you will gain a definite outlook, but that they may afford you glimpses, carrying inspiration.

"The place seems to be a place you enter after certain eliminations," she said suddenly one day, "It doesn't seem to matter how small, naked or empty-handed you are: it's just a matter of getting rid of things and making a start. I can't get there yet. It's a place of unencumbered vitality and desire."

"It's the world in which one deliberately and consciously acts upon substances and forces about which we only dimly speculate and realize on earth," she said again, "I am on a level with them, same level I can only feel it now; everything has been put out of focus for me. They say I mustn't look at it today."

"They are showing me how to combine the two worlds. This is the threshold where they meet. I must live on this level a great deal to get used to it. It's perfectly real, only I'm not at home, not very comfortable. They touched me then."

"It's like organ music," she reported on another occasion, "I don't hear it exactly, but it is like a rhythm rising in a great crescendo. I want to rise to it. It's all swinging. I should think you could feel it. Funny to hear music without any sound. It's dying away as through the branches of a tree. It was very beautiful."

"Where are you when you are 'up there'?" I asked her during one of her earliest experiences.

"I am in a nicer, more comfortable atmosphere where I can see things."

"What sort of things?" I inquired.

"I see what is important and what is not, mainly," she replied. "I only feel conditions, not my friends, yet. I am in a wonderful atmosphere, and it is teeming with life, and it is plastic somehow, and there is such an urge back of me to go forward with wide open heart and arms."

"It is no longer a spooky, way-off, celestial sort of state," she remarked somewhat later. "It is a commonplace everyday place I go into as into my own house. I feel quite at

home now. It is a definite state. Can you imagine air that is very active instead of passive? Sort of like the difference between still and boiling water. It is like that all around me in this state, just vibrant of life. The state is definite and recognizable and the same, without changing as it used to do. It is a very definite place full of a different atmosphere, a different consciousness than that I live in. It's a sense of being broken up and diffused from a dense, fixed substance."

"They are giving me a very solemn warning," Betty announced one day, "I was going too fast."

"The only wholesome method of entering our consciousness," the Invisibles took her up in the changed voice I learned to distinguish as not her own report, "is by careful, the most careful, disassociation with the body. We guard its nervous reflexes. Irritation of them would be very harmful."

"All right now," Betty assured, "Let me go on. But I can't HELP getting excited. I feel as though I were keeping my hand on the top of my head and holding myself down. It's a much bigger, nicer place. It's so real and fascinating, so far above anything yet. I want to open my eyes; but they won't let me."

"Blindness is concentration," said they.

There came a time at least when, apparently, from a mere perception of a state of being, she progressed to a more definite realization of her spiritual body.

After passing into the disassociated state and lying quite immobile for some time, she suddenly remarked:

"I don't mind; I'm not afraid! My body is going. I'm dead; temporarily I'm in my new body. I wonder if I can move? I'll try Oh, dear, it's so puzzling! I'm going through something so queer! I'm struggling through something new and confusing. It will clear up by and bye; it always does.

I don't know what to do. I'd like to be bold and start off, but I can't work it. Guess I'll keep still and stop struggling. People are talking over me, fussing over me just the way they do over a baby, and I haven't the wit to respond. I don't dare let go to tell you about it. I can wander around. I feel more like a wobble-headed baby than ever. It's rather awful to be a baby again! This is a new phase; I don't co-ordinate."

"In time, it takes time," the Invisible reassured her.

"Oh, this is going to be great," she said, "I can just dimly recognize people Oh, I've got to stop. I don't know where I am nor what I am."

"It's hard at first, we know," said the Invisible.

"If I could only stop worrying about it, it would be all right. How can I!" said Betty.

“Today is just a start,” said they.

“It worries me to be a baby, when I’m grown up!” Betty complained, “I’m so baffled and puzzled. It is entirely new. There is no doubt of it; I passed through my earth babyhood in just the same way, only now I am dimly conscious of friends around me, and their efforts for me. But I have no strength; it is curious to be so dull and feeble. A baby struggles to consciousness the same way, trying to understand. Only, they say, I’ll grow faster.

“I’m feeling a little better already . They seem so sweet and old fashioned and darling. They are so sweet and unmodern. They’re all around me trying to attract my attention, but I can’t respond. I haven’t got enough life yet; their kind of life. It’s nice to see them there so close. I can’t see them so as to recognize them; just a circle of people, and they all feel different. They say I’d better go now. Now I’m seeping back into myself, and they’re helping me.”

At first the mere recognition of this body in the other consciousness seemed to be all. Then slowly Betty began to experience the simple first functions of it.

“What a curious method of progression!” she said suddenly, “I don’t walk; that’s a bodily method. I press forward, or something, by a kind of intermittent force on my own volition. I go because I want to go. It is smoother than spurts; but it is no more continuous than steps are. When you think of it, it is a current of thought that makes your steps go; well, here there’s a current of thought that sends you forward, - waves of pressure instead of steps. That is what steps are; only here you don’t have to have feet for it.

“Now I understand movement. It’s the first thing they teach when you go over.”

“But I want so much to practice!” she expostulated after a pause, “It’s such fun to go around just pulsing yourself forward that way. Breathing is a lot more difficult; I don’t quite understand that. It is a much wider fuller breath, I can see that; not the little, short, panting, smothery thing we do now.

“Now go slowly. Let me follow step by step. This is fun! Lots of fun!”

“Suppose,” suggested the Invisible, “you started experimentally pulsing yourself around and you knew how to breathe big, almost aching breaths; you’d soon begin to change, wouldn’t you? You couldn’t stay quite the same, could you? After having so many different experiences? You have had two already.”

“I want to see what happens to me next; leave me alone,” said Betty. “The next thing I want These big almost aching breaths and this movement combine into a feeling as if I were hunting for something. I’m groping for something I want very much; very much. I want NOURISHMENT! It is an instinct toward substance of growth. Curious, that sort of nourishment; you don’t seem to take it and give it up again. It is like atoms of power.

You add it to the sum of your substance. I don't know how you do it. It seems to be a matter of the proportion. Proportions act on each other in a creative way, the way foods do on cells. Oh, dear! I don't know what I'm talking about."

"This goes on quite a while, this collecting substance," interposed the Invisible, "Someday you'll get yourself assembled and begin to function."

"Wouldn't that be fun!" cried Betty, "Wonder what I could do? If I could come over and really function. Now sight. What is sight?" she speculated.

"Our sight is such a definitely limited thing, like our touch. It has a radius. If you want to reach farther you move along: if you want to see farther you move along. It seems to be here a question of your candle-power, not of any definite radius (laughs). Horse power for the physical, candlepower for the spiritual."

"Think of a room with one candle," said the Invisible, "Each one added multiplies the strength of illumination and enables you to see more, makes more reality visible. Think of people according to their candle-power."

"Next time I'll try to co-ordinate and see what happens," Betty promised herself. "I wonder if I could work them all together?"

"Go slow," warned the Invisible.

"This free-moving body has to be gradually acquired, like the writing and direct voice," the Invisible told us some weeks later.

"It has wonderful possibilities when I grow accustomed to it," added Betty. "I'm not used to this kind of consciousness. It's so free and different a feeling; but I'm not enough settled in it or accustomed to it to start out. It is too new and feeble and tender. I don't dare push myself along yet I want to keep quiet for a while.

"Pretty soon I'll start out and radiate more strongly, pulse myself along. I feel like a baby that must wonder how people move around so fast and surely. I wonder how they dare do it.

"I can go quite fast when I make myself that channel. What makes the channel that I've got to travel on? Some force growing within us that overcomes, forces a way through the surrounding element. Then I renew it and I go on again; that's the wave or pulse. But I don't move a step unless I grow that impulse. It is all the same whether it is a wave length or a will-power length or a radius of consciousness.

"Are you very fussy about it? Do you want it explained? Or can I go on and just do it?"

"Go ahead and do it," said I.

Those excerpts from abundant but scattered records, as I said, give glimpses rather than definite ideas. It is quite reasonable, if your mind runs that way, to take it all

symbolically. The statements are not provable, and are credible only, as any non-provable statements are credible, on the faith you have in the ones who make them. And perhaps it would be well in this connection to repeat that - again if your mind runs that way - you may logically ascribe the source of all this philosophy to the subconscious, the tapping of the universal mind, or anything beside those whom I call the Invisibles. The real point is, by whatever mechanism it is produced, here is a philosophy of living that is reasonable, logical, and that bears results. Such minutiae as the actual nature of the spiritual body, or any other little glimpses we may get of the details of the further consciousness are extras, frills, whose interpretation does not affect the main argument. Take what appeals to you.

CHAPTER XIV

Perception

1.

The spiritual body has, as we have said, senses of its own. They develop with its development. They must not be sought for themselves. They are not the specific object of our quest; and if they are made so, their pursuit may become detrimental, or even dangerous, - a form of jag, like taking drugs.

In a manner, I think, we should also beware of any ambition to duplicate Betty's experience or powers. The idea is to fit us for a more enriching life right here where we are.

But the development, and the use, in our own environment, of the spiritual senses as concomitant to a more healthy spiritual body is a legitimate reward. What, specifically, they are has not been described. What the Invisibles call perception is one of them. That word, too, like stability, they have used for lack of a better.

Its exact nature seems difficult to describe. Possibly it cannot be readily understood until it is acquired, as is the case with many other things even in this world. When first they approached it, their main care was to make clear to us its distinction from intellectual understanding.

"We will not write you much," said they, almost at the first, "but we will make you feel that we are there helping to discipline and strengthen your spiritual mind. You in the world set great store by brains, which are not to be despised, but which often offer an insurmountable obstacle to the real mind, which is a kind of spiritual perception, given to the uneducated sometimes more freely than to the hidebound, mapped-out, more developed man. This is why the poor and humble so much oftener communicate with us."

"I see what is important and what is not, mainly," you remember Betty gave as her first impression of what was in reality the working of this sense. At another time in describing an experience she gave me indirectly another glimpse. She was trying to tell how she was meeting people in the other consciousness.

"I dimly feel people all around me," she said, "as one feels people about one in a darkened room. They are acting on each other chemically - just like chemical action, only it is spiritual. We laugh at the auras but the idea of them is quite real in a way. You go near a fire, and that has an aura of heat; so has ice, of cold. With people it extends just a certain radius around. When people approach within that radius these influences intermingle and at once that chemical action begins. Barbed wire entanglements are as nothing compared to the protection that could be built in this way. It is not a selfish protection, either, but rather a harmonizer that kills antagonism."

"I seem to become conscious over here," she reported again, "more by this permeating than by the physical senses of sight and touch - they seem like mud-turtle senses. This is a new sense; much finer. There is more comprehension about it. Can't you imagine a state in which, instead of looking at things or feeling of them, you would look like growing into them, growing around them. That's the reason they don't let me see yet. Seeing is an inferior sense; they want me to develop the other first.

Don't you see, when we ask them to tell us what it's like over there, why it's so hard to answer?"

This idea of growing into, growing around the thing perceived, so that you are for the moment not only aware of, but a part of the essence of that thing, was often insisted on. Apparently it states the process most accurately of all, though many other analogies give glimpses of its attributes.

"It is like the telephone or wireless," said the Invisibles another time.

"Suppose you could see through a telephone - could perceive with your ears as you concentrated on distant places you wished to communicate with. Does not that dimly give you an idea of entering a wider field? Of course it would not be sight you would use - but we find it easier to name one of your senses that most nearly approaches to perception. You can see only what actually comes within the range of your retina; but supposing you could see as you telephone, at a distance. Would not this eliminate your boundaries enormously? You must believe that these boundaries can be eliminated by means of this sense; that it can bring a clear sight and sound of reality. In dealing with carnate and discarnate it can wipe out the line of division, blend the two. Speech with fellow men can carry by means of this; when tuned to this vibration it will do far more than the words you utter.

“You have experienced this in knowing what a man really means or is. This is the law of that fact, presented to you to utilize.”

“It’s very hard to get that inward seeing-over-the-telephone idea,” commented Betty. “Seems to be a direct, unobstructed sort of force that carries intelligence from one to the other. Before, it always had to keep going through various filters and reducers and transformers to change its force and adapt it. Now it’s going to come sliding over! But you’ve got to stay up there, above the earthly senses. If you get back into your senses, it’s going to go right over your head.”

“See if I get a glimpse,” I interposed. “As I understand it, in order to get this, a man has first of all to rise to your level.”

“The level above your consciousness; not our level,” disclaimed the Invisible.

“They’re hunting to find concrete cases,” said Betty. “It seems to be in the army, or perhaps in Africa - your dealing with some of the men; how you know when to jump them, and when to go light on the offense. It seems to be a matter of the amount of integrity they can register on the silent gauge - it’s very hard to say. That is what you feel a man’s integrity by, no matter what he says; and makes you doubt another no matter what he does. That is an example of this new sense.”

“We don’t want to confuse you too much today with elaborate explanations,” warned the Invisible, “You are always so eager. Concentrate and economize your attention on a single aspect until enough of it comes to you through this sense to explain itself.”

“You see,” interposed Betty, “they give you an idea, and you can think about it a little, and then all the time you are not thinking about it, it is filling out. It is a lot easier than a lot of little discussions.”

“When you say something to a person,” they continued, “is it the words that actually influence him, or is it the current your thought travels on, the force that comes out of you and takes it to him? Some people’s words mean so little, and the same words from other people mean so much. That is an example of a diluted form.”

“If while you are talking to him,” Betty took it up, “you can unbatten your hatches or just get above your senses, tap this thing, you can say all kinds of things silently to him. He will know that you like him or sympathize with him or want to uphold him in what he is doing. I told you how when we meet over here we mingle in some sort of way. That is how sometimes we can mingle here. When in the world we catch each other’s eyes and laugh at the same joke is a simple example. It is the opposite of knocking your shells together like two old tortoises meeting.”

“It isn’t very clear yet,” confessed the Invisible, “but never mind about your clarity of perception of it. That necessarily comes after you have maintained conditions for a time long enough to establish it.”

Before leaving this subject of perception one more point must be emphasized: the necessity for acquiring its use, not merely in the secondary state which Betty used for experimentation, but in full possession of our normal consciousness.

“Each thing I acquire, like perception,” stated Betty, “I have to bring down with me with great effort; and I have to naturalize it, transplant it, so that it becomes an earthful thing. I have to arrange so that I don’t have to get into any supernatural state to perceive and use it.”

“We are so anxious to make an impression on you with this idea,” added the Invisible, “that we will give you nothing else today. Perception is not to occur merely in a solitary or trance-like condition; it is to enter your everyday, workaday world as soon as possible.”

2.

An excellent example of the working of this spiritual sense in everyday life is the way a creative artist goes at his job. How does he get his basic idea? If he is a man of insight, he will freely acknowledge that it is not by working his intellect. That comes later; when he assembles and arranges his materials. But the inception is something different. Things come to him.

His method of encouraging things to come to him varies according to his temperament. He may get them through an association with nature. Or through listening to music, or from staring at a blank wall. Or he wakes up with them after a good night’s sleep. A basic idea - or inspiration; only I am afraid of that word’s connotations must derive from this subconscious source. If it is an intellect thing; synthesized; constructed; then you have your hack writer for the “pulp,” or your mill-run painter of kind-faced cows or what-not, or your tin-pan-alley maker of tunes.

The same principle applies with the inventor; with the research scientist; with the creative business man. Such a man studies his problem intellectually; he assembles as much background as possible. In other words, he gets together his materials. Sometimes - perhaps most often - he worries away at them with his intellectual teeth. But only rarely does he ‘figure out’ a solution to anything that is new in a creative sense. That comes to him ‘in a flash’; and often when he is absorbed in something trivial and unrelated - like shaving. If you question him, he will probably say he had a hunch; a bright idea struck him all at once. But he did not actually THINK IT OUT. Afterwards he will, undoubtedly, think out the details. That is what the intellect is for.

This is inspiration. According to the Invisibles it is a working of perception; in their definition one of the senses of the spiritual body.

There are other routes by which it may reach one. But they are cruder, less reliable, and may in certain circumstances become actually dangerous. Perception can be developed, with security. It will then always direct dependably.

Its working is most clearly describable in creative work, but its usefulness applies to all problems of life. When we are hopelessly confused and no amount of study brings a solution, if then we but still our thoughts and LISTEN, we will instantly KNOW in our heart of hearts what course to follow. And the faculty that speaks to us then is perception.

Naturally a deliberate and conscious use of this sense is the surest. Nevertheless, in even the man who is the least bit developed, it is always to some extent in action. Generally he is unaware of it; or perhaps he ignores it as a “mere emotional reaction,” if he is of the intellectual type. But it is capable of dependence as practical guidance.

“Consider the use of your body,” said the Invisibles. “It tells you when you are hungry, and when you are thirsty, and when you are hot or cold and also what to do to remedy it. Your physical senses take you through physical life pretty well.

“In the same way your spiritual sense, once developed, has a hunger for service, a thirst for harmony, a perception of the heat and cold of human hearts. And it automatically fulfills its function of giving and maintaining spiritual life, just as the physical senses automatically fulfill their functions.”

“The spiritual sense,” they went on later, “is our modelling sense. It dictates our needs for rounded, constructive, progressive existence, just as our appetites, when unperverted, dictate the needs of our bodies. If you leave that side of you undeveloped you get out of shape; you lose the power of harmonizing. You have no instinct by which to apprehend your needs; you grasp almost at random; your being becomes diffused, scattered, instead of whole. Your component parts are pulling at random, instead of together as a good team should.

“It is like a pharmacist’s shop: there are all kinds of spiritual ingredients. If you mix them in the proper proportion, they begin working; without that mixing they do not work. There is truth in them, yes; but they do not work because they do not bear the right relation, possess the proper proportion, the right mixture.”

At best we use this faculty in a spasmodic and fragmentary manner. But eventually, we were told, in the long last of evolution, all of life will be brought within its control!

An animal dwells in his equipment of instinct, sensation, emotion and habit; with fragmentary incursions into an adumbrated faculty of reason. Man uses these also; but he has moved the center of his being more into the mental field, so that, as he develops, more and more intellect dominates his life.

But reason is not the end of the line. Beyond it lies perception. And, again as he develops, more and more will he transfer control, until eventually it will hold in his life the same dominant position he now accords to intellect.

This thought, we are told, is not fantastic - as an ultimate possibility. Probably we, as individuals, in this present life, shall not reach any such attainment. But how many of us have got even as far as complete intellectual control? However, we can move along that path. We can increase, little by little, our use of perception in the management of our daily affairs. And if we do so easily, normally, without forcing, without strain, we may astonish ourselves. Mistakes? Of course! But, the Invisibles pertinently reminded us, what is our batting average of correct decisions of pure intellect?

CHAPTER XV

Impetus

1.

The force that carries you along they called impetus. Impetus you originate within yourself. It is based on desire.

You get nowhere at all unless you desire. You do not move your little finger unless you have a definite wish to do so; you do not swallow, look, shift position, speak, understand, perform any activity whatever, physical or mental, unless you have first sent out from within yourself a self-originated impulse that starts the machinery. The force used, the mechanism employed may be altogether an outside thing. It is possible for a child's hand on a lever to accomplish mighty results. But the origin of it all is DESIRE for something, on the part of one man or many. That is the thing that is born within the human being, mysteriously, out of nothing.

Now according to this philosophy every desire, when it is a definite outgoing desire, produces an impetus. This is true whether or not that desire produces any apparent effect. Before it can result in action it may be inhibited, or it may encounter opposing forces that nullify it. But in the substance of thought - an idea we have examined - an impetus is produced - that proceeds on in its own direction and according to its own laws until its force is exhausted or until it is destroyed or deflected by other influences. It might be likened to a child's mechanical toy that runs when you place it on the floor, until the power of its mainspring is exhausted: or to the ripples from a stone cast into water. The strength and vitality of that impetus depend on the intensity and vitality of the desire and the clarity of the perception.

That proposition, then, is simple enough in its initial statement. In its ultimate results it becomes complicated beyond present human understanding. The billions of crosscurrents thus set up of impetuses, old and nearly spent or new and vigorous;

feeble in their inception or powerful; solitary or united; running with or counter to one another, make for a bewildering tangle. The ultimate effect is probably under some law, but that law we do not at present know. Still, it is not difficult to visualize the rise and fall of movements, ideals, ambitions, and the fate of dynasties and races if we think of the impetuses great and small started on their way by the desires great and small, collective and individual, earnest or ephemeral that arise in the breasts of men.

2.

Each person has his own individual spiritual impetus which he makes from whatever genuine aspirations and desires he may possess. "The will" they told us, trying to define this out-reaching desire that results in impetus, "is separate from either the mind or the brain. It is the driving force of the being that makes you decide for or against. It is what you build with. It is the conscious part of your soul. Will is a poor name for it, but we have no better. You measure growth against it as you measure a child backed against a door. It is like a number you are labelled with, what you amount to, your measure." By this inner and individual thing, that is yours personally and can be set in motion by no one else, you build your personal impetus. "You get yourself a certain individual power formula: it produces a certain result. That is impetus. Unless something happens to stop that impetus or deflect it, it will carry you along its appointed route until its force is spent."

Thus a very large percentage of your present life is made up of unspent impetus brought into being by the desires of your past life. Only a small percent is fresh impetus. In that fashion you are increasingly a slave of your past, unless by new and strong desire you create new impetus that shall override the old.

"But," say they, "you can change the formula you have made for yourself. The development quality it can put forth in new impetus is exactly according to the inspiration with which you combine it."

3.

Therein lies man's control over what he calls destiny.

"Destiny," they define it, "is the spending of impetus unarrested by spiritual consciousness."

This was rather too condensed a statement to be readily understood.

"Most people," they went on, "travel along logical routes of action, on half spent impetus. Unless deflected by some effort of the spiritual consciousness they continue to the logical end of that impetus. To that extent they are destined to a certain thing."

"I will explain that," put in Betty, as often happened when I was puzzled, "Most people walk alone, not coupled to any divine contact, travelling on impetus. They collect and

set in motion certain qualities. These run their courses to their natural conclusions, good or bad. They are like machinery that runs until the gasoline gives out; that is, the impetus. They are chug-chugging all around us, some nearly run down, some just standing. You can see just where they are going if let alone. On the other hand, if you can apply the complementary force - which is divine regulation, or inspiration, or consciousness, - you can check that machinery and turn it in quite another direction. Or you can keep it going in its direction, without running down. That's where your selective powers come in.

"It is very nice. In that way you can help other people. All Fate, Kismet, Allah's will-be-done, is just this passive spending of impetus. It looks as though one larger more vitalized contact could veto another. It is very complicated in people's lives."

That is not all of destiny, all of free will by a great deal. The subject is too complicated to go further with. But it is a glimpse: and it shows how man can master his destiny by capturing his soul; and points how we might help others.

CHAPTER XVI

Constructive Prayer

The inception, and the constant revision of one's impetus, is one of the important jobs in life. We are broadcasting even with our most secret thoughts and desires. We are accountable for what we send out. Our desire does not die in our breasts. It goes out as something we have launched, to run straight ahead on its appointed course until the force of its projection is exhausted, or until it meets a more powerful or deflecting force. It may be going and fulfilling its destiny long after we have forgotten it. That is part of our responsibility: to send out, as far as human frailty will permit, only wholesome impetus into the intricate crosscurrents of world life.

At that point we touch the subject of individual responsibility, into which we will go more fully when certain other needed concepts are attained. For the moment we will leave it.

Now of course impetus is being started all about us at every split second of the day. It is part of the automatic function of life, just as is spiritual contact. Without the one there can be no movement, no action in the world at all: without the other there could be no continued good thing. They must function, just as the heart must function, or life ceases. But that is not to say that in the present state of things they function easily or well, nor that they cannot to greater advantage be directed consciously. We have seen that, as respects spiritual contact, our performance is inefficient. As respects the production of impetus, also, our sources are haphazard.

The deliberate daily production of individual impetus comes, as we have hinted, from the individual 'formula' which we can take to mean, roughly, the character. This varies with each. One may lack stability; another must overcome inertia, and so on. The formula carried into practice produces impetus. If this impetus is to be conscious and intelligent, we must know our lacks and govern ourselves accordingly. That much, I think, is clear. But how are we to arrive at an adequate knowledge of these lacks and an effective desire to fill them?

In discussing that we are fairly forced to use an ecclesiastical word whose connotations have so thickly overspread the meaning we wish to convey as to make it almost useless. Yet there is no other. I refer to the word 'prayer'.

Please discard from your mind all stilted conventional meaning it may have for you now. It has become largely, and to many, a childhood ceremony almost abandoned as life engulfs us; to others an unconvincing act; a petition for favors from an overlord; a ritual; a paean of personal praise. Forget all that. Start over again without preconception. Let the Invisibles have the word "free and unsullied," as they expressed it to the author of THE SEVEN PURPOSES.

Next, as the first contribution to its meaning, assemble under it all that you have come to understand as the process of seeking spiritual contact and permeation. This process constitutes the first step in ALL constructive prayer. "In that phase," said the Invisible, "it is an assembling and offering up of your best self for union with the Overstrength. Only when this has been made habitual are we ready to proceed further.

"It is only by the strength of this contact that you gain courage for the second step; to plumb the depths and know yourself. It is the inspiration that quickens your perception. You cannot plunge all at once into a knowledge of your spiritual lacks, because that MUST come gradually."

"These two levels of prayer we must learn to perceive and use before they can give us more," Betty ended.

When the subject of prayer was first presented to us as such, the first step - the spiritual contact step - was re-expressed in terms which it might be illuminating to quote here. In essence, they told us, it is merely a spiritual association approached with human warmth of desire; and amounts in the long run to the great lifelong companionship.

"I don't understand that," said Betty, "I'll review it."

"I approach divine companionship in prayer as I reach for warm friendship," she went on after a pause, "only with greater expectation."

Then, as often, they showed her a picture; a statue of a figure poised for flight, as she described it, "a beautiful figure, more beautiful than the Winged Victory."

“It is so beautiful,” she said. “The head is tip and thrown back. Deliciously free! I want to start out that way, too, with my head thrown back, in faith, facing the unknown! I want to be poised like that, too!”

That was all for the first day. A little later the subject was taken up again, and they repeated in this new terminology the old warning against the enfeebling type of relaxation, the letting go all holds and waiting to be lifted up. It cannot be repeated too often.

“Weak prayer does not fulfill its part because it just calls down, instead of rising to meet. This is still all part of the chemistry of prayer. You can conceive a spiritual being by the strength of your direct desire for contact. You do it by calling for spiritual companionship or association. It amounts to very little unless something arises within you to enlarge your capacity to receive it and blend with it. Something within you must rise continually to meet the spiritual association. You cannot just wait for it to come to you.”

So much for the first step of constructive prayer: that of spiritual contact and permeation, the reaching for the heights. Now let us consider further what was told us of the second: that of plumbing the depths.

“Prayer is the projection of your spiritual being, heart and soul,” they defined, “It is the conscious assembling of your highest self. In offering up the spirit, you lay bare your own soul. It is the only way you can recognize your own proportions. You face the sum total of yourself. It pierces all your coverings and trappings as an X-ray pierces the body. There is a terrible reality to it. This is its zone of action, this compulsion to face your naked soul. “From dread of this people use only the surface of prayer.

“But there is no discouragement with this facing (of one’s naked soul); no discouragement. Even mortification is submerged in eagerness to reconstruct and harmonize. That is the big feeling prayer gives you. You must plumb the depths of prayer down to your timid soul in order to gain impetus.

“Under the inspiration of prayer each one of us recognizes the WHOLENESS necessary to spiritual harmony. In proportion as he lacks is the urge to acquire the wholeness he perceives.”

“It seems,” interpreted Betty, “to be a sort of chemical affinity among the parts that should make up each person’s wholeness. Therefore, as soon as spiritual perception is started a tremendous attracting power is set in motion, and you begin to assemble yourself. In that way the action of prayer, even spasmodic prayer, does good.”

“But persisted in,” added the Invisible, “it is the great workshop of the soul.”

“The assembling cannot all be done at once, you see; so they call it the workshop.”

“Any level of prayer is worthwhile,” went on the Invisible, “But for the strongest reaction you must plumb the depths. You must always, in anything, plumb the depths before you are permitted to go on to the heights.”

“Yesterday my beautiful statue of faith,” said Betty, “so eager for released action; and I didn’t know why it was held back. It was held back for today’s perception of the depth of self-truth.

“That’s queer! I can’t get to the top again at all! They say, until I can visualize my needs, I am bogged down. There is no hurrying over this; got to stay right here until I can see my naked soul and start my impetus. I can’t start it until I see myself, my fragmentary self. It is very hard to do; I am USED to myself.”

“Then this constructive prayer consists in the visualizing of spiritual needs?” I asked.

“No,” was the reply. “It’s a visualizing of spiritual lacks rather than needs.”

“If you need a thing, you lack it?” I objected to the curious distinction.

“You don’t gain the same impetus from one as from the other,” they answered. “A mere need does not create a vacuum that sucks in; it doesn’t set the same force in action.”

“Distinction still not clear,” said I, glimpsing that it was an effort to get a vital word.

“A lack looks like a hole,” Betty helped us, “a sort of physical thing that you fill up with a rush, once you create it by recognition. A need is a kind of mentally desirable thing - not a big elemental thing. The creation by visualization or recognition of spiritual lacks is the depth we talked of.”

Constructive prayer, then, considered in its entirety, makes us aware of these lacks. From this awareness springs that defined, understanding impetus which thenceforward must guide our destiny.

In conclusion it might be inspiring to quote an example of approach to constructive prayer as reported one day by Betty.

“It’s a beautiful form, a grand rhythm. In utter obliviousness of everything else I fling myself, abandon myself to one collective thought, the beauty of a physical world. I sweep it whole right into my heart, everything, the little Alpine flowers on Kearsage top, the undersea gardens, the desert bloom, the frost crystals, the world of the magnifying glass, the stars - all the physical universe. The manifestation of overpowering love and intelligence, - I gather them all in my own great rush of worship. It’s an offering, a concentration of my life’s experience returning to its source. Once spent, I lie still and quietly life recharged filters back to me, recharged with vitality, strength and eagerness to take my part, to be victorious with humility, conscious of the immensity of the scheme. When the renewed life flows back into me my great effort is

to retain it, to contain it all in all, for the force of the renewed life must be converted into world activity.”

CHAPTER XVII

Summary

1.

We have at last come to a breathing space or pause before taking up the second aspect of our teaching by the Invisibles. All that has gone before, you have noticed, has dealt with our relations to ourselves. Next we were called upon to examine our relations with the world outside ourselves. Before we do so it might be a good idea to summarize in very brief review.

2.

We are out of proportion: the spiritual and the material do not bear to each other the harmonious proportion. This is a materialistic age. We are not in possession of the fullness of life.

We gain our proper proportions by achieving spiritual contact and stabilizing it, in the sense that it becomes a function of our daily lives, like eating or sleeping.

This stabilized wider consciousness gradually develops in us a spiritual body whose senses advise us of our needs.

We gain our impetus to attain this wider consciousness from desire.

Desire is best regulated by this same habitual spiritual association. By the strength of this contact we quicken and develop a perception which gives us strength and courage of ourselves and discernment of our spiritual lacks, the things we haven't got; as distinct from spiritual needs, the ordinary sustenance of life.

The recognition of these lacks brings an understanding desire for wholeness. From this enlightened desire comes our individual impetus.

3.

Supplementing this skeleton of the teaching itself, it might be as well to pass on two bits of practical advice given us by the Invisibles.

The first of these is that as soon as we have got the machinery working we should not continue to emphasize its details. The small complicated devices - relaxation, elimination, aspiration, etc. - should be simplified into an ATTITUDE OF MIND.

“All this should become a subordinate machinery, like a digestive tract. You direct it from above by a selection of what is to feed it. Up to this point all has been spiritually

organic, making something that will function. You need to pay just the attention to it to keep it running smoothly. You should now use your perception or spiritual intelligence. Blend your ideas. Instead of being little pointed efforts, little mountain-peak things, rub them together in a mass, without detail. It makes a shaded band colored with the idea of prayer and capacity which generates the force to act on your physical world. That shaded band is the coloring of your mind; but do not particularize on it.

Forget the technique of it, and have it merely as the coloring of your thought. By making this a coloring of the mind you do it without thinking of how you do it. Your attention is freed for something else."

Nevertheless it should not be forgotten for a moment that once in a while first steps must be consciously repeated. They should by now be more or less automatic, but sometimes they need thought. The steps of our feet are largely automatic; yet we take thought to lift them high when we cross ploughed land.

The second pointer is, that if we start in on this at all, we are enlisted for the duration. We cannot make up our minds that we have done enough, and quit.

"It is a funny thing," observed Betty, apropos of this, "but you can't do that; you've got to keep going when once you start. It's as if you were to decide that your heart had beat long enough, and you thought you'd stop it awhile."

And we must continually 'make it so'; constantly animate, vitalize what we have acquired. We always come back to that. Unless it is alive it is not valuable even as a museum specimen.

"Keep fresh and vital what you have already received," the Invisibles told us, "Do not let it lapse to a mere collector's interest. YOUR SUCCESS IS MEASURED SOLELY BY YOUR VITALIZING QUALITY. The attitude of mind in keeping vitalized is to keep moving, not to let yourself get static" And Betty added: "They showed a picture, a bird over a blue ocean, but he did not try to light on it, to stop moving - he knew better."

4.

Rounding out the whole is an aspect of promise and hope.

The spiritual body, we are assured, is indestructible. It may be, as Betty saw it, crippled, embryonic, incomplete; but such as it is, it endures. Furthermore, whatever we may add to it in the way of development is an everlasting possession. We may go our ways deliberately blind, deliberately neglectful, willfully procrastinating, self centered, even antagonistic. These things may form over our real selves a crust that will stop growth. They may act on us, and on others about us, in unguessed ways through long vistas of time. Their effects we will have to liquidate, with compound interest. Their iron construction we will have to dissolve before again we can expand. But they cannot destroy. Whatever of the spiritual body is in ourselves - even in crudest embryo - is

ours forever, on which sometime or other, when we have resolved ourselves free, we shall build.

PART II

OUR RELATIONS WITH THE WORLD WITHOUT

CHAPTER XVIII

Levels

We may define experience, for our present purpose, as our principal points of contact in our meetings with the outside world. This experience is the raw material that life offers; but what we make of it is strictly up to us. If we handle it well we make something fine, and our advance is speeded on the road to progress. So it is a good thing to know how to meet experience.

Furthermore, the degree of our ability to deal with it is a pretty good indicator of how far we have already travelled. For we have by no means all come the same distance. In evolution we do not advance in company front, but string out irregularly like a crowd going to a ball game.

“You all live together on earth at different levels-levels of consciousness, we mean,” the Invisible expressed this. “Certain prerogatives pertain to each level of capacity. Your voluntary capacity, or the level you attain, contains certain growths, senses or prerogatives peculiar to that element, altitude, substance or level. This of yours is the level of dawning perception.”

In the course of our development, they went on, we progress from one level to another, like going up stairs. And each step must be lived out to the full before we can go on to the next.

“The only way you go from one level to another,” said they, “is to get your breadth in this level. When height has been reached, sufficient breadth in proportion must be gained. It is like layers. You must grow to the first layer, fill out all its breadth, before you can lay another over it.

“And when you reach a level, you contain, AND ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR, all below that level. Therefore you cannot skip a grade. If you did not go through the whole process, you could not contain all the levels below you.”

There was a pause while Betty explored.

“I was on a higher level,” she reported at last. “I travelled horizontally, but I seemed to contain sympathetically, consciously, all that was below me that I had come through. I

contained them in a curious way, as though I was responsible for them. They were all part of me in some humanly magnetic way.”

“The responsibilities of each level must be understood,” said they, “or you are not partakers of the life of that level.”

This system of levels apparently is not confined to life as we know it. Beyond the range of our ordinary human consciousness extends another region, likewise with levels of awareness.

“The highest level there,” they explained, “connects with the lowest level here.”

This is the region into which Betty has been led - the “higher level” of which she speaks. And this is the level which we enter when we reach for spiritual contact. In fact the Invisible often spoke of contact as ‘centering the consciousness in the level above.’

“This meeting ground of the two consciousnesses is not only feasible, but desirable; strengthening to all contiguous life,” said they. “Constantly try to overrun and merge at the boundaries. This union of the borderlands is a great and satisfying achievement.”

In the course of our development, they went on, we can expect to progress farther and farther into these upper regions. But at first we must be content to establish ourselves on the threshold. Early in the game Betty was warned against trying to push ahead too far and too fast. The elevation already gained must be made sure of before new heights are attempted.

“It can no longer be an upward growth,” said they one day, “except as you condense and assimilate each phase into structure which penetrates to the next range of vision.”

“That doesn’t make sense,” complained Betty, “but I know, and they always elaborate later. Yes, they say they will.”

“You have been holding your thoughts and aspirations into a kind of shaft, penetrating, rising above your normal restricted-self senses,” they continued. “Now, having attained a certain degree of light and freedom, you must, like a tree, begin the expansion and utilization. But do not complicate your struggles at present by trying to get a sequence further than you have attained. Merely occupy yourself with expanding to your greatest breadth of acute consciousness.”

This is only a glimpse of how evolution proceeds on its way; but it is a boundary-eliminating glimpse. First step up: then expand to occupy the whole area to which that step has raised you.

CHAPTER XIX

Assimilation

1. UNFINISHED BUSINESS.

The tremendous importance of filling out our levels efficiently was brought home to us in a variety of ways. At one period, though we continued to sit together, no spoken teaching was given. I ventured to ask what we were supposed to be doing.

“You are engaged at present in spiritual absorption of yourself,” the Invisibles replied.

“Could you elaborate?” I suggested.

“There still remains in you a stronghold of earth inertia which must be overcome before we can proceed freely and satisfactorily,” said they.

“This barrier is in the nature of a wall built of years of depositing weighty things that should have been disembodied by spiritual application. Everybody builds this wall. It must be disembodied before we can proceed, or you will be continually returning to it. It is a kind of a world dump of unassimilated experiences, merely recognized mentally, but not lived up to.”

This seemed to me an illuminating thought as to our relations with life - that the experiences we encounter must be lived out and assimilated. If they are not, they become, as in the case of physical digestion, an actual clog and detriment, a source of spiritual ill-health. Here was an incentive to meet life squarely, without dodging.

“I want to ask them how to recognize these low-order unvitalized-progress things,” said Betty. “Oh, that’s the searchlight they spoke of a time ago. You keep your spiritual powers so active that you can illumine earthly things and so discern true character. We can all get it if we want it.

“You can dimly feel how it would go on and on. First you’d be able to clean up or dispel the simple obvious obstructions. There is no particularly unhealthy material. It is not so much diseased as it is unawakened or of a lower order, all this earth material. Wait, this is so vague. You can dissolve it with a strong infusion of life or spiritual force so that it isn’t so dead and dense. That’s the first step, these obvious things.

“As you go on - I can’t see very well - but as you go on you could always be rearranging better and better . That would be creation. I’d better not go any farther; it’s too difficult.”

At another time the Invisibles gave us a striking symbol to illustrate how we should go about this absorption.

“You must absorb with the spirit all that you call into being with your attention,” they warned us. “You cannot leave unabsorbed stuff lying around. You must stay and fix it.”

“I’m always going through something that drags on me and tries to pull me back,” complained Betty, “or points out interesting things and tries to deflect my attention. It is diabolically ingenious in knowing my interests and weaknesses. It is my own unabsorbed self.

“Funny,” she continued after a few moments, “they show me the statue of Laocoon and the snakes.

“Your own emanations and misconceptions, fostered by an effortless, miasmatic sort of spiritual lassitude, create these snakes until they hold you fast. You could absorb them by spiritual strength; but you don’t. Just as your blood is oxygenated and destroys poisons.

“Thus you are held fast by your own misconceptions. What can be done?

“You must stop thinking about the snakes and reach out, all your attention concentrated on leaving your body to the snakes and freeing your spirit. Gradually, after going over it again and again and again – for you cannot hold it very long at first - and by persistently renewing the spiritual contact, gradually that contact will be so strong that it will react on the body. Then you will begin to absorb. The permeation, the transmutation will start.

“The snakes lose their vitality. You are stepping on them, freeing an arm to pull them off. But if you start thinking about them much it livens them up! Your attention must be kept on the other contact. Stretch your arms and make your plan and take care they stay under your feet.”

2. THE DISSOLVING OF SPIRITUAL FORCE.

We ingest experience as the sustaining nutriment of life. That nutriment is assimilated as food is assimilated by the body. By means of it we are empowered to fill out one level of consciousness so that we may rise to the next. Unassimilated, it, again like food, is a lump in the throat, a clog, a detriment, a disturbing thing. In one respect however, the analogy breaks down. Unlike the automatism of absorption by digestion, this process may be subject to intelligence. It goes on, whether we realize it or not, but it goes on much surer and faster if we use that intelligence.

At first glance it might seem again to strain analogy to postulate a spiritual gastric juice. And yet the thing we have been reaching for in what we have called permeation, or contact, is in a way just that. Over and over, from the very start, such a concept was impressed on us. At first we took it as a figure of speech, but later discovered that it was meant to be taken literally.

“It is a matter-of-fact law,” said Betty positively. “I don’t see anything ‘psychic’ about it. I am just studying the law; and little by little I am demonstrating. The biggest thing you can study is this, and how much of it you can take. I lie here and strive according to the

poor little rules I have discovered already, and something like slight chemical change takes place.”

“These forces we call spirit dissolve and enter in if they have a chance,” she said another time. “They change the particles and penetrate and establish connection. That’s what they do to me. It’s so easy to see - and so hard to tell! The world is full of chemical changes like that - it’s the same in the spirit world. I’m permeated now, and you are not. That’s the reason you look so hard to me. I see so clearly the action of this thing I am trying to understand. I know the secret of it - it’s the same old thing: keep in touch, keep it near us all the time. It works when we are not thinking of it if we will only think of it once in a while. Reach out and touch it, and it stays with you - that’s the secret. I’m looking at it now, a great big sea of spirit; and some are wearing diving suits and it cannot touch them, and others are swimming around in it and are so happy.”

This was early in the experience, when these things were conveyed in simple pictorial forms. Here is another:

“I am pushing with great strength and purpose, tremendous force,” Betty reported. “But it is not destructive force - constructive force. There is a dense mass before me; ordinarily I would say it was impenetrable. I couldn’t get through. I’d stop where I was. But I can get through by means of this spiritual force. It finds the little channels between and widens them. Yes, I know: it’s the world. I am going through what looks like the impervious world of matter.

“It is very curious how that force works between the atoms until it makes a way. It is most interesting to watch that. Those atoms couldn’t possibly be packed any tighter, and there is no room to push them out of the way. But I start working among the little interstices between them until I have widened them and made a way through; and then somehow I absorb the matter. It is like a saturated solution of matter in spirit; I take up what I have strength for. Then I come to a stop until I gain more strength. The absorbing power of the spirit transmutes. That is the way the whole world will be absorbed some day.”

“I am gradually getting hold of this spiritual substance,” Betty ventured another time. “When you have acquired a little of it, it seems to have definite uses you can put it to. That’s what they are trying to get over. A consuming power. Things seem to disappear under it, like ice under the sun. It seems as though no material thing can stand long against it. It gives you the feeling that if you had enough of it, and you were behind an iron or a concrete door, the thing would - that sounds queer - but it becomes so recharged or vitalized that it seems to have dissolved into its component parts. Could that be done to iron or concrete? Why, it looks that way!

“This wonderful transmuting, absorbing substance is what you set in action by spiritual contact. Once set in action, you cannot stop it. It is bound to act, to consume. The more

faith you have in it, the more powerful it is. It would be terrible were it not used for good."

"Oh, well, you could never fully utilize this power until you had first destroyed all your own earth conventions and limitations. If they were really destroyed, so they could not dilute with doubt, then you could utilize the full power of the spirit. That is what it is to be made in the Image. You see, we really were made in the Image, but we've got to earn, to deserve our heritage."

"One of the most useful things to hang onto for spiritual imagination purposes," supplemented the Invisibles, "is that dissolving power of spirit on the iron and concrete."

The world is being created over and over again, each time with a greater and greater spiritual infusion. That is progress. At last it will be absorbed by the spirit."

"If you once get that idea," Betty concluded, "you can start absorbing things. It makes the whole solid world soluble in spirit. To you it looks as though nothing could destroy Mount Diabolo, but from here it seems as though sufficient spiritual power could actually dissolve it."

"And far beyond, I can dimly sense the power to put together again." (*Move mountains? Ed*)

That was an inspiring glimpse, the working over and over of stubborn material, as a sculptor kneads his clay, until it becomes through creation and re-creation more and more capable of expressing the spirit. That, as they said, is progress; the power to dissolve and put together again. And it applies, apparently, even to our physical bodies.

"Spirit dissolves the natural so curiously!" commented Betty one time. "Its substance seems to have a dematerializing effect on the body - it gets not so solid, more flexible. It makes it easy to be acted on by the thought. It's the first step in something, the preparatory work."

Several days later in the midst of other work she unexpectedly returned to the subject.

"There must be some definite relation you should have with your body," she exclaimed, puzzled. "The outside alliance is your real life."

After the usual pause when such a point is raised, she resumed:

"I am living in a body. I must fill the body until it becomes just a thin clothing for the spirit. The bodily self is produced by bodily limitations. As soon as you know your spiritual self, you can begin absorbing your bodily self. You do not destroy these walls; you must have them; they become translucent so you can shine through them. Nor is it a development of the body, for it does not bring it upward, but reduces it by the contact of spirit. It is something of the oil-on-paper idea. That makes paper translucent. Thus at the last it comes again to relaxing the bodily self, but filling with the spiritual self."

The more we succeed in doing this, the less resistance there will be to our progress. In her super-physical development this was symbolized to Betty.

“Somehow I’ve worn thin a dense material that has always been around me and kept me in a little narrow space,” she announced one day. “And now I have only to keep on stretching myself and pushing through the thin stuff, the very slight resistance. I can advance through this substance with very little effort, like a tide coming in, feeling its way up the shore. I can spread that way, comprehending, having contact, advancing. It is endless, just endless!”

3. THE GENERAL ANSWER.

This is a wonderful, a thrilling picture. But for most of us it is undeniably of the future, at least in its completeness. We must pass through many intervening stages before we shall attain such freedom and such power. Nevertheless at whatever stage we may be the formula for advancement remains the same. Experience must be met and assimilated in order that we may fill out our level and proceed to the next. “It is only by fulfilling the laws of each step that this can be done. And that means just living them naturally, with as much light, bigness of heart, expansion, as you can - doing your best and pushing on.”

And in this task our most effective aid is the power we gain from spiritual contact. Sometimes we will get this directly through our own conscious efforts; sometimes indirectly through association and observation. But always it remains the vital factor in our progress; the one most worth fostering.

“Choose the companionship of inspiration wherever it feeds and nourishes,” advised the Invisibles, “Whether in the gift of dead poets or the sweating toil of living workers. Outside your hours of duty refresh and stimulate your thought chambers by constantly associating yourself with the aristocracy of the spirit wherever you can recognize it. There is always such a drag to the commonplace, such a vortex of it. You must continually guard yourself against it if you are going to maintain yourself above it. I am not saying there is anything wrong about it: I am only saying it is crowded. Our restricted imaginations, our semi-paralyzed wills, our spasmodic instead of habitual acknowledgement of the unknown - by all these we keep ourselves commonplace.”

“Oh, yes,” put in Betty. “I remember the spiritually provincial, of course. I hadn’t thought of that for a long time. They are arousing my ambition to travel beyond the commonplace of my ‘home town’.”

“Do not mistake us,” resumed the Invisible, “we do not worry about your application to little necessary things - it is the UNBROKEN application. That’s the thing that makes you commonplace. If you stop work, even drudgery, often enough to switch your center of consciousness to big spiritual proportions, you can accomplish ordinary life without

getting commonplace. You must get outside of a thing, always, to recognize it. So keep alternating your centers of consciousness frequently enough to get a proper proportion.”

CHAPTER XX

Personal Responsibility

Suppose one acknowledges all this. Still it is conceivable that one might decide just to let things slide.

“After all, it is my affair,” one might imagine such a person saying. “As long as I so conduct myself as to harm none of those about me, as long as I live a socially decent life, it is nobody’s business but my own whether I live up to my opportunities or perceptions, or whether I prefer to postpone my effort. I understand fully that this postponement means more effort when the time comes; but I am willing to pay that price for the sake of my present peace, or enjoyment, or freedom from struggle, or what not. That is my concern alone.”

But unfortunately for him this is not true.

We approached the subject indirectly, as was so often the case. Or, at least, indirectly as far as we were concerned. These Invisibles seem to keep in mind where they are going, and refuse to be deflected. I ask a question; one that interests me, but does not belong to the main scheme, or is unripe for it. I am answered quite often; but in that very answer they manage most ingeniously to include something that furthers their own discussion.

Thus, one day I had harked back to an old statement – ‘your world is more selective than ours’ - and was trying to get their idea of what our world is meant for, anyhow.

“Your world is a vast storehouse of all sorts of things and experiences,” they told me in effect, “and must be considered, in one aspect as a test of selection.”

“I’m in this storehouse,” Betty broke in, “keenly aware of the test I am undergoing, and I can’t bring myself to make a selection. Perhaps I should; but I don’t want to shut it all out and pick up just a few things. All my instincts are against picking up a few things, just a few to work with, no! no! no! It’s so FULL of things, every kind of an equipment for work, every kind of tool and paraphernalia. It represents the weight the athlete picks up to test his strength.”

Then after an interval: “Now there’s the same old horror of a five and ten cent store, cheap horrid little things that people spend their lives in making and selling. I don’t want to pick them up.

“Oh! I know what I want to do! I want to eliminate them! That’s nice work! I wouldn’t mind that! That’s why I didn’t want to pick them up! I want to substitute. That’s what this world is for; it’s for the substitution of values: the real for the imitation.”

“Why the imitation in the first place?” I inquired.

There was a considerable pause, and then Betty reported:

“I am taking away some painted toys that someone is clinging to. I am trying to quicken them, make them see, make them want some living things.

Now why are all these things in the beginning? Why make them at all? Why run the risk of people selecting them?

“Such a mess: I can’t separate it. Some of it is just the debris of unabsorbed responsibilities, things people have left cluttering the world. Lots of it is that. That just complicates things terribly. And some of it is unfinished work, - very tiresome that unfinished work! – in different stages of evolution. People didn’t put strength enough into the impetus and left it around; it isn’t refuse, like the other, because it has a start. And then there is more stuff, you see, and a lot of it is very useful, all kinds of handy little kinks and knick-knacks, very useful each in its little bit of a zone of action. But you pass through those, like the phase of children and toys. That is why they speak so slightingly of the world as a man speaks of toys; they’ve passed through that stage. But it is a necessary one in evolution. You cannot easily skip a grade; you always miss the link if you do.”

“The only object these things fulfill,” finished the Invisible, “is that of children’s toys; they teach people coordination. It is just the same as resistance of the air to the plane; it is something to come in contact with. You cannot overcome nothing. That is what the world is for.”

“You say you cannot easily skip a grade,” said I. “How about those who die prematurely?”

“Can’t be sure of that,” said Betty. “Guess I’m tired; getting a little weak. They look like a higher order of half-finished work. But what happens to their withered growth? What happens to things cut short?

There’s a sadness about that. It seems like a failure that somebody is responsible for. I cannot see how it is remedied.

It is retarding. I see it like any accident that retards progress. It’s too complicated; I’ll have to leave it. So many things happen that are nobody’s fault . Oh! Always someone’s fault, eh? I’m too tired to wrestle with it.”

“Another time” they promised. “All we can say now is that any progress or work has its accidents and failures. What compensations and faults there are, and how they are made good we will take up again. It is ALWAYS SOMEBODY’S FAULT!”

I brought up this aspect of the subject at our next meeting; for it interested me greatly. They told us that the whole matter was too involved and complicated to attempt; that the danger of getting a false idea from a partial statement outweighed the advantages. Finally they gave us a figure of speech by symbolizing to Betty.

Away back in history, said they in effect, conceive two lines side by side that are supposed to run parallel forever. But there occurs a deflection. It may be so slight that it could not matter in the least to them at that time. They go on and on through time; but sooner or later they will meet. Then they will arrest each other, or one will cut across the other. But now from the point of view of the greater harmonious proportion, something must be done with the crisscross tangle. The remedy is in pruning the lines back, cutting them off, cutting them short. And, they told us, back in the source, in those lines before they began to deflect, lies a germ of life from which will grow other straighter lines when once the pruning has been done.

This was admittedly vague, and left many gaps; but, we were assured, it at least contained the principle. Betty, in her sensitized state, was much puzzled.

“There is the crooked piece I cut off,” she mused, “and the new straight one, and they look something alike; and they’ve grown on the same living body. Oh, somebody help me!

“Why couldn’t our root be our real life, our real being? If our root is our real being, our real source of life, it wouldn’t matter so much if some of us were pruned back for some reason or other, perhaps because of some crossed growth. The life would be there to put it forth again, perhaps with greater strength. That would explain vaguely the lives cut short. It wouldn’t be so incomprehensible if they had been pruned back to their source by their own fault. And He would cut them back in greater vision and wisdom. Now you are not so sorry for them. Their roots are still there.”

“I see that much of the principle,” said I, “but how about the individual cut short and deprived of his earth experience, that you state is necessary?”

“I don’t know,” reported Betty after a long pause. “They seem to be getting some compensating treatment. It is like shaping a thing you prune back. They’re being watched and tended. That idea of having your roots is a very deep one. It stands for great vitality.”

“Well, how about sheer accident,” I persisted, “as when one is run down by a train? And do I understand you use the Gardener as a symbol, or is there some intelligence, or group of intelligences with power and duty to do this pruning?”

“Oh, yes, there are terrible accidents,” agreed the Invisible. “They are like death-dealing derelicts, somebody’s abandoned responsibility. As to the great regulation of destiny, that is too vast to be reduced to human terms at present.”

“You said yesterday,” I pointed out, “that it is always somebody’s fault when one is cut off untimely.”

“Remember those deflected parallel lines, AWAY back,” they reminded.

“I don’t see why B should suffer loss of his earth opportunity because of an action by A, perhaps a thousand years ago, and which A himself probably did not understand,” I objected.

Betty laughed heartily at this.

“They are laughing at you,” she reported. “They say that is like the child asking ‘what is the sun?’”

“Why is the world run the way it is?” said the Invisible, Betty’s voice changing drolly to the measured tone in which they articulated. “Well, the world is run as it is to demonstrate individual responsibility.”

A moment later Betty returned to the idea of avoided responsibilities being like derelicts turned loose that wreck or damage those with whom they come in contact.

“I can’t get high enough up to see why they wreck one and not another,” complained Betty.

“That’s too big for now,” they intimated. “That is Fate.

“Do I gather,” said I, “that there are, roughly speaking, two classes of those whose lives are cut short; those who are pruned back, and those who die by accident in running against these derelicts?”

“That is vaguely it,” admitted the Invisible, “But they are not sharp-cut little things like that; they are big blended things. But never mind.”

And then they gave us our first glimpse of how we may gain a measure of protection from this type of accident.

“By combinations of harmonious force it is possible to check an impetus even when you are headed straight for a derelict,” said they.

“If you see it!” I pointed out.

“Or if somebody sees it for you!” they amended.

“Besides, if you accumulate enough harmonious force, there is an automatic action. Your own impetus is strong enough to fend you off. It CAN be. There is something you can generate that both quickens your senses and subconsciously directs you.”

Next day they took up the subject again.

“There are laws that supersede laws,” said they. “There is the blind following of law; the unspent impetuses we see in all nature. In our study of these natural laws we find we can direct and harness them. Now the world is full of unfulfilled responsibilities. They go hither and thither like atoms in the air. It seems blind chance whether they hit you or somebody else; but part of the time they hit one or the other because there is no superseding law.” “I seek for a controlling force in all this random action,” said Betty. “Something in me tells me there is a controlling, superseding force.”

“Your spiritual instinct prompts your questioning of seemingly random impulses. Union of your volition with spiritual force (our old friend spiritual contact) governs those random impulses; just as understanding of the law harnesses the forces of nature.”

I asked whether one with highly developed and long continued spiritual contact would be able to avoid these ‘accidents’ and so be exempt from untimely death.

“Not exempt, but greatly ordered,” was the reply. “Often sorrow is a quickening agent, one of the gates of wisdom; and it may be necessitated by individual need. Then there are spots, torpid spots, that have to be surgically treated. You must remember that collision with these derelicts that have been turned loose does not necessarily mean death. It may mean merely obstructed tendencies or desires.”

“I referred to deprivation of chance for earth experience,” I pointed out, and received the following partial explanation:

“Those with unfulfilled responsibilities sap other people’s output. They are like parasites. Sometimes that involves a crime that terminates some healthy existence, without fault of the person attacked. You want to know about the innocent person who gets in the crossed line of growth. If this crossed line had come in contact with a line of superior force, it could not have crossed it. Therefore, it can harm only those of depleted vitality. This depleted vitality, which is depleted spiritual force, may be from inheritance. That again, you see, is unfulfilled responsibility.”

“Wheels within wheels!” cried Betty in despair.

“There is a seemingly innocent victim, isn’t there? pursued the Invisible, “But he wouldn’t have been a victim if he had possessed superior spiritual force. So that was a good deal his part, too.

“Now let us further consider the seemingly innocent but weak victim. He is pruned back because of weakness rather than because of misdirected strength. Some are pruned back from rank growth; but this one from weak growth. There is a compensating care that starts him anew. You can see a visible example of it in the poor crooked fir that WILL grow straight on top. The impulse of every living being is the

primal instinct to renew itself. It is the law of its being, Like the pointing of the magnetic needle. So the soul has its formula for growth, just as a tree has its chemical formula for growth. It has to fulfill its law. The compensating treatment is in the roots of its life."

"Is this new growth made here or there?" I asked.

"That is according to the strength of its core, its degree of spiritual development: the size of its root, if you prefer that. It is easy enough to see how it is with those of strength; they go on over here, with a little compensating care, and grow by the law of their being."

"Well, how about the weaklings who have little care?" I asked.

"There is always an automatic action aside from especial action. This weak thing is being self-doctored. It is stimulated in proportion to its response. It always has its chance to germinate. It can be dormant for countless time until some overflowing strength can imbue it with desire to repeat the struggle. Then it can reincarnate. It is like a suspended sentence.

"That is the work of the greater proportion, taking charge of the weak things, suspending sentences, giving them a chance. That is the source of the overflowing strength that imbues them with desire to repeat the struggle. What would be the object of getting a core, if there were not some necessary work for each?"

There was a short silence while Betty contemplated one of her illustrative visions.

"I am acting to raise the whole," she reported presently. "I take my bit of force and I act. I try out my strength through this leavening process on all the lower stratum of weak things. That stratum must be lifted to raise the level of the whole. IT MUST BE DONE! That is one's responsibility."

"There is a terrible responsibility in entering this consciousness," concluded the Invisible. "You then have to do more than your share to make up for the accumulated wrongness. There is such an awful lot of this wrongness to be absorbed! And you can never go back. When once you've seen clearly all the mess men have made, - the folly, stupidity, misunderstanding - you've got to become a sympathetic workman. You have entered an ordered and harmonious consciousness which MUST act back on a mess like that."

CHAPTER XXI

Summary

In the preceding pages we have been occupied largely with our relations with experience. Now we must consider our relations with people. Before doing so, let us sum up.

In the course of our evolution we progress through a series of levels. No grade can be skipped, and each level must be filled out before it is left. We fill out our levels by the assimilation of experience, and in this process our greatest ally is the force which we gain from spiritual contact.

For this assimilation we are responsible not only to ourselves but to our neighbor; not only to our neighbor but to all that make up our world of being down through the perspectives of time. If we shirk what is placed before us, then we turn loose a derelict that may wreck or destroy. If we would avoid damage or destruction ourselves, we must develop to the point of acquiring protection. And our responsibility is more than our share because the past has bequeathed its heritage of fault and failure.

“The world is run as it is to demonstrate individual responsibility!

CHAPTER XXII

Spiritual Circulation

Circulation is one of the great fundamental laws that run obviously through all nature. Water evaporates in mist from the sea; is condensed into clouds, falls as rain, and flows in rivers back to the sea. The seed springs from the soil; grows to maturity; sinks back into the soil again.

We evoke the power of electricity from the earth's magnetic field; use it to turn the wheels and illuminate the nights of a city, and return it grounded to its origin. One could multiply examples indefinitely.

And just as a blockade in the bodily circulation is sure to bring trouble, so ANY interference in the perfect rounding of the circle always spells disaster. Drought, famine, death follow the non-functioning of nature's circulations. Similar calamities attend stoppage in the free flow of spiritual forces.

When the Invisibles first took up this subject they began it with a sidelight on the spiritual body. It amounts, said they in essence, really to the force that little by little you manage to segregate from the great universal reservoir and make your own. By your own volition you painstakingly segregate from the vast forces all around you. “This is your own bit of force; you have surrounded and contained it, it belongs to you. By getting these bits and welding them together, and working hard, and capturing

another bit - pretty soon it grows into a real thing. It works just feebly, but after the manner of the whole big power.

"I am going to see if I can make out how the segregated bit should fit into the whole," said Betty, "and the action of each on each.

"Over and over a pitcher and a bowl," she reported after a few moments, "over and over a pitcher and a bowl. You fill the pitcher to your measure, and you empty it into the world, the bowl. There's a rhythm over and over again, filling and emptying, filling and emptying, a rhythm like a great pulse.

"When someone fails, what happens? It is like a cylinder missing, the pulsation skipping a beat. The filling and emptying process is disturbed. There's a sucking void created because of that unfulfilled responsibility."

We fill our pitchers, to epitomize the further teaching, by spiritual contact; making from that source greater or lesser personal gain according to the voluntary capacity we develop. Next, these advantages must be passed on; the spiritual circulation must flow unimpeded. If it is checked: then without fail, disaster follows.

In the picturesque phrase of the Invisibles, spiritual contact gives us 'sure-footedness' so that we can tread the difficult paths of life in confidence. Equally important is its twin and balance, 'bountifulness,' which makes it possible for us, as surely and accurately as the human heart, to pass on what we have received. They must go together; or they are neither of them effective.

"If you are bountiful without sure-footedness," said they, "you will be just Irishly sympathetic; expansive but unconvincing. But if you are sure-footed without being bountiful, you are merely ascetic."

Presently they showed Betty a picture illustrating this.

"I don't like to look at it; it makes me so uncomfortable!" said she. "They say I have to look at it until I tell you about it. Very uncomfortable, a kind of indigestion. If you just take, and don't function naturally by giving, you get all clogged up and poisoned.

Self-contained virtue soon corrodes. Lots of these hit and miss impulsive people do more good, even with their lack of sure-footedness."

It does not in the least matter, then, how godly a life we may lead, in the sense of committing no positive evil, in the sense of self-discipline, in the old ecclesiastical puritanical conception of 'saving our souls' "If we fail to give out, we have still missed the most important job of all, and are still due for trouble of the worst kind. If we do not draw off water from our reservoir, soon we shall have no room for fresh to flow in: we shall become stagnant and dead.

“All the physical laws work in the same way,” the Invisible took it up, “even the lowest forms, the urges of the bodily functions. You must give out or you poison yourself. If you take in a different spiritual substance, you must be able also to throw off, in order to get the ideal of simple normal action. This is rhythm and harmony. Move with it; do not obstruct it. Call it anything you please. There are plenty of names for it, all depending upon what plane you are dealing with, or what level: constipation, nerve tension, miserliness, any kind of stagnation depending upon what level it works. They are all alike. The same law works in wider and more ascending ways.”

“The minute you share, it doesn’t all run away and dissipate and get weak,” said Betty. “It keeps its depth, and yet is ever so much wider - a feeling of overflowing.”

“Giving back is more important than taking,” said the Invisible.

“I can see the bees over the honey in the hives,” pursued Betty, “and the ants: just full of this. They have surefootedness and bountifulness; they act in their limited way within the Law. If you just travel directly, without producing or giving out, you lose your health and dry up, and you will at last have no power to attract the spirit.”

“Remember that the first point of health,” they added, “is the active life that means constant inflowing and outflowing. You must not forget to be constantly giving out. Watch out for that, or you’ll get hardening of the arteries.”

“The forcing through is the next thing, getting it back,” said Betty, “straining it through the earth consciousness. Spiritual consciousness strained through the earth-consciousness is what we are after.”

She went on to elaborate the figure of a sort of double funnel, one end widening toward the source of spiritual power, the other toward the world.

“It wouldn’t make any sense if I told you that it funneled in and funneled out,” said she, “but that’s what they say. It starts from an infinite expansion, condenses through the self, and then must be distributed out. Behind you and in front of you are limitless expanses, but mostly behind you. The free exit is almost as difficult as the getting through. It is an expansion of what is given. It sometimes comes through, but then stops. There is not enough impetus to bring it through and spread it.”

“In summary,” they concluded, “first of all you stimulate your consciousness to partake of the higher consciousness. Then you prepare for a still higher comprehension by filling out your level. You fill out your level by producing yourself, ‘making it so’; which means the materializing into the physical world of your new and vitalized consciousness.”

CHAPTER XXIII

The Return Flow

1. AUTOMATIC ACTION AGAIN.

All this is very well, I hear you say, and it may be true enough. It forms a logical picture, and within this picture makes pretty good sense. But how do you go about making it work in an ordinary busy life? After all, the final test of anything is its practical application. You tell us to 'materialize into the physical world this new and vitalized consciousness,' but that is pretty abstract. What we would like is some sort of definite handle by which to grab hold of the job.

Betty in her superphysical development met the same difficulty. It seemed to her that entering this new consciousness was like striking out blind into a strongly flowing river.

"I feel it just as a vast current!" she exclaimed. "I am in connection with it. Little nerve-scattering things cannot hurt me. But this is not enough. How can I arrest and deflect it, this mighty force? How can I handle it? It sweeps through me and by me, partaking of me. How can I partake of it? Suppose you found yourself in a mighty thing like this; what would you do? I've got to decide.

"One thing is sure: it is easier to work with it from this end. I worked from the other end before. Now I am working from strength back. The force is always eager for new outlets; it helps me. I've got that strength to help force through."

Later we found out that part of what we are looking for comes as an automatic result, a by-product, of our efforts at contact: if we practice this it tends to give us a quality of mind and heart that radiates even without our meaning it to.

"The thing is mathematical," they told us.

"I hate mathematics," put in Betty promptly; then after a moment, and a little doubtfully, "Well, I suppose they are nice and tidy."

"Just as two and two must inevitably make four," they went on in their explanation, "so we, or the combination of qualities we have managed to assemble, by which we have attained our level, or the formula we have made for ourselves - or whatever you please to call it - has its automatic action. And just as two plus two make four, that automatic action produces certain results on the physical world. The mere fact that we are what we are, emanating our thoughts, our desires, our spiritual quality, produces its effect, irrespective of conscious intention on our part."

"You are distinctly spreading something!" Betty exclaimed. "That's the automatic result. What I am interested in is the laws that govern it. I call them laws; but they are harmonious workings. Now I've got to find out.

“It doesn’t do any good to look at the earth end and get a technique. You must go to the source of things, and then the works out of itself - too big for me; I’m not sure of it” she gave that up.

“I’ll tell you what I’m trying to understand: the reversal in order of the way we work,” she concluded. “We pay attention to the minute details in order to be successful. That is all right; details must be attended to, but I want to get this right. I must be careful. It has to do with the ‘take no thought’ and ‘consider the lilies’ idea.”

“Your main effort must go into union with the supreme force or intelligence,” the Invisibles helped out, “not by just calling it down and isolating yourself in it, but by calling for it and uniting with it in such a manner as to transmute it into an available earth force. That is the secret of it.”

“How could you make that practical in business?” Betty wondered. “ It’s having a tremendous effect; I can see it. It changes the order of things when you follow it into an office. I can’t follow it very well, because I can’t apply it to any definite problem. But just as it has changed the whole background of my life, so it acts in the business world. In some cases it looks as though it were changing the business and substituting something else. But the point is that instead of being a chaotic and strained machine you become a powerful and orderly machine. Things around you shift into different relationships. If you can get the inspiration to generate this force within you, there is no question about its acting on things.”

“Here,” the Invisibles took it up in their tones, “you get back to the automatic action of the force you have gained by your contact. If you truly get that, and pay your main attention to it, it brings something approximating inspiration, insight, that carries over so that when you come to the details they become concentrated, essential, more successful instead of being strained and confused.”

It is the difference between having spiritual capital and trying to run your business on a spiritual shoestring. One is harmony; the other discord. That is what the ‘take no thought’ idea is. You will have the strength to take care of details abundantly, if you give your major attention to the spiritual association. “When you are rested and fit you ‘play better than you can,’ you ‘work better than you can,’ “ said they.

“This association is how you get rested and fit spiritually; that’s all.

“Attention is existence.

“In other words, choose where you are going to live. People are afraid to leave their own plan, to relax their attention to the details, in order to go back to their source of inspiration. But if they had the courage to try it!

“There is certainly an automatic action to harmony. The man goes to his office so full of renewed vitality and freedom of thought, courage, that his trained faculties work more

efficiently. He doesn't in the least lessen his attention to detail; but it has become automatic action. That automatic action springs from the power he generates from his habitual existence, his habitual attention.

"A man who has no spiritual alliance, no source of vitality renewal, whose existence is concentration on business details, gets business adhesions. He either overreaches himself by establishing a haggling standard of business, or he bankrupts his own soul.

The other man.

"Looks like an intermittent current," Betty interrupted.

"The other man keeps himself replenished and his vision raised above his work. He creates a different order of business. I grant you he's not always as successful by the same standards; but he doesn't want to be. He's of a higher type of development. His business has a life-giving quality instead of a blood-sucking quality."

"Could you give illustrations?" I suggested.

"We don't know," they replied quaintly. "We don't belong to business. It is just the Law. Work it out yourself."

"If you do not know business," I suggested, "how do you know this would work in modern business?"

"I look at the action, the Law. I can't follow it out, but I know it is the Law," replied the Invisible, a little impatiently. "It works in all other things so I know it will work here."

2. SENDING OUT.

But this automatic action is not enough. As with spiritual contact, the effect can be very much increased if we give it intelligent support. And this means the gaining of another inner attitude that is not easy to grasp. Betty was led to it gradually through the usual variety of symbols.

"It sounds silly to say 'think horizontally,' doesn't it?" she remarked one time. "But that is it. It is as though the spiritual force were fluid, and by thinking horizontally it could be made to flow in all directions about you, reaching others and bringing others to you in a single all-embracing exchange of vitality."

Another time the Invisibles were discussing the subject.

"There is an open-hearted feeling hard to describe," said they. "It is not just making yourself charitably disposed toward people; that's an imitation, awkward, paltry, blundering. You don't try to PLEASE people; that's silly. You just proceed on your way, but the emanations from an open heart spread around you, working according to their law, and bringing return of rich reaction."

“The thing I do,” acknowledged Betty, “is to shut down on people and retire into myself - that is, my lower level. I must try to be more open-hearted until I can stay that way. Everything goes wrong the minute I shut down. It is like a trap that is always falling on me. One moment I am walking along all right in the open, and all of a sudden the trap falls and I am shut in by the walls of myself. Now I have recognized it, so maybe I can keep from getting into it - or at least I can crawl out again.”

“In your relations to people,” continued the Invisible, “it isn’t at all this everything-to-everybody, hand-grasp idea. That’s the cheap imitation; very cheap! There is dignity and reserve and depth to the real thing. It is just a QUIET feeling, a silent feeling of kinship and sympathetic response, instead of the usual indifference we feel. It should be the first point of contact when you meet each person. If you send him that when you first meet, then you can begin to talk without tensions or contractions. Only then do you get real intercourse with people.”

When two people meet, both of whom are thus openhearted toward one another, then you see genuine friendship and love; on one level or another. There is nothing miraculous about it, nor anything more intangible than chemistry.

“You can find anywhere in this ordinary world samples, fragments, that have been brought down and left. They have had their growth stopped, or they have been abandoned. But they don’t die out, and they are here. They pop out in various generations. You see some of it in people who give fellowship generously, who inspire you and stimulate your heart. You recognize the quality, but you don’t say: that’s a good sample, we must have more of it. You just think it’s a happen-chance, an eccentricity of one person, something belonging to another, instead of an ingredient of the whole that we are working toward.”

Perhaps these hints will give a glimpse of the attitude we are after. If it still seems obscure, try to get the idea of that wide-hearted feeling of our first attempts at contact; and add to it the idea of gathering others into it. It is the feeling of spiritual contact plus a sending out feeling. If we do this, we were assured, the details will take care of themselves.

CHAPTER XXIV

The Channel Back

1. SERVICE.

Perhaps by now we had some comprehension of this ebb and flow, this spiritual circulation. But we knew little of the more exact details of mechanism. Here is a strong force, a strong current. But a strong current, of any kind, presupposes a definite

channel in which it can flow. Blood circulates in veins, rivers have beds, electricity follows its conductors. What is the channel here?

We got our glimpse by what little we were able to elicit as to the state-of-life of our Invisibles themselves.

Curiosity as to particulars of the life “over there” is natural. In the beginning we questioned them eagerly. We got little satisfaction; though we received answers, sometimes. Most often, however, we were told flatly that it was not our present business. And, anyway, they added, its details are often so unlike anything we know about, or can conceive, that even a try at an approximation would merely convey false images.

This was not impolite: it was no snub. They did tell us certain simple and basic things. They have form. They can see our physical world as we see it, but only when the occasion was important enough to justify the effort. And so on. But no geographical descriptions, so to speak, such as a traveller would bring from a far country. That manner of life is not our manner of life: we are not ready for it; we should remain in this without unsettling conceptions until we have finished with it; distraction is useless.

“If we gave detailed specifications of our life over here, it would be impossible thereafter to concentrate your attention on broad general principles,” they told us plainly, “on the few simple lines of your effort. It is painfully difficult to eliminate and economize your attention. Only by shrouding other things in mystery can we occupy your minds in due proportion to the importance of the things we select. You do not agree with us, but the same method is successfully employed on earth to develop men of genius. We protect them, we shroud them, we amputate from them. Be content to look where we point. Time enough for details later when we show you around. Take my word for it; impossible to explain.”

But though we have not been given geographical details, inevitably in the course of many discussions we have glimpsed here and there certain conditions of that state.

Some of them you have gathered in these pages. Among other things, we learned that their world is a world of development, of work to that end; and that it contains the resistance to effort which is necessary to development. In fact, they have at times used the word RESISTANCE interchangeably with the word WORK. Our first hint as to the nature of this work was given Betty in a symbolical experience.

“I’m face to face with this vast level of consciousness that is back of human consciousness,” she reported. “They show me a great rope twisted of many strands. I don’t understand it. It runs through us all. It is the connecting link. It is the connection through which we act on each other on this level. When we touch it, it is charged with life and vitality, an open way of wisdom and understanding. Our invisible friends use it;

they don't create it. If you had no invisible friends and you touched, reached this level, somebody would answer somewhere if you had a real need they could supply. It is the universal conductor in some way. It is what people feebly recognize as the sub-conscious - only it is super, not sub.

"The point is that on this level there **MUST** be an answer to an actual need: if you reach this level you are sure of an answer to your need. I don't understand it very well. It is a universal thing that could reach anybody in the universe who had something you needed, or who needed something you had.

"On this level there is always something you are attracted to in this way - somebody you want to work on. And the only way you can work is to get something to work with. That is the first incentive here. It is a fine busy world!"

"All human processes must have an incentive in order to get them accomplished," explained the Invisible. "Your first incentive over here is to seek eagerly for strength in order to aid someone whom your superior perception shows to be in dire need. It is so simple. You get almost frantic about rendering first aid of some kind.

"It is a very strong instinct. One of the strongest of yours is the sex instinct which carries on the physical world. This is the great strong instinct that carries on the spiritual world. You must get something to put in the void beneath you. It is the first big urge: get busy! fix this mess you see under you; and when you realize how useless and futile you are, you try hard and experiment until you acquire something with which to work."

"That seems to be my dominant instinct, the thing I feel strongest," said Betty, "that idea of reaching up for something, not with the idea of collecting it for myself, but with the idea of using it as a tool to work with. It is a way of furnishing myself for the business of living."

"We all move upward by what we build under us," concluded the Invisible.

"It is the filling out of your level, but a step higher. This shows the foundation of actual accomplishment you must put under you."

2. THE NATURE OF SERVICE.

Here is the rock on which many religions and many systems of ethics have split wide open. By logical steps they reach the point where the rendering of service appears as the spiritual fulfillment. So at that point the more consecrated of their devotees go forth to render service.

But right here is where most of us get off. We are probably leading normal busy lives, with families and other responsibilities. To become a professional philanthropist would mean the disruption of our entire established order. Very likely, too, we have a healthy

prejudice against any dilettante 'Going Down to Call on the Poor', furnished out with a brisk, cheerful manner, a form card, and a determination to 'Do Some Good' in the World. And so we acknowledge the problem intellectually, but do little or nothing about it.

Much the same thing is true of any kind of missionary or reform activity.

Most people have an instinctive aversion to Carrying Sweetness and Light to Darkened Souls. And those who try it on anyhow, generally do little but get in wrong with their friends.

The trouble is, we have not realized the possibility of another kind of service - one that is open to us all.

"It is a quickening, awakening process," Betty explained. "I am not big enough for it yet - I haven't enough heart-containing quality to manage it.

And I don't understand it. I only know I've got to go among People every day, experimenting with it."

"This," the Invisible told her, "will give you daily practice for some time to come: this experimental work, the first application of principles that have been imparted."

"It is hard to know just how to go about it," complained Betty.

"Experiment! Experiment! And live in constant association of mind with the tremendous power of spiritual force until it becomes the backbone of your consciousness. Its life-giving quality is the richest gift you can pass on. It is second-hand inspiration. The main thing is to help people to get it first-hand. But sometimes you can't - it is too unaccustomed."

"I can't just dump it on them," Betty objected. "I've got to get some sort of technique for administering it."

"When you want to germinate people," said the Invisible, "you admit them to a companionship in your spiritual contact. It is like taking them in out of the cold."

"Any practical hints?" I ventured.

"I'll try to find out how you do it," said Betty, and then was gone for some time.

"He's thawing out," she said at last, "but I don't know how I did it - It seems to be the superior force of my own warmth of conviction. That's how you do it: by your demonstrated stability. * You see, everybody really wants stability; and they always recognize a person who has it. If you have something they haven't, but want, they'll pay attention to you. And if they haven't it and DON'T want it, but you make them feel it, then they'll begin to want it. You make your stability by spiritual contact. Then somehow the response to that contact must be shared."

* See Part I, Chapter VI, Section 2.

“Unfolding: that’s the way of it,” interjected the Invisible. “You unfold people in a certain atmosphere until it soaks into them.”

“You must do it so they’ll think they’re doing it themselves,” Betty went on, “- as they will be. You must be only an agent to arouse their own active forces, silently, very carefully, almost secretly. It is too vague to go into yet. I’ll know in time how to do it.”

She paused to consider what they offered.

“To show people to themselves seems to be the only way,” she resumed.

“Not their faults; but their best selves, their real selves. That is the only handle to take hold of. That is what they are doing to me.”

The silent instruction went on for a few moments, then she continued:

“I remember - was it Richard Coeur de Lion? He was in prison, and his friends used to whistle or sing under all the dungeons until they got an answer. The only way to get at people is to call out encouragement to their imprisoned self. After a while you can stimulate it to stir itself and take possession. No use pointing out people’s faults and attacking them. That is silly. If you arouse their inner selves, they will take care of their own faults.”

Which last remark seems to me the very essence of common sense.

“Whatever you do,” concluded the Invisible, “avoid the holier-than-thou attitude toward people. That is far from what we want. The worst ones often are the narrow and virtuous ones; they blind the trail. Nobody wants to be like them, so they go off in the wrong direction. They are very harmful people, very harmful. They would be surprised to know that often they are really worse than many in the penitentiary. Narrow and uncharitable virtue!

“The way to counteract this tendency and yet maintain your ideals is to think of yourself always as an agent. Then there will be no tinge of superiority or self-satisfaction in your attitude. Why are you being given light? To distribute so quietly and unobtrusively that it will arouse no resentment or resistance, but will gradually sink into others unawares. That is the way of influence-bad, unfortunately, as well as good; so yours must be the stronger of the two.”

CHAPTER XXV

Insulation

1. THE VORTEX.

We experimented as instructed, and soon found that the technique of this new kind of service was a pretty complicated thing. With congenial people it seemed to be easy enough. But unfortunately many of our daily contacts must be with dragging, non-receptive, aggravating, non-comprehending and uncongenial personalities. Ordinarily, perhaps, in such cases we are inclined to take refuge in indifference that amounts to a separating gulf. If not indifferent, then we are contemptuous of them; or actively in conflict with them; or even, if we are of nervous sensitive temperaments, they drive us crazy. And usually we are ourselves more or less affected, more or less nagged into deteriorating emotions. Daily contact with such people is one of the first things we must learn to manage.

“Do not let your newly acquired freedom and energy be sucked into the vortex,” said the Invisible unexpectedly one day.

“It is just out of reach, but perilously near,” supplemented Betty. “I must keep my energy lifted up, insulated. The minute it rests without insulation it gets into the vortex.”

“What is the vortex?” I asked, for it was a new figure and meant nothing to me.

“I’ll go down and look at it. Wait,” promised Betty, after which ensued a pause.

“I am watching somebody go into it as a demonstration,” she went on. “It is the zone of action of lower forms of life. You see, when I get within the power of that zone its action begins on me in spite of myself. It is like getting into quicksand; that acts on you, and you can’t help it.

That’s a zone of action of a certain kind. It takes great, almost superhuman, spirituality to go into that lower form of life and hold your own. You can do it, if you have the right insulation. They are trying to get me out of it, and keep me in another zone of action so I can acquire the superior force.

“It is the antithesis of spiritual. It is the impetus to nullify, to deaden your life-containing powers. It is analogous to the way a certain action takes place and a tree is petrified; or if you stay out in the cold, you freeze. Certain action takes place, a certain impetus is unchecked, and you are reduced to a helpless state and can’t do anything about it. It has a great drawing power toward its own. When you get in the vortex it begins to work on you unless you have a strong insulation.”

2. MAINTAINING OURSELVES.

If you want to help someone, first of all you must somehow be better off than he is. Then in your effort to lend a hand you must be careful not to lose your advantage. If you want to pull someone out of the mud you must first get a firm footing yourself - and then keep it while you are trying to land him. Anyone can see that.

But when the need is an intangible mental or emotional one, instead of a perfectly plain physical one, we generally act as though this principle no longer obtained. We get angry, or we weep on the other person's neck, or we indulge in sympathetic recriminations, or whatever. Circumstances differ, but in every case the process is the same: we abandon our own equilibrium in favor of the other's turmoil.

This is the vortex. Clearly, if we are to be of any use, we must not approach it undefended; must not get drawn in by its almost irresistible zone of action. If we do, one of two things must happen: either we must enter into conflict, use violence, in order to retain our very mastership of ourselves; or else that mastership will be warped, bent aside, modified by the influence of conflicting and disintegrating forces. That meeting of the other influence, or the other man, on his home ground is where most of the trouble begins.

"When dealing with non-receptive people," they said, "you must first of all protect yourself from getting in their zone of action. It is an insulation. You must first insulate yourself. Insulation is not unsympathetic! It is just the precaution the doctor takes against infection. That is done by quickly raising your thought above the disease-level and concentrating on the cure, so that none of your attention is taxed by getting into their morass. If you meet the opposition in its own manner, it entangles you. You must not let it obscure the strength of your desire to serve. It is human to oppose opposition, so watch out!

"It's like being immune," Betty reported. "Curious! They hurl themselves on me, bite me - it LOOKS like biting me - but they can't inject any poison. It is impossible for them to hurt me because all my attention, my consciousness, my nerve centers, my existence is centered above them where they can't get at them. If they could draw down my attention, if they could make me hate them, if they could get me to work on their level, then they could poison me."

This, then, is the secret of maintaining our integrity: we must meet the problems of our world and the people of our world, not in their zone of action, but in ours. We must not go to them; we must get them to come to us.

"When a child enters the room he at once establishes himself, brings with him his child's world which at once you strive to enter," they illustrated the idea.

And our world must be one we have constructed for ourselves by spiritual contact - by centering our consciousness in the level above.

3. FOREDETERMINATION.

We were led into methods and ideas slowly. One evening a friend was with us, a friend who had that day come in contact with one of those wearing members of the family who fairly suck out the life blood under a plaintive plea of due family affection. Our friend was just about all in: and the Invisibles gave her some advice.

“Don’t take dragging personalities to heart,” said they.

“Let them hang as heavily as they please on your body, but not on your spirit. That is drafted for other work. Think of them as only scratching the surface. It will keep you immeasurably freer and will conserve your strength. Separate yourself deliberately before you encounter them. Give them your body to play with. Try it.”

“I have tried it.” said our friend.

“Yes, you have. But you must always deliberately prepare yourself in advance, because otherwise it is difficult for one side of you not to be influenced by the exhaustion of the other.”

“You forget that on earth our spirits and our flesh are pretty closely knit together,” she reminded them.

“That’s just my point,” said the Invisible. “Disconnect them, like the telephone, temporarily and deliberately. It can’t be done when the vibrations between you are once set up. It must be done before hand.

Foredetermination is a powerful weapon, little appreciated. You’d be surprised to see how it would work. Use it more.”

“They’re trying to show me how you can protect yourself.” put in Betty.

“That’s all very well, but you’re not definite enough. How can you leave your consciousness on one level and walk around in another? (complainingly). That doesn’t make sense!”

“Leave your consciousness in repose on a higher level than your physical functions,” said the Invisible. “The intervening space absorbs deteriorating vibrations - vibrations will do - acting as a kind of vacuum, like a thermos bottle.”

“There’s a good idea there, but it’s vague,” said I. “Let us be definite. Let us postulate Mrs. B., a bore, a depletor of your vitality; but nevertheless someone you are morally bound to help.”

“Take it the other way around,” suggested the Invisible. “The effect of your attitude will be to react on Mrs. B.”

“I can see Mrs. B.,” said Betty. “She’s forgotten everything she wanted to say, lost her power over you She’s gone into the shock absorber, the vacuum part.”

“In effect it is a weapon of defense, a superiority of arms which you must experiment with in order to believe it can be demonstrated. Try it. Do not contemplate your end of it in relation to her; occupy yourself maintaining your shock absorber.

“And watch your foredeterminations. Bad days must not be bad before they begin. Put your consciousness on the shelf - the level above - before you start out every day. You need more preparedness for yourself.”

CHAPTER XXVI

Sympathy

While the foregoing is certainly true, we must watch our interpretation of it. Its practice might easily turn toward an egotistical self-centering, a lack of sympathy with the other fellow’s point of view, - what might be called a spiritual Toryism. Beware of such an interpretation. It is simply that when we step out to meet the world, after having more or less development in solitude through spiritual contact, connection with the greater forces, we must be able to protect ourselves. Otherwise we would soon fall back into the old turmoil. We have laid off our old turtle shell of indifference, of antagonism, of clannishness, and all the other world protections: we must in compensation command this other safeguard or we shall be torn to pieces.

But there is in mere insulation no construction in the way of service, spiritual circulation. There is not even the consolidation of ‘make-it-so.’ Insulation is merely a means to an end, a tool to use, a self-preserving thing. It is often very necessary. But it is never more than a beginning.

“Your first insulation process should become automatic,” they advised us, “so your attention will not be engrossed by it, but will be entirely free to focus on your faith genuinely to Rive of all spiritual first aid, sympathizing with your heart and not judging with your mind. There is a very wrong way to do it: that is to insulate yourself and just stay there. That is irritating and selfish and very aggravating to the trouble. Nothing could be worse.”

With this any of us will agree who have encountered the bland, blank superiority that seems to say: we will not discuss this because of course you would not understand.

The antidote is sympathy. Unfortunately, sympathy is one of those mildewed words - or at least it has spots of mildew. Nothing is more annoying to the average of humanity than the false sort of sympathy, even when it is wholly sincere: the sort of sympathy that is sentimentally maudlin or voluble, or ostentatiously ‘Christian.’ And no better is

the kind that tries to 'share your trials and sorrows': that so completely enters your annoyance or perplexity or grief as to adopt it; to strengthen it; - and perhaps to end by leaning against you for comfort!

Real sympathy - the useful kind - is an entirely different thing. When it was first shown to Betty she did not recognize it.

"I don't understand the way this sorrow looks," said she. "From here suffering looks like just an INGREDIENT of life. I don't think I can get that. I don't know what to compare it to. I am so afraid of getting it wrong. It looks like an undiluted acid.

"From where I am, suffering looks like just a great mass of work you've got to force yourself to attack and bit by bit lessen, transmute, consume, - I can't understand why it doesn't make me any SORRIER. It is so different from the way I have always felt before. I feel deeply responsible and solicitous, but the feeling has a curious proportion. I am spending my energy in a given ratio. In place of spending my attention in being sorry over unharmonized ingredients; I associate myself, I join forces with the vastly greater proportion, the greater harmony. Wait, wait! I've got to investigate this! It's so different from the way I've always felt; I've spent my life being sorry for people."

"If you do only that," said the Invisible, "it is like sitting with and sympathizing with a sick person instead of getting the Great Doctor who could cure him."

"I don't like it - it's so puzzling," complained Betty. "Being right down among them and being sorry doesn't get me anywhere; and it doesn't get them anywhere."

"There is a whole," the Invisible took up the argument. "There is in it a little spot of discord, call it sorrow. Then there is all the rest, the greater proportion of harmony. If you can get out of the zone of action of that little spot into the greater harmony, you do not become aloofly superior and unsympathetic - the attitude of you don't understand; it's your own fault - but you get deeply responsible, and you acquire power to act, power to transmute. It is a necessity. You act upon it and fly to it eagerly with something bigger than ordinary sorry-sympathy, because it is a life-giving sympathy, a reinforcing sympathy. You act almost hungrily on that sorrow, absorbing it with the greater proportion of harmony. But you must get out of that smaller zone of action in order to be any good. It is the ratio in which you can give. The more you live and ally yourself with the greater proportion of harmony, the more you can identify yourself with it and command it - and utilize it, the more you can further its ends of becoming whole and absorbing the spot of disharmony."

"It is so important always to run and get help instead of just sitting and feeling sorry," added Betty. "And it is not selfish to have your life centered in that greater proportion. That's queer; you seem to have to pass that sorrow stage somehow into the other in order to contain it sympathetically. Funny how now you can be actively solicitous for

them - something more active than being sorry - without letting them enfeeble you. It is insulation again, so you can act upon them. There is a feeling of conviction in ultimate wholeness; that by time and your eager efforts you can harmonize the whole and eliminate the spot.

“Oh, dear!” she said suddenly. “I don’t want to go! But I’ve got to! I’m dropping down so suddenly!”

“That’s the new element they gradually led me into without my recognizing it. I haven’t begun to tap the power of alliance. I’ve just got to get perception enough to want to live in it.”

“It’s so simple,” assured the Invisible. “Any atmosphere you put yourself in you unconsciously absorb, whether it’s musical or artistic or what. If you live in this spiritually harmonious atmosphere, this greater proportion, if you develop the capacity to live in it, it begins to react on you, to strengthen you, and gives you scope beyond anything you ever dreamed of. So, while you are sorry, you are strongly sorry, not weepy sorry.”

And in this glimpse we see the unity of ideas that runs back of it all, the insulation, the centering of consciousness on the higher level, the keeping out of the zone of action in order to be free-handed, and wide-hearted in helpfulness.

“Sympathy is the key to it all,” they added. “Sympathy is not pity: but understanding, and then caring about it.”

CHAPTER XXVII

Meeting Non-Receptivity

1. AVOIDING CAPTURE.

The things we have been considering are simple enough in theory; but far from easy of accomplishment. No matter what our good will, it is sometimes almost impossible to avoid irritation, anger, even obstinate hostility. Try as we may, we find ourselves - our whole consciousness - down in the other fellow’s zone of action, scuffling with him in the dust, using the old weapons, and coming forth victor or vanquished according to the brute strength of us. But, whether victor or vanquished, shaken in our finer parts! Even after we can work it fairly well in the ordinary business of every-day life, ‘duty’ or affection trips us up. It is not easy. We will be licked about as often as we will win out; but that is no reason why we should not keep on trying. Avoidance is even worse than failure. There is no use in acquiring these things unless they can stand the test of living. Indeed, they are worse than useless, for they will have merely made us sensitive without having made us strong.

“Every time I meet a difficult person,” said Betty, “the need arises for using that combination with the spiritual. But when annoyance, due to what you might call my near-sightedness, takes possession of me, I shut out deliberately at the time of need; just when I ought to use the combination to grapple with the problem - to supersede the old near-sighted way. At the moment of test I give myself over to the human mechanism part, I sink myself entirely in that, let go all hold of the other. I say to myself: this is a case for such and such definite action; what can spiritual expansion or consciousness have to do with it?”

She was manifestly impatient at some failure of the day before: annoyed at the fact that a petty complication with a petty person had upset her.

“Every time I feel annoyed or deflected or crossed,” she resolved, “I’ll think of myself as in danger of capture by an inferior force. Instead of cutting myself off from my reinforcements, I’ll try to utilize them in commonplace moments like that, and not keep them for big, noble occasions.”

“Trying to combine the ideal with the practical mechanism is very difficult, for they have always been developed separately,” observed the Invisible. “It is useful, whenever provoking things happen, to look at yourself that way: as in danger of being the vanquished instead of the victor, the captured instead of the captor. Each time you score, it is a definite count; it is not erased. It is like acquiring something; makes what you are doing easier. It is a great help each time you hold fast and don’t get captured.

“But when you look at the defeat side, it is like compound interest. The next time you will have to overcome this time, and the failure that went before, and the one before that. No wonder you get caught! One little success will start you. It does not matter, though, how firmly you hold to your combination with the greater force; it will not do you much good if you let go each time. Just hold on; and make one little success, one pathetic little success. It counts; helps so much!”

2. THE BIRD’S-EYE VIEW.

Another useful suggestion was that we should try, as far as it was possible, to look on deterrent personalities not as individuals but as belonging to a unit, a whole, a level of consciousness: and when you do think of them as individuals, think of them as warped, out of proportion, wrong-headed, if you must; but as being so not because of their personal malice or intent, but because of this distorting element in which they have their spiritual being. To put it another way, they see things wrongly not because they squint deliberately, but because their lack of development furnishes them that sort of a lens.

“The consciousness I look down on,” said Betty, examining this, “is a kind of formation, a mass, that has become a unit, like one pervasive element. And the effect that single

element has is to make earth problems all look the same way. So I am never dealing with a cranky or a dull or an irresponsible individual, but with them as a struggling whole, with tendencies instead of little idiosyncrasies. I am sensitive to the underlying struggle, where all the little surface characteristics are not so obstructionary as they usually are. I have broken down that surface to a kind of dematerializing; it has disappeared and I can see what is below. That I could do because I looked at it in this bigger massed way, instead of individually. I can't translate it."

"Study causes, not effects," concluded the Invisible. "Give understanding to those who suffer from poverty of vision. Do not concern yourself with the symptoms of their disease, however annoying or obstructional. Each time habit drags you down to focus only on results, symptoms, effects, instead of deeper, higher perception, you are retarding your own development as well as acting the part of the miser."

3. OVERFLOWING.

The importance of actually living all this, making it so, one time was brought home to us most forcibly. For some days we could get in touch with nobody; we seemed quite deserted.

"When we do not come," they explained finally, "it is a signal to turn back and consider something that has been left uncertain. The flow of your stream is obstructed. Great responsibility is now on you; increasingly heavy as your perception grows. Unless you harmonize the weight, that is, carry only your share of it, and lift the rest up to us; you are not succeeding. Carry your share and responsibility."

Betty paused for some time to contemplate what they offered.

"The unassimilated part that set me back," she said at last, "was my just merely recognizing people's depressing weight of blindness, without any strength of desire to serve, without any attempt mentally to encircle them, to unite them to a higher strength, to work upon them through spiritual laws. In my thoughts I passed them by unaided. Until I get this all cleared up, I can't do anything else."

"There they are: Y., whose life gave me the horrors, and X., who hurt my feelings, and the old Worm - they're all there, and I shrank from them. I thought of them as stopping the flow of my stream. That was all my own point of view. I ought to have overflowed."

She considered this further.

"But," she objected, "all my admiration is gone, all sentiment of that kind. What is it I should give them? What is there I CAN give them?"

"Give bountifully of your spiritual vitality," said the Invisible. "That is what they are starving for. It enters the consciousness somehow, and gives them a faint perception. Don't shut down or turn away. Indifference is so terrible. It closes in on you like a fog."

You grope and struggle. You make constantly renewed efforts. You fight your way out into the sun again where you can see clearly once more and there is some joy in the doing. Then when the quick and ready resentment comes toward people, remember what it was like when you were in that fog.

Your whole heart will be set on helping people. That is hardest of all when there is no response. But it must be done in spite of the lack of visible accomplishment."

"I am looking at it," said Betty, "to see how you go about lifting this dead weight."

"It is done by chemical action again. You can't just say: Poor thing I have faith she's going to get help. I'll lift her up in my thoughts. That's no good; that's outside you. There's got to be strength enough in you to send out something to the person, something that overflows from your own conviction, has vitality enough to reach them. If it isn't big and strong enough, it only gets half way, and then is turned back by the other person's non-receptivity. It must be a battering-ram sort of thing. You must make them feel, not any critical virtue on your part, but faith in their own strength. It is the idea of expanding something from their own strength to the Great Strength over all."

"I know," Betty admitted, "but you've got to make it practical. Imagine my trying to expand!"

"Your attention is all concentrated on what he CAN'T do. If it were concentrated on what he COULD do, it might help. Watch yourself," admonished the Invisible.

"That's the point," Betty agreed. "We let these non-receptive, unbalanced personalities obstruct our streams, instead of developing a superior vitality and overflowing on them. It is very hard to do when you are sensitive to people. Non-receptivity and lack of balance look so ugly! Ugh! Like a sort of petrified malformation! It seems to be hopeless to hurl yourself on those!"

"If you really believe in the chemical-transmuting power of the spirit, it can be done," assured they. "But you can't believe it without using it. You can't keep it shut up in a treasure cabinet of the mind. It must be put to its intended use: re-creation."

"That's all very well, but - -" Betty began.

"If you expect to spread our teachings," the Invisible interrupted, "there must be this next step, this acquisition of power to overcome not only yourself but others, by the same method. You are not doing it alone if you utilize the spiritual law."

CHAPTER XXVIII

Conflict

1. TURNING ON THE PRESSURE.

Nine times out of ten the methods we have been considering will prove effective. But sometimes they are not enough. Every once in a while the opposition will prove too strong, and we will have to resort to more drastic measures.

“People don’t go far enough against non-receptivity,” said the Invisibles. “They have little spiritual courage. You must have the strength both to overcome it and to register your own conviction - and that must be a genuine conviction or it will not carry. The strength with which you give determines what they will receive, for they can get only a small percent of what is sent.

“This never can be done perfunctorily, for you have twice the pressure to meet as when dealing only with yourselves. You must double the pressure when you work with others.”

Betty lapsed into a silence so long continued that I asked what was doing.

“I am hard at work; leave me alone,” she objected. “I am studying how to overcome the opposition we encounter, which they spoke of as non-receptivity. You will always be turned back on yourself if you do not know how to overcome it.”

“Double the pressure,” repeated the Invisible. “In non-receptivity you fight also your own thwarted thought. Your own thwarted impulse must be revitalized to penetrate the resistance they offer.”

“I can see them busily erecting a defense, as though fearful of being stormed,” reported Betty. “All their strength is in that defense; all their attention is on it. There is nothing to receive an impression from you. What can you do? You can fight to a finish if you want to; but it’s such a waste. You merely arouse to greater defensive action along the lines of least resistance. You’re just clashing to no purpose.

“This is hard to get. Let me try.

“Here I am. I want to influence him. I’m trying, but the resistance is too great; it is impervious. Oh, I’m changing weapons!”

“Oppose at first with all your strength,” struck in the Invisible. “That first rush of opposing strength is very important because it preserves your own impulse, keeps it from getting into the zone of action of the opposing strength. That follows the natural law of self-preservation.”

“That certainly is very important,” agreed Betty. “It is establishing your own standard in order to get through their zone of action quickly and forcefully, before you get involved in it.”

“But then you must convert your weapons to spiritual ones,” warned the Invisible.

There was a pause while Betty studied the problem.

“Their method is so different from ours!” she exclaimed at last. “They don’t just face a thing squarely and attack it doggedly face to face. They use a kind of mental release - they un-stopper themselves, increase their capacity. There is in this not the idea of striking loose and being superior and unsympathetic; they always keep sympathetic contact with the opposing force. But the idea is of generating something so much bigger and superior, a kind of reflected or borrowed something, that they can return and overwhelm it.

“That is the way they conquer a thing, work on it, over there. It is quite a thrillingly fascinating way because there is so much zest to it; it’s the grandest hunting in the world.”

“Just un-stopper yourself,” concluded the Invisible, “and something within evaporates, so to speak - returns to its source. It is a simple, normal action. Just don’t keep yourself corked up. Remember: open at the top!”

2. SIMPLIFICATION.

Once we have got a start in this way, our next care must be not to get caught in an argument over non-essential details.

“Hold on tight,” advised the Invisibles, “and don’t say much; for words confuse them, and they have to start combating them. Say just enough to direct their attention. Make them feel your attitude of mind, and especially convince them of your lack of antagonism, your conviction that harmony is possible between you. Lured from their own base, meeting no opposition or antagonism of the kind they expect, there is a chance of enough uncertainty and receptivity to enable you to awaken new perception.

“Now state with all the force of your convictions the simplified problem as you see it. Force and simplification are necessary to recreate your vision to others. You’ve got to raise up the level of the whole thing by the strength of your own wider vision, which you have acquired by the elimination of the very things under dispute. Never weaken or scatter yourself at this point by giving heed to their distorted view. It is an attracting of attention from the perverted to the healthy for which you must try. Bring forward in plain statements your attitude of mind, approaching theirs only after definitely shaping and stating your own. You then have made a contrasting picture, form of mind, and can safely approach theirs for the purpose of reproportioning it.

“In any small application try sympathetically stating the two contrasting forms of mind, shapes of thought; stating the other’s first, perhaps, as you see it, followed by a whole-hearted creation of your own. And always, in the contrasting form of treatment, the leavening of sympathy and encouragement which will make it work. It will not otherwise. Incomplete, it becomes merely antagonistic, and fails. Coupled with sympathetic encircling action, minus anger, it will work. The great trouble is half-recipes, half-truths.

“And don’t dispute. State the purity of your aims, which will recur at their calmer moments and sink in. They remember now only the irritated words of dispute. Make your own form of life to present in contrast to theirs. That is the only way. The force of your vision must get in. It must have strength and energy and beauty.

“Concentrate on two points: reality in creating your form, and encircling action that surrounds with a harmonious atmosphere in attacking theirs. Be unmindful of the rest.

“The world and all these spiritual powers are drawn up like two sides of a great game, and when you face all that seething side that is the world, you wonder how you can go into it and not be dragged down and lost. And then this great weapon is placed in your hands, this simplification process, which keeps you on the chair above the crowd, touching them for a moment by attracting their attention.”

3. THE CONSTRUCTIVE FIGHT.

In the last analysis it is the nature of our own inner attitude that will determine the value of our efforts. As we all know, our daily life is normally a struggle, a series of oppositions. But a persistent attitude of service can almost miraculously transform the conflict.

“If you fight to win people,” declared the Invisible, “instead of to win results at their expense, it must become a fight of acquisition.”

“Isn’t that strange!” cried Betty. “You don’t fight to repel or subdue - that’s just a temporary half-won victory. This way you go round acquiring people. It’s an absorbent, acquisitive, releasing sort of fight. It would be like taking prisoners and setting them free. You certainly make an effort to get them; you do fight for them. That’s very amusing, going round the world absorbing people for your side. It’s a funny way of fighting. But it is a FIGHT, a distinct fight. Yes, it is a grand, big fight. It takes so much superior strength on your part.

“It is so important to get rid of the idea of destruction connected with the fight; and to substitute a constructive fight, doubling the force and manliness of it, eliminating all the antagonisms. That’s a curious thing to do!”

“It is like the fighting to rescue someone from drowning,” explained the Invisible. “You fight them with strength but without antagonism. Often people fail in good fights because they cut themselves off from reinforcements by antagonism.”

“Hold on,” I begged. “How about righteous indignation? Christ and the money changers?”

“Certainly,” acknowledged the Invisible. “It was a cleansing force. That is necessary; very necessary. But there is a difference between having your driving power one of hatred or small antagonisms, and having your driving power a big constructive thing which requires CLEANSING destruction.

“Not long ago we stated that in meeting non-receptivity the first reaction sometimes must be a quickly generated opposition to being included in its zone of action. Well that often works out in what you call righteous indignation. It is an instantaneous exposition of your own standards in opposition to those of a lower and destructive order. That is part of the big fight and it is a REAL fight! But the whole of your attention, the SOURCE of your strength, is in reconstruction, not on the money changers themselves. They just represent the resistance you are to overcome.”

“I can see the clash,” added Betty, “but the big idea hovers about and does not demand the petty gratification that other clashes do.”

“Make no mistake about the fight,” warned the Invisible. “It is the great conflict without antagonism. The big things of your war were done more with attention fixed on the freedom of the world, than by the strength of hatred of the Germans. There is a difference in the strength you tap and the channels you open up to carry it when you fight for a cause, primarily, and not against a people.”

4. THE GREAT FORMULA.

“Do not forget how you do it: through strength of desire to serve, through vigorous encircling action, through overflowing faith, through vision of reality, through union with spiritual law and purpose, through understanding of temptation and resistance, through magnifying to each his own soul. Through all these you find your way to the comprehension of the divine life.”

PART III
APPENDICES
APPENDIX I

The Technique of Communication

1.

We must premise that the source of all this material is a matter for each to decide for himself. It may originate in Betty - in which case she is more of a wonder than any of us had supposed. She may, by this mechanism, tap some wide source of wisdom, some reservoir, some 'universal mind.' Or, in this state of divided consciousness she may come into touch with 'race consciousness,' the stored or accumulated experience of humankind. Or, finally, the source may be what it purports to be, distinct discarnate intelligences. Each is free and welcome to adopt any hypothesis that appeals to him.

But the material is here: it did not exist before as a formulated thing, either in our minds or in our reading. It came to us - and still comes - in the manner I have set down. That much is indubitable fact.

2.

Assuming the source as from invisible intelligences, the technique of the communication is a fascinating speculation. Early in the game it became abundantly evident that it is not so simple as talking into a telephone. In the beginning were inconsistencies in statement; sometimes direct misstatements and contradictions. There were irrelevant trivialities or absurdities. There were blank failures to give simple replies to simple questions. It was almost impossible to get any adequate explanation for these things. It took considerable faith and perseverance not to have quit in disgust.

As time went on, we came to various conclusions of our own; and still later were told a little.

Before taking them up I want to repeat what was said in the main body of the book: that this whole question of communication seems to be still in a highly experimental state, on both sides. We have been repeatedly assured of this by the Invisibles themselves, and we have seen them many times begin, try out, and abandon different methods and expedients. In answer to direct question we have been told again and again: "We know little more about this than you do: we are experimenting." Just as only certain people here are sensitives, so apparently only certain specialists there have the knowledge, training or especial equipment to manipulate the process. Those less skilled, less conservative, more inclined to try it on anyway, are likely to blunder both in method and content.

When one sees the pencil moving in automatic writing, or hears the voice in spoken communication, one asks questions in the expectation of receiving simple and direct answer, as though the discarnate intelligence were actually holding the pencil in full control, or were talking as one talks through a telephone. Except as to the simplest ideas, such accuracy rarely occurs.* Ordinarily, when one presses for a concrete statement of fact, or a detailed description of conditions, he gets either evasion, a flat assurance that the thing is too complicated or difficult to be told, or else the required details are given but are awkward, absurd, or contradictory to what has been given elsewhere through other stations with at least equal authority. Even a simple yes or no is difficult to elicit.

* I am writing of average experience.

This is especially true of the personal type of thing; which is the usual approach to these super-normal-not supernatural-matters. If the seeker sticks at that, he is up a blind alley. It may be all right as a start: but only as a start.

But if someone appears to be manipulating a pencil, or speaking directly through another's voice, and if that someone claims identity as a friend; our first demand is that he prove that identity. How can that best be done? Naturally by asking him to recall something we both know. If he is what he purports to be, he ought to be able to remember - and describe - the old mill by the pond where you used to go swimming together.

And as you are interested in him, you will probably want to know something about his present conditions and surroundings. So you ask him that.

What do you get? As to the old mill, indirection, half-hints, small bits, sidelong approaches. Rarely anything direct and satisfactory. The records of the various societies for psychical research are full of these slow, painstaking, fumbling efforts to get across "evidential" messages. Their synthesis to anything that can be even an approach to satisfaction is a business for experts. As to your desire to know something of your supposed friend's conditions of existence, one of two things: either a vague statement that they are so different from yours that they cannot be described; or a rash attempt at a picture that is flatly inconsistent with what somebody else is supposed to have told through some other station.

Even if some of this strikes you as beyond coincidence; if you are encouraged to go on because there seems to be the germ of 'something in it,' why all the fuss and struggle and indirection? Why not say so, in so many words?

It is all pretty tough on the common sense. And if, as often happens, you suddenly find yourself an object of personal attention by Julius Caesar or Napoleon or William James - he's a favourite - then your innate modesty is quite likely to join hands with your

skepticism. You stop dead in your tracks. You are fair. There may be something in it, you acknowledge. There is a residue you cannot explain. But even if it is genuine, it is too unreliable. How can you tell what to accept and what not to accept? How can you have any assurance of the value of what is passed out to you? And if that is John talking, he must have gone off fearfully in his mind.

That, I think, is the reaction of any man who has not already the will to believe. It would most certainly have been my own, had it not been for the fact that, even in the earliest days of the actual teaching, part of what we got was straightforward, logical, progressive, and with purpose. This carried us through until the confusions disappeared.

3.

But since they did disappear, and the genuineness did establish itself – at least to us - then it was a logical thought that similar difficulties, which had caused abandonment in other cases, might be similarly a mask to something real. If so, it was worthwhile to speculate on them. I thought about them a great deal; and I observed Betty in action; and I evolved a tentative theory that fits well enough the facts in our own case. It will probably need a lot of modification in detail; but I still believe it basically sound in principle.

This is what I conceive happens:

The Invisibles have no DIRECT power to manipulate our physical substance, though at times they may appear to do so. Their ability to levitate tables, for instance; or to move a pencil in automatic writing; or to jerk our limbs about; or to appear to speak by direct control of another all depend on their ability to impress an idea on a portion of the station's mind. That portion of the station's mind, in turn, so manipulates the necessary physical mechanism as to approximate the result desired. This rule I conceive to be invariable.

Now the physical mechanism which is so manipulated by a portion of the station's mind in accordance - more or less - with the idea impressed on it, is not necessarily the familiar muscular system. Take the common case of table tipping or ordinary levitation. The experiments of Crawford, Schrenck-Notzing, De Rochas, Crookes, Flammarion, Gustave Geley and others show that this is accomplished by a projection of what they have named ECTOPLASM, a physical emanation from the body of the station, capable of considerable extension and rigidity, perhaps capable of carrying force as a wire conducts electricity. By means of this ectoplasm the manifestations occur. I may hasten to add that their occurrence implies PER SE no intervention of any other personality than that of the station, or – telepathically - the by-standers. Neither does common writing or speech. Merely it is a physical mechanism, like writing or speech, though not as familiar to us. It is available, like them, for use by that portion of

the station's mind which receives the intention of the Invisible. It cannot be manipulated DIRECTLY by the Invisible, any more than can a pencil or the organs of speech.

The portion of the station's mind with which we are dealing we will have to call the subconscious. That has become a sort of wastebasket word into which we dump everything we do not understand, but it will have to do. It is not a distinctly separate mind from the conscious intellect. They are both one Mind. It is the submerged portion, the part below the threshold. In some the threshold is higher or lower than in others; and likewise the threshold can be raised or lowered by effort and development. This subconscious portion, broadly speaking, receives impression, idea, emotion, inspiration, which it lifts to the conscious intellect to be fitted into expression. It does just that constantly in everyday life.

For example, it is the seat of our "instincts" as we call them. That aspect of the subject has been so thoroughly treated in so many works on psychology that elaboration is unnecessary here.

Now this subconscious mind is the only point of contact with the Invisibles. They cannot affect our physical selves nor our physical environment except through it. I make this statement in full appreciation of many phenomena in apparent contradiction. And as they cannot intervene directly on us physically, so they cannot intervene directly on us as to our consciously intellectual part. They must impress what they want on the submerged subconscious of the station, which in turn reports that impression to the conscious intellect for expression.

At just that point the difficulty lies. Let us assume a specific case of a sort apparently at variance with this theory. An Invisible desires to communicate in direct words. The subject matter, the details, of that communication, are "prepared in such a manner as to make an impression on the station's subconscious as accurately as possible. The method of impression is a trifle obscure. We have been told of it in various ways.

"Recording my thought on your brain," was one attempt, "How I reach you. The clearer you understand it, the better you can co-operate. Reckon first on receptivity. Presuppose receptivity. Without that there is the merest chance of succeeding. Reckon next on desire from both ends. Registration is accomplished by means of the mating of sensitized consciousnesses superimposed; something like the making of a color print.

"Roughly speaking, the general preparation which you make through admitting the possibility of communication is the sensitizing which admits of the impress from this end. For this reason SYSTEMATIC preparation or seeking is almost certain to insure results. The preparation of the plates is your part."

After the impression is received, it must be translated. This is done by that part of the mind which we use constantly in everyday life, the intellectual part. (But not, of course, with the conscious knowledge of the station.) In the case of both automatic writing and spoken communication it is more or less divorced temporarily from conscious active thinking, so that the words seem, and are, independent of the station's will. Nevertheless, that is the part that does the translating. It must do so in accordance with its equipment. If the equipment is limited, the translation is limited. One cannot strike typewriter keys that do not exist. It should be added that in most human beings there exists vastly more equipment than is ever under conscious control at any one time. Hypnotism proves this. But nothing beyond that equipment can be expressed. If an idea totally outside it is offered, it can either be conveyed only partially and by analogy, or it cannot be conveyed at all.

Consider the case of an absolutely unlettered, untravelled solitary cast away as a child on a desert island. Bring to his subconscious mind an accurate impression if, say the essence of modern rapid transportation-motors, locomotives, airplanes - and demand of his intellect a report of that impression. He must translate it in terms of the birds of the air, the beasts of the field, the fish of the sea, or his own two feet. If anyone were present to receive that report, he might get a highly poetic analogy, but hardly much idea of the reality. And if he had just come from another island where bullock carts - and nothing else - were known; with his head full of an authentic "revelation" of winged carts, or bullocks of incredible swiftness breathing fire and smoke, he would be justified in throwing up both hands and calling it all bunk.

This matter of translation may be conceived to be one of basic difficulty. A great deal of distortion also comes in by what we call "coloring," - the arbitrary though unintentional intervention of the station's own thinking mind. That is fairly common, and is pretty well recognized. The mind seizes a fragment of the genuine impression and, by association of ideas, goes galloping off with it in the grooves of habit, constructing out of past experience a more or less coherent statement that is genuine only in a fragment at inception. At its worst it results in complete falsity. At its best it modifies and distorts.

4.

Let us now examine the apparent method by which these impressed ideas are translated by the station.

Everybody is familiar with the type of mind that reacts in conventional phrase to any common sentiment. We call them "bromides." It is like touching a button: one knows exactly what to expect. That is the simplest possible example of what takes place. Certain ideas automatically attract certain forms of expression. Present the idea and the expression follows.

Betty once said; “Queer how I hunt for words. I have a magnet and the proper word climbs up.” Often she will snap her fingers and cry impatiently; “Word wanted! Word wanted!”

In the unicellular rudimentary mind-if such can be imagined-there might be only one expression-response, so that the translation of any certain ideas would be invariable, even though inadequate. But as a matter of fact even the most simple-minded station has in store at least a dozen words any one of which might fit, and all of which report for duty, so to speak. That happens in everyday life. When it does so happen we have, we say, to “make a choice of words.” It is the same thing here, only there is not only a choice of words to be made, but also what might be called a choice of concepts.

In ordinary circumstances this choice is left by the Invisibles almost entirely to the station. Sometimes it is done deliberately, I believe, in order to get the gist of the matter over with a minimum of difficulty. In nine cases in ten, however, in my opinion, the Invisibles cannot help themselves. The human habit of expression is too strong for them. They can make the impression, but then the thing runs away from them. This is especially true with undeveloped or partially developed stations,-people who suddenly discover a pencil writing for them, and who promptly take all as gospel that comes to them. The sequence is a premature rushing into print, with more “basic discrepancies” and attendant bewilderment and disbelief. For when the matter of translation is wholly or partially left to the station, it necessarily is tinged with the station’s habit of thought. It becomes ecclesiastic through the formally religious; or fuzzy through the emotional; or highfalutin’ through the sentimental; or even ungrammatical through the illiterate.

Parenthetically, I see no objection that often these messages are cast in the first person, as though the Invisibles were actually talking directly.

That, too, is a matter of impression. Do not forget that in this choice of which we are speaking the station takes no conscious part, in the waking sense of using the will. The choice is made and put into action by what we call loosely the conscious part of the mind as differing from the subconscious; but the personality of the station is for the moment more or less in abeyance. That is what makes the person a station; the faculty of stepping aside. Here is where our impersonations come in. We are told solemnly of long and fluent - and ordinarily commonplace - conversations with Julius Caesar and Plato and Nero and Judas, all of whom seem to be dwelling in bliss as a Happy Family, and all of whom seem frantically eager to rush into conference at any hour of the day or night with any Tom, Dick or Harry who calls them up. William James must be either ubiquitous or must possess a large corps of secretaries to get around at all. All a matter of the translation of the impression on the subconscious. Some little thing reminds the station's mind of Caesar or Plato or Nero or James: it seizes and personifies that idea, and is off on a tangent of its own. The subconscious has received from the station himself an impression deeper than any that can' be given from an outside source. Even a direct denial of identity on the part of the Invisible, we can conceive, would not even get over against an IDEE FIXE.

Our own Invisibles were constantly lamenting this tendency of the human mind to gallop off on its own.

"That, roughly speaking, is all we can say today, they ended a rather sketchy exposition of something we wanted to know one day. "The trouble is, we might give you more; but once hinted at or wrongly accepted or conceived, you would start going with grim determination in some direction from which we could not divert you. That increases our difficulties and makes us very cautious how we start your consciousness - your EARTH consciousness - in any given direction."

Even when the source of impression is from without, how can one be sure to whom one is talking? One cannot; except through painstaking, wearisome, minute, evidential work, such as Dr. Hyslop did, and such as the physical research societies are always busy on. Except of course a moral certainty when personality is marked and strong. That is why, except to those who need evidence of survival, personal communication is so nearly futile. That is why our Invisibles have so insisted on anonymity, and have so stressed the content of what they have to say. The case of PROVED identity is not hopeless, but it is difficult.

We have said that the "choice of words" was generally perforce or intentionally left to the station. We have discussed the perforce. It has seemed to me also that much of the time the Invisibles have deliberately refrained from much, if any, supervision. This

happens when the station's equipment is sufficiently adequate to the impression, either because his habit of mind fits the subject matter, or because he is sufficiently in harmony with the Invisible to be exquisitely sensitive to refinements of meaning. That results in great fluency. It is a method most often allowed when the subject is very general, or of no especial importance, or in ordinary conversational exchange. What difference, when the impression of "affectionate paternity" is made, whether that conveys to the station, and is so translated, Dad or Papa or Governor or whatever? Or whether the station says, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant," or "Bully work, old man!"?

But, again, the form of translation may make a great deal of difference. Then from the flock of words that rises to the magnet of the idea impressed, the Invisible may make a choice. In Betty's case that choice is made by elimination, by negation of one after the other that she would select until the suitable one presents itself. I imagine that is always the case. The result is more accurate, but it is also more halting. When an absolutely literal statement is in order, - what we call dictation - it is very slow. It is slow when Betty reports in her own person what is supplied her. It is slow when the Invisibles, apparently speaking in THEIR own persons, desire to make a measured statement. The whole equipment of the station is at their disposal - vocabulary, experience, intellectual ideas, habits of mind and phrase, mental reactions, beliefs, wisdom and knowledge - as the words in a dictionary are at the disposal of those who would write. These materials are capable of being arranged in any pattern or sequence, to express in their combination, perhaps, - ideas entirely unknown to the station. But they can be so arranged only by the rejection of those not desired from that portion of them that automatically rises to meet the stimulus of the impression.

To go back to our simple illustration. Let us suppose that in life a son called his father Daddy, and that for purposes of identification he desires that this precise diminutive be got over. But the station used to call his own father Dad. That would first present itself as a suitable translation of the impression. It would be inhibited by the Invisibles; as would, in turn, Papa, Father, Governor, Old Man, etc. Then would ensue what the records call "difficulty." If the station's conscious attention were roused, failure would result. Yet to the son seeking communication with his father it would seem an absurdly easy test. How much more difficult to get over a pet name entirely personal to those who used it: or, for that matter, names or dates at all! Yet that is a "test" commonly requested.

A moment's thought will show how this same reasoning applies to other "tests," as a request to know "what we did together May first," or "describe the house we used to live in," or the like. The Invisible may impress on the station's subconscious an entirely adequate conception; but nothing may rise to it that can express accurately necessary details.

It seems that it should be easy to say in so many words that it was a white colonial house by a millpond. But suppose white houses habitually mean Italian villas to the station, and water implies a sea or a harbour by the sea. The matter must be gone into bit by bit from the beginning, working from generalities to particulars, and resulting at last after much stumbling in a patchwork, with - if lucky - a few recognizable salient features.

In all of the foregoing I have purposely instanced the simplest types of communication. There are many. The most striking and rapid is that in which the station seems "possessed" by the Invisible, using gestures, turns of phrase, even tones of voice not his own. It is sometimes impossible to believe, in spite of the evidence of one's eyes, that another personality is not before one. Joan, of OUR UNSEEN GUEST, is wonderful that way.

Nevertheless, as I see it such apparent "possession" is not incompatible with the hypothesis. Description of the process - impression on the subconscious; a rising of apposite material for translation to the conscious; a selection by suppression of all but the exact form desired - may be likened to a slowed-down moving picture. All the movements of the action stand out singly and painfully. But in some cases it is possible that the station may be far enough developed, or so sympathetically EN RAPPORT with the Invisible, that the film is speeded up. The mechanism moves as smoothly and promptly as the parts of an engine. The impress is formed, made, translated, almost in one movement, as it were; and with that major impression come minor impressions - perhaps intentionally, perhaps involuntarily - of personality and mannerism. These too, the station seizes and translates into speech or action. We have the impersonation. Yet I believe if Joan's process could be slowed down for inspection, - as the moving picture is slowed down - it would be found to comprise the sequence I have outlined in my hypothesis. And even Joan does slow down at times to the point of the most deliberate and tentative dictation when some technical matter requiring absolute verbal accuracy is to be said.

Or take another type, that of the station who pronounces words unknown to him. Cases have been reported of communications in foreign languages with which the station was alleged to be unacquainted.* There is no reason why SOUNDS should not be impressed and translated as well as words; and a proper combination of those sounds as syllables would form words unknown to the station. That would imply an extremely delicate process, and the development of enormous skill, control, sensitiveness and receptivity. In principle it should be possible. We are yet at very crude beginnings. Certainly the little group around Bell, jubilant over distinguishing faintly a single jumbled sentence across the space of two rooms, could have had no vision of hearing a whisper four thousand miles.

* As in the celebrated case of Dr. Whynant conversing through an illiterate station with a purported Chinese sage in an ancient dialect known only to a few scholars.

5.

That brings us back to the specific instance: the development of Betty as a station. You remember the explanation of the slow and difficult progress as an attempt to get away from “spontaneous or spasmodic” phenomena to an “intelligent co-operation.” If, on the basis of seventeen years’ experience, I were to indulge in prophecy I should say that the future of both fluency and accuracy would depend on: (a) development of the station’s sympathetic receptivity so that he will catch the impressions as rapidly as an engine receives the two or three thousand sparks a minute that drive it so smoothly and untiringly; (b) the extension of the station’s equipment so that the translation will be both instantaneous and accurate; (c) the strengthening of the Invisible’s veto power, so that it, too, will act instantly and smoothly to depress all the words that rise to the magnet of the idea save the one desired. Then we should have true communication. The Invisible may then be said to control directly, in the same sense that we control directly the forming of words with a pencil. WE do not drive the pencil: the hand does it, controlled by and obedient to ourselves.

Of the points mentioned above, the receptivity is perhaps a matter of personal equipment. Stations seem to be naturally “sensitive” - to a greater or smaller degree - while other people are not. But I am not sure that the potentiality does not exist latent in mankind as a race: and it is indubitable that a natural sensitive may develop to greater and greater efficiency. The third consideration, of course, is not in our hands.

But the second deserves a moment’s attention. The development of the station is one of the big things of the future. A preponderance of the results we have attained have been by means of the raw material, so to speak.

Part of the intelligent co-operation lies in our second point - the equipment of the station. It grows not only by the fullness of the life he leads on earth, including his education, his reading, and his experience of wisdom, but also it grows tremendously by the very translation he makes and by his experience with the Invisibles-provided that is intelligent and co-operative. The new patterns they turn out of old things become magically new things that may in turn be used for fresh patterns. That is the essence of what we call “psychic development,” and it is capable of an extension without limit, infinitely beyond the expansions of life as we know it. It is in this that our hope lies for the future, our hope of reaching out into a fullness of knowledge we can never attain through the contacts and experiences provided us by the world we see and hear and touch and taste and smell.

6.

That, in brief, is my working hypothesis. I do not delude myself with the idea that it is in any way a finished one, or that it covers completely all the variations of delicate adjustment. But at present I do believe that it represents the root of the matter; and that those variations spring from it; that it is the focal point from which the whole subject spreads fanwise. I offer it as a glimpse, in the hope that the vigorous, exploring, new young era that began with the close of the war will find it at least a scaffolding from which to construct.

Since formulating it, sometime in 1920, I have observed nothing to cause me to change its essentials. Indeed those essentials have been corroborated by direct statements, too voluminous to include here. One alone I shall quote, because it was addressed to beginners.

We were discussing first “messages,” and were wondering why - assuming in them SOME genuine content, they were generally so inconsequential.

“The content of first messages, through new stations,” we were told, “is important only as it serves to retain interest and does not discourage by too complete irrelevancy. We are rarely at first attempting to say anything. We are merely trying to get a reaction to stimulus.

If this could be fully understood, it would be as effective to convey a single irrelevant word, - or, indeed, mere meaningless sounds. From our point of view the whole importance of a considerably extended period of first work is in the reaction to any impression on the part of the station. Often in a long alleged message a small phrase, a single word, or even a solitary syllable or sound is all that actually emanates from us. The rest of the message, so-called is a mere carrying out of what the station himself unconsciously imagines to be the purport. That minute response is, however, completely satisfactory to us, as it indicates success in actually impinging upon our neophyte’s receptivity.

We have no particular concern with the rest of it, unless, as I said at first, it may affect the probability of an abandonment of the experiments because of nonsense or discrepancy or contradiction. Since our, major interest is thus fixed upon the PROCESS, while your interest is naturally fixed on the CONTENT, our aims must at first be divergent. And since at first we see the trend of progress, while you do not, we are naturally reluctant to divert our purpose any more than is absolutely necessary.

“Therefore we give our attention and force to complete accuracy or to the production of what you call evidential only when our hand on the pulse of your interest or belief indicates a slowing down, below the danger point.

Our object, you see, is to develop an instrument of receptivity capable of something more worthwhile than could be possible in crude beginnings.

“Now we try to start, naturally, with the apparatus that is most simple, both in manipulation and in range, that it is possible to devise. The simplest of all is of course a single reaction, a single impulse, resulting in a single phenomenon. We tip a table according to an almost childish prearrangement, or cause you to thrust a thing about in a limited number of directions, like the ouija board. These manipulations require, as one might say, a mere touch on a button.

“Generally the next stage is coherent language, generally through automatic writing. This requires, however rapid it may seem, the choice among only twenty-six different things.* You will notice, if you remember your experience, that after a little and at times, you occasionally anticipated a whole word in your own minds, a fraction of a second before it was put down. That was a merging into the next step. But the first of automatic writing was - in process slowed down - an impression of one out of twenty-six things only.

* The letters of the alphabet.

“This, you can understand, was quite a different matter and a much easier matter than selecting one out of the several thousand things which constitutes your vocabulary equipment. The latter is what must be done in the case of even fairly developed spoken communication.

“There is a curious reciprocity about this relationship. We can only reach - take advantage of effort, and you have to supply the effort. We generally in the beginning have to snatch at chance effort. You happen to be at a friend's house tipping a table. There is our chance. But we might shout at you ten years. Try every technique you hear about, provided that if it does not seem promptly to work, you will not become discouraged with the whole business. There are no two things in the universe absolutely alike. In coarser adjustments wider dissimilarities will respond to identical method. As the adjustment becomes finer the individual differences exercise more influence, and the method must cease to be standard and itself become individual. When this is the case, careful and slow experiment is necessary, ON BOTH SIDES, until the method is determined.”

APPENDIX II

Experiments with the Spiritual Body

Betty's "mediumship" has never emphasized physical phenomena. That is something else, apparently, with which we have little or nothing to do. Only once, in our seventeen years' experience have we even assisted, actively, in their production. And even then our inclusion had a direct connection with the teaching, in that it seemed to be directed toward some sort of proof of the actuality of the spiritual body.

It happened that, in the early part of 1922, we had a rather unusual opportunity. From various parts of the country happened to be gathered in New York, for a month, a group of people known to each other as personal friends, three of whom were gifted, like Betty, as sensitives; and the rest interested, like myself, from an unemotional standpoint. Strangely enough none of us had at that time read much concerning the physical phenomena of psychics. We had little knowledge of what had been done; and no preconceived notions of what to expect. After the show was all over we were surprised that certain trained investigators found some of our results so remarkable. We had found them exciting and interesting, and loads of fun! But at the end of our month I think our predominant feeling was of regret that we could not go on and really get somewhere!

We had, then, a newspaper man and his wife: I will call them Mr. and Mrs. Gaines. Also a business man in foreign trade and his wife: I will call him Cass. Then there was still another couple, both of them active in professional life. And, of course, Betty.

Mrs. Gaines, we had discovered in the course of our friendship with them, was possessed of a considerable degree of this peculiar sensitivity.

Cass's wife was Margaret Cameron, whose book *THE SEVEN PURPOSES* was at that time in its height of popularity.

The professional couple were the anonymous authors of *OUR UNSEEN GUEST* – so deeply anonymous that even their closest friends did not know of their identity. In their book they called themselves "Darby and Joan," so we will do so here.

Now here were eight people, all of whom by temperament and training were practical, hard-headed, and known to each other as of unquestioned integrity; and four of them had demonstrated this peculiar power, each in a different fashion. The extraordinary content of *THE SEVEN PURPOSES* had been conveyed largely in huge automatic writing in full consciousness.

Mrs. Gaines, also conscious, spoke from a revery-like condition of a rather lovely sensitivity. Joan, in contrast, fell into a trance state so deep that she had no consciousness whatever of what went on; no subsequent recollection of it; and no sense

of time. So far as she knew, she might have been “out” four minutes or four hours. Betty’s method has been described.

We all had these things in common; we were much interested in this new exploration; we took it “lightly,” in the sense that we did not stand in awe of it, nor consider any of its aspects “sacred,” and were able to have a lot of fun with it; we knew each other, and had complete confidence in each other as friends; we had no axes to grind, emotionally, in the way of publicity, or in any other manner. Curiously enough we were at that time singularly innocent of any connection, mental or practical, with organized research; we knew nothing of professional mediums!

The whole combination was so unique that we could not fail to take advantage of it.

“Four-count ‘em-four under one tent!” cried someone. “Let’s work them tandem. I wonder if it’s ever been done?”

In that spirit we tried them tandem. At once it was evident that something interesting was going to come out of it. As Margaret Cameron lived in New York, we arranged to get together as often as we could at her house on Eleventh Street.

There we met, generally in the evening, sometimes in the afternoons, eleven times in all, between the dates of December 31 and January 28, when it was necessary to scatter to our various homes. From the first the Invisibles took definite and purposeful charge. We had no faintest hint or preconception of what to expect. The actual work was done sometimes by one of our stations, sometimes by another, sometimes by various combinations of the four. Generally Joan and Betty were the leading performers - the “positive poles,” they were called; with Margaret and Mrs. Gaines assisting as the “negative poles.”

The locale was an ordinary drawing room. From first to last no especial apparatus was used, except a dull-finished dark cloth over a screen as a background; and an ordinary Brownie dark room lantern. From the latter we removed the red slide, and substituted for its electric light, globes of from fifteen to twenty five watts in various tints. By a process of elimination the Invisibles finally hit on a lilac glass as the most useful. At all times there was plenty of illumination so that every detail of the room was plainly visible. Indeed, as will be seen, some of the experiments were repeated in daylight. However, white light did not seem the most favorable.

Most of the phenomena were observed by all those present not actively engaged in their production, and were checked off by comparison both at the time and afterwards. Those actively engaged in the production, as a general thing, saw nothing, or got merely fragmentary glimpses. There was no emotional excitement. Even surprise soon wore itself thin. The human mind is remarkably adaptable that way. After the first ten minutes even the sight of the first airplanes in flight became almost commonplace. As

the experiments extended over so long a period of time we came very shortly to examine their results in a mood of almost hypercriticism.

The principal operators from the other side were the Doctor and Stephen, who gave the philosophy of OUR UNSEEN GUEST; Anne, a Scotch-woman; and Joe, the son of the newspaper man before-mentioned as one of our group.

There were apparently many others busy and interested, but the aforementioned appeared to be in charge. All of the sessions were alike in that the serious experimental work was lightened by much rapid interchange and by some intentionally amusing interludes. In my account, however, I am for the sake of brevity focusing on the object in hand.

The first and second meetings were devoted to preliminary explanations which can be epitomized as follows:

Both mind and body are the human manifestations of one reality, the human consciousness. The body is the material manifestation of the sort of consciousness that is human. The mind is the link between the body and what we call the spirit, or cosmic germ. The spirit or cosmic germ, the actual I AM of the individual, itself has a definite body, with weight, form, color, substance.

We have, of course, demonstrated the existence of the mind and the physical body. It remains to demonstrate the actual existence of this other, or Beta, body as a tangible and definite, not merely a symbolical thing. That demonstration, we were told was the intention of the projected experiments.

2. THE THIRD MEETING

We found that the best we could do was a bi-weekly meeting. On the occasion of the next (third), we naturally expected a continuation of the explanations, and were somewhat puzzled by an apparent hitch in the proceedings. When Joan and Betty were put under,* Betty remarked that she felt confident "We'll get a long way tonight." But there seemed no start.

Finally Joan said:

"It is cold around my ankles."

Betty advised her to "prance around a little."

"It's not that"; said Joan, "IT'S SOMETHING GONE OUT."

* Throughout all these experiments both were heavily and thoroughly blindfolded.

A long pause ensued.

“Perfectly tremendous, the current through my arm,” observed Betty at last (the two clasped hands when “out”), “like a tremendous force going through. Not a word: but it’s terrific.”

Joan made motions as though writing. We offered her pencil and paper but nothing important came. Finally I asked whether we should try to get speech, or should let it alone.

“I think it is too strong,” returned Betty. “GOT to let it alone. The force is very strong.”

Suddenly, after another long and silent interval Joan cried out sharply:

“Pinch it! Feel the cold stratum.”

The cold stratum was readily distinguished, extending some inches above the floor. It was so unmistakably cold that it struck through our shoes.

The effect was not unlike that of a wintry draught along the floor of an old fashioned house. In three things it differed: it had not been apparent five minutes before; it ceased to be apparent five minutes thence; its upper limits were sharply defined.

Betty was evidently also involved in the production of this - as indeed all subsequent phenomena, - for at this point she said:

“Have to take it slowly because I’m just a little sick. I’m doing work for two, and it makes me just a little sick.”

“Pinch it,” repeated Joan, speaking with great difficulty. We did not instantly understand, “Me,” she repeated, “Me away; me, out there where it’s cold.”

Darby caught the idea of what was wanted, and pinched the air about four feet from Joan, but a little to her right.

“Not there. In front of me,” stammered Joan, “Not so high; I’m not so high.”

Darby again pinched the air; this time in front of her and about on a level with her knee. Instantly her left leg winced back as though it had itself been pinched. He repeated the experiment at the level of her waist: her hand flew to her head. Successive trials seemed to show that points of sensitiveness existed at a distance from Joan’s physical body corresponding in location to the parts of the physical body; but apparently on a somewhat smaller scale. That is to say, when one pinched the air at the floor, the reaction was in her ankles; at the waist level, the reaction was in the head; and at various points between, the shoulder, hand, knee or other part jerked back as though in pain. When these points had been sufficiently determined, Joan sighed and said in a relieved voice:

“Now I can go back!”

The Professor * - through Joan - next attempted to resume the discussion; but Joan was not in tune as yet after her effort at what we concluded was an actual projection of the Beta - herself. He made, however, one statement that was important.

"The subconscious," said he, "is to the Beta what the conscious is to the physical."

* Our designation of one of the invisible entities.

The difficulty for a time seemed insurmountable.

"Please ask questions," spoke up Stephen* suddenly, "Difficulty with this form of communication. Cannot get a clear channel, but think we can interest this brain if you will stimulate from outside."

"Father, ask her some questions - anything," struck in Joe.

"What is the Beta?" accordingly asked Gaines.

"The actual invisible substance which you have for long termed soul or spirit," replied Joe promptly.

"Does it weigh anything'?"

"Yes."

"Are there scales fine enough to weigh it?"

"Yes. If you had had her on a scales tonight, you could have had the weight of the Beta. It would have been the difference between the weight of the normal body, and that body after the cold had gone out into the room. Darby pinched the Beta."

"What is the cold I often feel near or about me?" asked Margaret Cameron.

"It is your own Beta going out in response to a magnetic call of another consciousness to your own."

"But it often happens when I am alone," objected Margaret.

"There is always another consciousness present," Joe assured her.

"Don't forget," he continued, "the main thing we want to get over to you while you are all together is an actual physical demonstration of the existence of the Beta. You remember the other day she told you what my body looked like: she described the type of substance. We are not sure we can show you a Beta, because it requires a condensing of her Beta, and perhaps of ours and also a strengthening of your retinas. But we want to tell you our hopes so you can help us. Faith a thing is going to happen helps."

That was all of importance for that evening. In explanation of Joe's remark we must here record that at the first session Joan broke into the discussion by wandering off, and was with some difficulty brought back to the point. During that excursion she apparently saw someone with whom she insisted on talking.

“Protoplasm?” she remarked then, “This substance, you say, is a step beyond?” She turned and spoke to us, “Now this man I’m talking to; he has a perfectly good body. You can’t see through it. It seems to be more or less illuminated from within though not with the effect of phosphorescence - He says the nearest thing to it on our plane of manifestation is a microscopic analysis of protoplasm.

This is stronger, lighter, more plastic. It is just beyond the humanly visible sight. It isn’t a fluid, quite, because it keeps form. A fluid does not keep form. He says that the thing he is the thing we term our soul: that it has form on earth: that we have it; that the only way it differs from our physical body is that we don’t see it. It is beyond our retinal registration. It has color too.”

“Could we touch it? Is it perhaps that cold feeling?” asked Darby.

“Yes. However, it is so plastic that you could not pick it up in your physical hand.” said Joan.

“If it maintains form, why is it not broken up when I happen to put my hand through it, for example?” queried Darby.

“No more than smoke. That does not maintain form; it merely assumes form.

This does both. These people are plastic. The other man could go through a wall, could go through you.”

“Interstices: Magnetization of interstices,” put in Betty.

“Matter, as you know it on earth, is nothing but a ganglion of stress points. Consequently these plastic forms which have more power than you have over your physical hands, - they sort of seem to flow - they walk, yes, but - ”

“Come back: get on the main point.” urged Betty.

3. THE FOURTH MEETING

The fourth session began by a request from Joe.

“Would you mind turning off the top lights?” he asked. We did so, leaving the room illuminated by four sidewall brackets “I wish you would test the temperature near her left arm.”

No change there seemed apparent. Betty said to wait.

“Always before,” explained Joe, “we have only been able to get her to release her Beta through the lower extremities, for some reason or other, but this time it is coming out almost normally. It is simply sliding out from her point by point exactly as she is. Watch for the cold all over her. You will probably find nothing around the head. We

can't manage that yet, but the arms, breast, ankles, knees and hands ought to show tonight."

Darby and Gaines now reported cold emanations from Joan distinctly recognizable, especially about the right knee. I was taking notes at a small table over which a drop light in a reflector shade had been lowered at the end of a cord. The heat from this was considerable. All at once the space between the light and the paper seemed to me to turn cold, and I mentioned my impression. The others verified it. This cold area over the paper persisted for perhaps three or four minutes; then was withdrawn. Immediately the focused heat from the electric light became apparent again.

"Why did you have us turn down the top lights?" asked Gaines.

"They squinched her - and me," explained Joe.

Margaret, Cass and Mrs. Gaines now reported definite areas near themselves; all of which seemed plainly evident to us. The quality of cold was a good deal like that felt from the rapid evaporation of menthol, and seemed to have sharply defined limits. That is, the line of change from the tepid air of the room to the cold area could be detected within an inch or so.

"Why is the cold everywhere about the room?" asked Darby.

"It is not all from the same source." Joe replied, "It is all of us, an intensification. There are fifty or so here: like sardines. It is her and us. She is playing around with us and having a good time. She may tell you about it later, if you want her to. Just now she is completely out, and I am using her material body; not as fluently as the Lady Anne.* - Watch her right arm. A cord is attached there. It is not a muscular motion at all. Somebody examine it."

* The Scotswoman.

During all this, Joan's forearm had been resting along the arm of her chair. The hand, partly open, hung inside the chair arm. It was now agitated by a quivering so rapid as to be almost a vibration. The physical impossibility of producing so rapid a motion by an effort of the will we immediately demonstrated by trying it ourselves. Darby and Gaines, after examination, reported that all the muscles of the arm were absolutely flaccid, without the slightest tension. Furthermore, they discovered under the palm of the hand a thin cold streak. When they pinched this, Joan shrank as though in pain.

"You remember that verse (Ecclesiastes: 12:6) about 'The golden (silver?) cord is loosed'? That is the golden cord," said Joe. "We could take her anywhere while that cord is attached."

We were not quite sure we understood this.

“Do you mean that attachment would stretch enough to permit of her being taken to California, for example?” asked Mrs. Gaines.

“Anywhere. Anywhere in the universe,” assured Joe, “That cord could be loosed by no human agency, except through a vital organ. It can be loosed only when the time comes.”

“Then nothing we might do, no clumsiness could break it?” queried Darby.

“No. No human agency could possibly loose that cord.

“We want to get this Beta. Tonight we are working more with the two stations than with you. It is to get them out and teach them to release completely, not to hold back. It is a purely physical, though internal thing.”

“Can you chat with us at the same time, and not interfere with that work?” I asked.

“Sure,” said Joe, “talk ahead.” *

* It should perhaps have been stated before that the report of all these discussions is absolutely verbatim.

“As I understand it,” said I, “This physical proof of the Beta is to be made not only to us on one occasion, but is to be repeatable at will, so it can be examined scientifically and at leisure?”

“That is what we are after, absolutely.” said he. “One of the first proofs will be a very delicate thermometer to determine the cold.”

“How prove that this repeatable demonstration of the Beta is not merely physiological?” objected Darby.

“In this way,” he replied, “The Beta emanating from a physical body on your plane brings with it a quality of magnetism which we on our plane have passed beyond. This Beta, coming out, intensifies ours. Like voltage; you can intensify a current. This body coming out with its physical magnetism intensifies the others about it. Now we want to produce several Betas. Indeed we have already done so here. You have found three distinct personalities of intense coldness; one by Margaret, one by Stewart, and one near Cass. If we could get them sufficiently intensified, you could see, in addition to a nimbus around Joan, three other pillars or nimbuses. Would not you then be reasonably satisfied that there were three other Betas present?”

“How would we know that these three other nimbuses did not emanate from Joan?” persisted Darby.

“Because when you pinch the Beta of Joan you get a physical reaction from her: and if you pinch the other Betas from now to doomsday you will get no physical jerks from

anybody. It would then be reasonable to suppose that those Betas belong to someone discarnate.”

“Would this affect a compass?” asked Gaines.

“Probably: I am not sure. It would possibly whirl it.” “A radiometer?”

“Yes.”

“And how about the test for weight?”

“There are two procedures. Weigh Joan before going under and after the Beta is out, before and after taking. Then perhaps you can find some scales delicate enough to set them in the cold spots.”

“How delicate?”

“Fairly so. But you might try it with common scales. We do not know ourselves, simply because we haven’t done it either. It will be a difference in ounces rather than pounds.

“Next I want you to get a very dull dark room lantern, one that gives a very small amount of light. Certain colors are intensified by red, and others by blue or green. Get three sets of slides for the lantern, red, blue and green, to help your human vision so you can see the spots of cold.”

Soon after he again asked us to test the cold around Joan. Darby and Gaines, after some search reported a clearly defined cold stratum, or thread, apparently only a few inches wide, extending from Joan’s right hand straight out into the room.

“Try to find the other end of this cord of cold.” urged Joe.

The cord was traced about eight feet in Margaret’s direction.

“It is not a connection to Margaret,” said he, “It is simply that Joan’s body is out, and the cord goes to it. I want to establish the cord.”

“Here is the Professor,” said Joan.

“If this Beta is physically proved,” I asked, “would not that as a corollary be a strong proof of communication; better than the personal identification method?”

“Yes; but not quite in the way you think,” replied the Professor, “It is going to be a dovetailing process rather than a straight line. The thing that we have to establish is not only the existence of the Beta as a part of the human physiology, but the existence of my Beta.”

“The Beta has been demonstrated before, has it not?’ asked Darby.

“Not demonstrated in modern science, and only in isolated cases. It has been demonstrated, surely; but not by such abnormally normal people,” concluded the Professor.

Under advice the two stations were now brought out for a short recess.

When they were again put under, Joe resumed the explanation.

“Let’s get the discussion back to the relation of the Beta to the physical and the effect you, through your wills, can have on it,” he began, “We are doing two things at once here now, and it would help if you would ask questions.”

“In going around the indicated series of conscious mind, subconscious mind, physical body, and Beta,” suggested Darby, “why not go direct from physical to mental and be done with it? The Beta is being postulated.”

“Because,” replied Joe, “there is more to it than from the mental to the physical. You are disturbed because you have never actually given the spiritual a place in existence, and it has a place. IT IS A THING. Can you imagine the difference between your being, your animation and your physical body? There’s a distinct difference.”

“The body, the brain and the ME are all distinct, but - ” began Darby.

“You haven’t defined them properly,” Joe interrupted, “You are in the dark because you have not known that the ME is a body, too.”

“The ME has a body; it isn’t a body,” countered Darby. “The ME as a Beta, that ME goes on,” insisted Joe, “You have an awareness of the ME that many human persons haven’t. You have developed that peculiar attitude. You glimpsed the ME, and you consciously developed the ME. Your above and below the threshold are not so far above or below as most. That is why you consciously are so definitely aware of the ME.”

“Admitting the reasonableness of the Beta,” said Darby, “in the philosophy it is postulated; but it is quite a postulation, and you are trying to give us a sense perception of it. But why communication with the reservoir, the oversoul should have to come through the Beta is too much for me. Why not through our real inner self direct, instead of through a mere attribute?”

“You don’t. You get it through the subconscious, which is to the Beta what the conscious is to the physical. Can your mind communicate with anyone about it without the intervention of your body, through the physical formation and expulsion of words or symbols? All are more closely linked up than you have thought. All consciousness has form just as you have form.”

“So we actually get in touch with a discarnate through a body?” was Darby’s question.

“Exactly. We have form, weight, color, and more senses than you have.”

“Isn’t it necessary to have a notion of the force basis of all matter?” suggested Gaines.

“Matter is only a ganglion of stress points,” stated Joe.

“Then my Beta is my individual bunch of that consciousness,” added Gaines.

“The Beta is the form attribute of the consciousness which is you. The subconscious is to the Beta what the conscious mind is to the physical. It is the everlasting. It is that form attribute that goes on. The spirit is really the subconscious, if you want to get down to fine points.

“Suppose it were possible to take your Beta and stand it alongside you. Then there would be you as you know yourself; your Beta; the conscious mind; and the subconscious mind. They are all actual things. To be sure, as I am now, the Beta and the subconscious mind are more real to me than the conscious mind and the physical body are to you now.”

“Let us take the Beta out. Here it stands and here the physical.

Connected with the Beta is the subconscious; with the physical the conscious. Where is the person?” asked Darby.

“In the Beta,” replied Joe.

“But it isn’t the Beta though?” persisted Darby, “The Beta is also the shell of the real person?”

“The Beta is the form attribute,” was the answer, “All consciousness has form. The physical is the form attribute that comes with physical birth only. There are many worlds, but only one earth.”

“Is there any difference between the essential me and my Beta?” put in Margaret.

“No, not really,” Joe assured her.

“Is the Beta an agglomeration of stress points in the force which is the me?” was Gaines’ next contribution to the discussion.

“Not in the same sense as the physical. There is a difference in kind. You have the same body as I have, and an outer covering which I have discarded as a disintegrating shell. The difficulty is in words. For instance, I have a hand. You could not separate my hand from me and have me go on living. You have a physical hand that you could separate from you and still go on living.

“Don’t forget the subconscious mind.

“The physical body is made up of atoms. Each of these atoms is an individual consciousness, and each of them has a form. The Beta is not made up of any such; not in the way the physical is made up. The Beta is elemental; atomic, but not infinitesimal.”

“The physical body is not our form in any sense?” queried Darby.

“Your Beta is the form of you. Get the difference between form and shape,” answered Joe. “I have to tell you things in terms you know. It would do no good to tell you in

Sanskrit. Our terminology we use here would do no good. We have to do as well as we can in the substance in which we have to work.

“The Beta influences physical form. Have you never heard the phrase, ‘The eyes are the windows of the soul?’ The shape of your face, or your nose or lips would not be governed by your Beta; but the expression of your eyes, your own expression, the atmosphere radiating from you, the personality are controlled by the Beta.”

4. THE FIFTH MEETING

Having thus given us a fairly clear idea of what was to be attempted, the fifth session was largely devoted to experiment. The two stations, after being put under, talked a moment or so to each other. Joan said to hurry up, that she had a long way to go; and that she felt a strong breeze blowing. Betty asked for time to make arrangements; said she had to get her feet planted firmly. Then they fell silent and we waited.

Suddenly Joan held her right hand up flat and vertical.

“I can’t turn my hand over,” she said; then with an effort turned it to the horizontal. “I can’t hold it this way,” she added, “I’ve got to put it back”; and returned it to the vertical.

Then for nearly ten minutes she wriggled the fingers of that hand, sometimes very rapidly, but generally very slowly; sometimes all together, sometimes one at a time.

“There’s a question of procedure,” Betty broke the silence, “Isn’t settled yet. - There are two things unsettled. Don’t be impatient. I’m getting strength for something.”

“What we are trying to do is to get her to allow the Beta to go out at each of her fingers so you can see the emanations. - I think you can see it now, if you squinch your eyes,” suddenly said an Invisible, probably Joe.

We squinched our eyes, and saw a faint smoke-like emanation from the ends of the fingers. This increased in density so that shortly everyone in the room could see it plainly with the eyes normal. It was a fine bluish smoke, much like cigarette smoke, but with apparently a slight phosphorescent tinge. The ordinary electric lights were on in the room.

This and the succeeding phenomenon were seen by everybody, and in most cases from several angles; at distances of, from six to eight feet, to a close examination within a few inches. After everybody had determined this, a forearm began to form parallel to and about five or six inches above Joan’s physical forearm. This was much of the visual character of the secondary image one sees when looking closely into a mirror - the surface glass reflection supplemental to the brilliant mirror reflection.

For perhaps three or four seconds the wrist and hand were also visible to some of us. All present, however, saw the forearm, which lasted for perhaps two minutes or so.

“This test,” Joe told us, after the emanation had gone, “is the best possible because it took place under normal light and conditions.” He paused.

“Wait for directions,” said Betty, “Wait a minute; this is expert work. Space is being made.”

“Now remember,” Joe urged, “that anything that may happen is normal and natural. No matter what happens don’t be frightened or astonished. Try the red light.”

The ordinary electric lights were turned out and a darkroom globe turned on.

There was considerable difficulty in getting this adjusted so the light was properly cast, and much talk and moving to and fro. There seemed to be difficulty as to some one thing, for Betty kept making remarks to the effect that an element was lacking. At length we were instructed to look at Joan’s knees. The effect observed was of voluminous tenuous clouds of rising vapor or smoke. This was not seen at all by Darby, and in varying degrees by the others. Gaines and I apparently got it the strongest. It was as indubitable and physical in appearance as was the smoke of the first experiment, to those who saw it. At the conclusion of the experiment Joe said that different people’s eyes reacted differently to different colors of light. That, for example, Darby was evidently blind to these emanations in red light.

It was somewhat analogous to color-blindness.

“We have at least shown,” Joe continued, “that we can produce the Beta on the physical plane for your investigation. The next time I want a dead, dense, shadowless, dark screen; and I want her to sit in a black chair.

Get various colored lights, not higher than twenty-fives.”

“The thing was so successful in ordinary light, why confuse our eyes with these colors?” asked Margaret.

“The violet ray has an intensifying quality,” explained Joe, “and you can get the same results from a small voltage through purple paper. Get red, green, blue and white. An orange light might produce black. Might try that: it might do. By George, Dad, I’d try that, I believe!”

Somebody said we could drape the folding screen that stood in the other corner for the next experiment.

“How many panels has your screen?” Joe enquired, (Somebody said four)

“Place it around on three sides of her, so as partly to enclose her.

Let’s try it now.”

This was done under the blue light. Again we thought to discern a luminosity at the indicated point, but not distinctly or indubitably enough to make the observation of any value.

“Weel, guid evening to ye all! “ Anne unexpectedly appeared, “It was a grand party. Ye did na see much, but it was a guid start in mair ways than one.”

“Did you not tell us, Anne, sometime ago, that people at ‘materializations’ really saw the Beta of the medium, shaped by her thought to resemble someone else?” asked Darby.

“That,” replied Anne, “is ORDINARILY true. But I didna tell ye it were impossible to see the Beta of the other person. It depends on the conditions; on the receiving station, the strength of the current; on many things we will talk over together.”

“Is the emanation from the tips of the fingers an emanation going on with us all the time?” enquired Gaines.

“No,” was Anne’s answer. “It were the Beta which we showed ye.”

5. THE SIXTH MEETING

For the sixth meeting the four-paneled screen had been covered with a dead black material, as were also the chairs in which the stations were to sit. We had also procured electric globes of from ten to twenty-five watts, colored red, green, lilac and orange, respectively. Mrs. Gaines was unable to be present.

After some waiting, and with the same manipulation of the hand, the smoke-like substance rose again, first from Joan’s thumb, then from all her fingers. At length a complete outline of a dim double hand was visible. This was about four inches above and to the left of the physical hand.

“Any sensation?” Betty then demanded.

Darby approached and touched the double; but not the physical hand. Joan winced and cried out.

This was evidently considered satisfactory for this phase of the experiment; for we were now told to try the different colored lights. The experiment thus far had been under the ordinary white lights of the room.

Accordingly we inserted the various colored globes one at a time. Betty described the green light as “sharp and acid”; the orange light as “glarey”; but seemed content with the lilac, which she said was “soothing and plenishing.” * When we went on with the other colors, she insistently demanded the lilac back again. We ended by using it

customarily. It was of twenty-five watt power, very light in shade, and gave a good strong illumination in which every detail in the large room could be distinguished.

* It must not be forgotten that both stations were always heavily blindfolded.

The outline of Joan's forearm now began to lose its sharpness. It became hazy, much in the effect of a soft focus lens. Shortly an even emanation or nimbus began to form along the entire forearm, radiating perhaps two inches from the flesh. Its appearance in substance was like a greenish-bluish glow of phosphorescence; but had a depth and softness that phosphorescence does not possess. It is probable that the color was influenced by the lilac light. This nimbus defined itself to produce a double of the forearm, as in the previous session.

Joan now asked Margaret to draw nearer. Margaret took her position about four feet from Joan, and slightly to her right and in front of her. After a few moments Margaret extended both hands toward Joan. Afterwards she said that she was impelled to do so by the same recognizable force that used to move her hand in the automatic writing. She also reported that she attempted to lean forward in her chair, but was pushed back by the same type of force to lean against the back. Her hands and arm had the sensation of being upheld, not by any support beneath, nor suspension from above, but by drawing force at the ends of the fingers, as though cords were attached there. That this support had physical value was amply proved by the length of time she held both arms fully extended without fatigue. The same nimbus-like phenomenon, though in a lesser degree, was now observed about her hand. Anne began to talk, and give brief directions. Between Joan's hand and Margaret's two hands a band of the same lucent fog formed, about four to six inches wide, a sort of luminous connection between the two. Then Anne urged "the lasses to shake hands for the lads." The lucence in more condensed form emerged about three or four inches from Margaret's hand, and about a foot and a half from Joan's, but not sufficiently to span the space between. Anne urged Margaret sharply and repeatedly to "let it go." Finally she gave that up, and told them to "play ball." First Margaret, then Joan, turn about, made the motion of tossing something to the other. This caused a flash (the word is intended to express the speed, not the appearance; which had none of the bright quality of a true flash) of this same lucence to pass between them. The effect was much that of the light from an automobile's spot light crossing a room, provided again the element of hard brilliancy were eliminated. It is to be noted that this was not to be seen at every tossing motion. We caught it distinctly about once in three.

Next an indeterminate but voluminous mass of the same material slowly formed above Joan's forearm, or near to her right side. Betty said that an attempt would be made to show Joan's Beta, or a manifestation of one phase of it. The general shape of a form became visible, but the whole thing was more a mass in certain proportion than a form.

The head was not defined. About this stage Anne instructed us to bring them out and take a rest.

After about ten minutes both were put under again. Anne instructed Joan to stand up, still holding Betty's hand. She did so, and the chair was removed. Slowly the right side of her body became indistinct in outline, although apparently there was more reflected light behind on the right side than on the left. The body blended in the usual lucence. This also showed abundantly above her head. It spread until practically the whole area surrounding her was filled with it. A darkness next formed about two feet away to her right, similar in appearance to the "coal hole" in the milky way. At first it made a streak perhaps thirty inches broad right through the lucence, but shortened until the top of it was level with Joan's head. The entire figure of the body following the outline of the right side, including head and forearm, now formed, exactly in appearance like the forearm second image of the first night of these experiments.

Cass, Darby and I remarked at the same instant that the face was slightly in profile. The figure was constant, but the profile was out and in; that is to say, it appeared and disappeared momentarily. Anne instructed someone to "pinch her." I pinched this second body at various points, and got quick and strong reactions from Joan's physical body (about eighteen inches distant) from corresponding points-knee, arm, shoulder, head.

The Beta was strongly drawn toward Margaret, and Joan swayed to follow it, causing Betty to hang onto her tight. Joan next swayed toward Betty. The Beta stayed in position, so the effect was of Joan's drawing away from it, and further exposing it.

Now Joan was reseated in the chair, and the white lights turned up.

These results seemed to us wonderful and satisfying; but Anne told us she was not satisfied.

"Can you tell me what is happening to my right hand? asked Margaret suddenly.

She said that for sometime, beginning with the thumb, and extending to her whole hand, she had felt as though it had been taken and drawn outward. Anne chuckled.

"It's coming out," she explained, "It tingles on the hand, and feels a bit cold, eh? Put your hand an inch from her fingers, and you'll feel the spark."

We then perceived the emanation, as a sort of elongation of the fingers. This was in the white light. Gaines passed his hand about an inch and a half from the ends of her fingers. She shook them violently, as though they had been sensitive and had been touched. This was repeated several times. It required considerable assurance to persuade her that Gaines had not touched her physical fingers; but myself, Darby and Gaines could attest positively that this was not the case. Cass saw the secondary fingers, or prolongation, so distinctly that he could perceive Gaines' hand coming in contact with them. She was in her normal consciousness; though afterwards she told us that

she had tried a short time before to join in our discussion - which accompanied freely all these experiments - and found herself unable to speak.

"I wish," she concluded, "I had some other name for the Beta."

"Ye will call it the Beta," stated Anne, "It has form and shape and is material and has all the attributes of your own body intensified. You - not feel it in a vaporish thing.

The truer thing is what we know, and that is the human body with all its attributes. You are only reflections."

"In case of disease in the physical body, is there a reflex in the Beta?", asked Darby.

"To a certain extent," she told us, "The illness is in the physical body because it disintegrates, and the Beta does not. The Beta is a whole thing, and the physical is many bits."

6. THE SEVENTH MEETING

The seventh session began in afternoon daylight. The smoky emanations commenced almost immediately to rise from Joan's finger tips, and were promptly followed by the nimbus blurring of the forearm. Evidently practice was bringing facility but for some time the phenomenon did not progress beyond this point.

"These are bold experiments," at length remarked Betty, as though in explanation, "Carrying on beyond this point takes more preparation. Oh, poor child, they are stimulating her body to make it more visible. - It is very experimental - Kind of a frictioning process as you would rub color into your skin. - Maybe only a flash will come. Do not look constantly, but intermittently. - You see, naturally her Beta is not very vigorous, is not born, as it were. It must be stimulated; made more visible."

Joan's face seemed to become pearl gray and a little blurred. We all got this, and mentioned it, but were not sure that the effect might not be retinal. In view of later developments it was probably not retinal, but after a few moments this phase of the experiment was apparently abandoned, as indicated by Betty's next remarks.

"They tried to stimulate it to the point of visibility, and now something else is going on," she said. "There is great confidence; so do not get discouraged. It is necessary. The more this experimenting is done, the more sure the results for repetition. We are on the right track; it's all right."

"Who is this who is so certain?" asked Gaines.

"I am; reflecting," returned Betty.

Under detailed instruction through Betty, Margaret and Mrs. Gaines - the "negative poles," as the Invisibles called them - were seated in front of and a little to the left of

Joan and Betty. They were in normal consciousness. Streams of the lucence or “smoke” came to Joan from their hands, which they were both impelled to extend toward her. We tried a military prismatic compass in the line of this emanation and in three trials obtained in each case a west variation of fifteen degrees. Joan was facing magnetic north; and the “negative poles” were twenty degrees east of north of her. Anne now instructed Margaret and Mrs. Gaines to take Joan’s and Betty’s hands, alternating the positive and negative poles. The first manifestation with this arrangement appeared to be that Joan’s skin became self-luminous, shining with a soft white. This seemed evident to all of us, especially in contrast to the flesh tones of the others who sat beside her; but in order to make sure that it was not a reflection we arranged by means of screens to throw a strong shadow on Joan, so that in contrast with the rest of the room she sat in twilight. The luminosity persisted.

We reseated ourselves. Joan’s features became indistinct, as in the first and unsuccessful experiment of the afternoon. It seemed to become a mere mass, without recognizable detail.

Gradually a luminous mist-like mask appeared to form in front of her face, at first intermittent in character, then continuous. It was at first formless, but in a wavering sort of fashion took a kind of rough shape. Soon it became very evident that an attempt was being made to form another face in front of Joan’s, using this fog-like luminous material as the plastic medium. The bandage around Joan’s eyes had disappeared entirely, and shortly we all distinctly saw eyes. The shaping is hard to describe, as it was slow, intermittent, wavering and a little uncertain.

By a strong effort of concentration it was always possible to look through this mask and see Joan’s face with the white bandage around the eyes, but at once the concentration was in the least relaxed the mask face reappeared. The final result was a woman with hair high off her forehead, a rather round face, - or, more accurately, a plump oval, - short nose, long upper lip and wide mouth. This face was not clear and steady, like a physical face, or a photograph. Its features as described above did not change at any time into features of any other character, but they did wax and wane in distinctness, so that at no time was there a completely correlated single image. It had no color.

This disappeared into the same unformed mass of luminous mist in front of Joan’s face. Next a man was attempted. This did not get as far in formation. All that could be determined was that he had a square lean face, square forehead, firm jaw, and (probably) rather high cheek bones.

Anne said this was Stephen.

“Now,” said Anne, “I will show you how bright the lass is, and then you shall take her out.”

Joan's luminous quality increased, first on the exposed flesh, then on her garments, until against the black screen she appeared to be self luminous. Her black gown, which had blended with the screen, was now plainly outlined. By way of test we cast a complete shadow across her feet and ankles by means of a hand screen, but the same degree of luminosity seemed to persist, even on a close examination. Twice crinkly brighter lights showed themselves briefly, once across her forehead, and once around her waist. At last her eyes became luminously visible to us through the bandage she wore about them.

All this was done by daylight, leisurely, without excitement on our part, and with every precaution we could think of to avoid retinal strain. We did not stare fixedly, we rested our eyes often. We refused to accept many small phases we could not be sure we saw; that were not in a way FORCED on us.

We now brought the stations back to normal consciousness and adjourned for dinner.

The session resumed about nine o'clock. The violet light was used, as having been the most successful. This, by the way, was on the left and a little in front of the stations, and so arranged that they cast no shadow on the screen background. The Negative Poles were seated as before, I.E., alternating with the two Positives.

The first attempt was only partially successful. The cloud of mist formed above Joan, and as time went on we distinguished a vertical shaft of it to her right. This, however, attained no further definition. The experiment with the mask-like faces was then resumed. The procedure was as in the afternoon. Margaret described the impression as like that of being at considerable distance from people, as in an opera house, and seeing the faces as masses, with features half defined or momentarily glimpsed. To me it was like looking down through clear water at a face just at the limit of visibility because of the depth. The quality of the glow, mist, emanation we have called phosphorescent was more the quality of the light one gets through the water of the usual aquarium.

Six different faces were formed one after the other. Some were recognized by one or another of us. We adopted the idea of checking off the salient features against each other. It must be remembered that the members of this group came from widely separated sections of the continent, and possessed few mutual acquaintances on this earth, and none on the other side.

So Cass, for example, would say: "I recognize this one."

Whereupon I, who had never seen the original of the portrait, would describe the features. In all cases these comparisons tallied perfectly.

This is a good time to note one impression. These images or masks gave the emotion naturally accorded to portraits rather than personalities.

The observers were pleased at recognizing them, but experienced none of the intense welcoming emotion that would naturally follow the appearance of actual personalities. Indeed there was not the inner feeling of personality that so often accompanies the spoken word. They were, what Anne called them, pictures. It should further be noted that these pictures were, in the majority of cases, of persons with whose features Joan was unfamiliar. She had never heard of some of them, had certainly never seen them, nor a photograph of them.

It should also be noted that with the possible exception of the time when Anne showed "how bright the lass is," there is nothing up to now positively to connect these phenomena with the Beta idea. They were extraordinarily interesting, but did not go beyond the ectoplasm hypothesis. Indeed, Anne expressed something of this thought.

"We did not get so far the night as we had hoped," said she. "I do na think it is arranged quite right yet. It is better without the touching of the pulse; without Margaret and Lucy touching Joan and Betty, but just sitting near so the spark can jump across. We are a bit disappointed about tonight. We had a big program planned."

"Were those masks we saw made of Joan's Beta," asked Darby, "or the Betas of the people who showed their portraits) In other words, were those people actually there?"

"That is a bit difficult," was the reply, "They were here and they were not. It was their own Beta that was revealed. If it had been wholly successful, then you would have had no doubt because you would have known them. You, however, saw them plainer than you saw Joan's own Beta. Ye ken that your difficulty is in your own minds. They close down and refuse. You see, and you know that you see, and yet you doubt. Jack did see Joe, and he knows he saw Joe."

"No," denied Gaines, "I saw a form, but I saw no face there nor anything resembling him. I am willing to admit that it was Joe, if you say so; but I could not SEE that it was he. Why are these faces represented as of a certain age in life?"

"They chose what is most recognizable," Anne told him, "Now bring out Betty and I will try to show her something."

Betty was brought out. The Negative Poles also came back into the body of the room so that Joan was left alone. Under Anne's direction she stood up, and the chair was removed. The succeeding phenomena are interesting not only because of their especial features, but also because they proved that Joan has now so progressed that she can get along without Betty's help on the other side.

They started again with the "masks." The first head was a good rough portrait of someone known to two of us.

Betty could not distinguish the features, but saw only the change in Joan's face. Mary K. came next. The face was as before, but now a strong, big framed, square shouldered

body was in some manner suggested so plainly that we all got it, except Betty, who still seemed to be seeing the first phases. While we watched, the face and bust turned to the left squarely into a profile, well-marked and unmistakable. I crossed the room rapidly and found that Joan had not stirred, and was still facing straight out into the room.

Anne came again with a portrait of herself that she had shown in the afternoon. There was also here a suggestion of body, with a long sort of waist and flaring full skirts that reached to the floor. (Joan's costume was the modern close fitting gown, then in style, with short skirts).

"You are vain, Anne," joked Gaines, "to show yourself so young. You were an old woman when you died."

Immediately the face began to change until it had become that of a very old woman. Then it took on a middle age; and afterwards returned to youth. This took place slowly.

The most vivid portraits now followed; those of Joe and Lee. The likeness of Joe was perfect, strongly marked, and steadier than the others. He wore a sailor suit, and held his hands, so Gaines said, in a characteristic attitude. Lee appeared as a very pure young face, of great beauty, with an apparent age of about sixteen.

Anne announced that she would try to show them both at once, adding that she did not know how to do it; and was doubtful of success. She apparently produced two of the misty shadows, one either side of Joan, but they did not take human shape. This closed the session.

I will add as a matter of interest that earlier in the evening crystal gazing had been tried. Joan, Lucy * and Margaret saw several little scenes carrying inconclusive action: a prospector making camp, a boat trip down a tropical river, an episode in the street of a foreign city, etc. These scenes were said to be sharp cut, clearer than a photograph.

* Mrs. Gaines.

The interesting point was that all three could see the same thing at the same time. This would obviate the subjective self-hypnosis theory unless an hypothesis of accurate telepathy were adopted.

7. THE EIGHTH MEETING

"The next step," remarked Anne, "is to have more and more of the Beta come out, together with more and more of ours to assimilate it, so as to have the appearance strong enough to examine and to analyze. So have patience, and continue along the same lines, though this time, with the free force-current - it is not a good word - it will go further out. You will take note that the first action is always the same."

This was true. The usual milky emanations took place around Joan. We expected further manifestations about the face, so we were much surprised to see that Joan's right hand was to be the field of operation. It lengthened to almost twice its normal length. Sometimes it had a deeply cloven aspect, again it was filled in solid. First one finger then the other would instantaneously appear of an inordinate length. It would not shoot out, but would suddenly show and as suddenly disappear, though the continuance of the appearance would extend to eight or ten seconds. The hand and the fingers at times seemed to be in motion, though both Gaines and I approached near enough to attest that Joan's physical hand was immobile. Indeed on trial we found we could not possibly hold our hands as completely still. At times the ends of these Beta fingers, as one might call them, were a deep red, and looked not unlike flame; at all times they had a pink tone. It was noted that Joan's flesh, either on the arms, face or neck, had none of the usual luminous greenish-bluish effect. At one time, for some seconds, the hand folded into the likeness of a lily-like flower. On near examinations the fingers of Joan's own hand glowed in a phosphorescence of a reddish tinge, and the extensions to the fingers were not unlike in appearance to a Chinaman's nails that had been permitted to grow long. This could be distinguished even as close as three feet. Closer examination showed merely the natural hand surrounded by the "smoke."

This phenomenon finished, there ensued a short pause. Gaines arose from his chair to examine more closely. At a distance of five or six feet from Joan, he placed his foot on the carpet in stepping forward. Joan cried out sharply, saying: "Get off me! You are stepping on me!" Gaines hastily resumed his chair! Almost immediately afterward he complained of the cold and continued to do so at intervals. The cold was remarked here and there. Joan's figure seemed to become larger and slightly luminous.

"Why we don't exist except -" cried Betty suddenly, "I'm out in the room! - We're both spread over the room! - Now we are down over Margaret's desk."

"Let's pull them back a little," suggested Joan, "We can't do anything when they go out so far."

Betty afterwards said that from her vantage point of the other consciousness she watched the process in Joan. The mist came out from her, rolled over and over like a ball, and finally became detached. Then to her astonishment she found herself also out in the room, and the two together seemed to fill it. She wanted to go away outside the room with Joan but was forbidden. She had an impression of "putting pressure," "spreading waves of influence," and got the idea that this was their method of influencing us. She said that it seemed to her intended more as a development work for the two of them than an attempt to do anything for us; and at one time remarked: "They have freed us both together for future work."

Anne then remarked briefly that she would show us some pictures. The procedure did not differ from yesterday's. Joe was unmistakable in his sailor suit, seated. Before this last portrait came out there seemed to be an obvious confusion of feature, showing first one way, then another.

Betty remarked: "Stephen and Joe fought over it. That wasn't very good.

Stephen started it and Joe ended."

"I want Betty to see something, so I will send her out," said Anne.

Betty came back very slowly and reluctantly, and the same type of experiments were repeated with what seemed to the rest of us signal success. To her great disappointment, however, Betty could see little beyond the fact that Joan's features disappeared, that there was a luminous mist, and that something - almost formless to her, - was superimposed over Joan's face. The rest of us, with the exception of Margaret, had seen not only the same thing, but apparently the same degree of the same thing. Margaret had lapses when she saw nothing.

Now while we had no doubt that certain phenomena were actually taking place, outside the possibility of delusion, this aspect disturbed us somewhat. We discussed it at length. Two previous statements were recalled. Joe had told us that part of the necessary preparation for these experiments was the tuning of our retinas to see; and that when on one occasion Gaines had not seen when we had seen, it was because he was "being used." The first statement seems to have a very good analogy in the necessary adjustment of the pupils when one comes from brilliant sunshine into a dark room. The influence of color in light toward making certain objects more or less visible is also apposite. Motion picture camera men, for example, have colored screens, to determine actinic values, which will completely eliminate from visibility certain colored bright flowers in a field of grass, or will throw into strong relief other objects which to the naked eye are in indistinguishable monotone with their surroundings. Thus the especial preparation of the audience, as one might call it, should be considered a legitimate part of such experiments as these.

Nevertheless we appreciated perfectly that to have generally convincing value it should be possible for ANY person to see these things clearly at ANY time. It is comparatively useless from a scientific point of view to bring about results of which only certain persons can be aware, and of which certain other persons then present will see nothing at all. If especial preparation of the retina is needed, then that preparation must become as standardized as the cameraman's color filters. Acknowledged that the color filter is necessary; acknowledged that it is absurd to hope to see with the naked eye, so to speak, what requires especial apparatus, nevertheless that especial apparatus must be universally applicable. Otherwise a certain proportion of scientific test must at

certain times prove negative, depending entirely on the personal equipment of the investigator or his susceptibility to necessary adjustment.

It is perhaps too much to expect at this stage of the subject's development that this standardization should have taken place. Therefore, exact scientific proof is not yet possible. We are still in the empirical stage of investigation, the accumulation of testimony, which must be examined and weighed on the credibility, the balance and the judgment of the witnesses.

"Betty," Anne answered her complaint, "cannot see because she is not her normal self. She has not come clear back. There is an unconscious tenacity. It is not Marget's fault (that she sometimes sees imperfectly).

We use her a great deal with the lass (Joan)."

"Could you even vaguely give us a glimpse as to the direction the work is to take?" I asked.

"We shall try to get the Beta entirely out and clear so that it is tangible. This is experimental with us as with you, and we cannot tell exactly."

8. THE NINTH MEETING

On the occasion of the ninth meeting what was said to be Joan's actual Beta was shown, as distinct from the molded materials that had made the "pictures" or masks.

Darby and Joan were a little later than the rest in arriving, so we tried Margaret alone against the black screen. We perceived the smoky emanations from the ends of the fingers and very successfully repeated the experiment of touching the air from one to about three inches from the ends of the fingers and getting an instant physical reaction.

Margaret reported that whereas the other day it felt definitely as though her finger were touched, today she received rather a sharp semi-painful shock, almost as though from an electric current. Darby and Joan now came in, and Betty was put under with Margaret in order to give Joan a chance to see something, if possible. The demonstration was entirely successful.

The peculiar lengthening of Margaret's fingers, the cloud of lucence, and finally the formation of masks followed customary lines. The mere fact that well-defined portraits could be obtained before Margaret as well as Joan was interesting. Three portraits were shown. The last was the most distinct and unwavering of any we have had yet. A man with gray or light Vandyke beard, deep eyes, considerable hair, with a cowlick just off the center line of the forehead. Joan identified this as her father. Betty coughed in a hacking fashion just as this mask formed: and Joan said this was characteristic. Somebody through Betty, probably Joan's father, said, "Very very gratifying." Betty

instructed us that Mrs. Gaines was now to work at this, after Margaret, and before Joan, "In order to harmonize."

Accordingly she took Margaret's place for some time. The phenomena centered on her right hand. The fingers elongated and returned to normal, the hand stellated or became a solid bunch, and the fingers writhed and moved - though the physical hand was motionless, - just as had Joan's the other day. A new aspect was furnished by the pulsing aurora-like rays of lucence that shot from the extended palm of her hand toward the floor.

These were quite the most vivid of anything we had yet seen. There were also brief but bright flashes across her breast.

Now Joan was put under, and the original team went to work. The upheld hand went through its changes as before.

"We are coming out again. Wait for us," stated Betty.

Joan's ankles began to show as luminous. We had particularly noticed previously that they were in almost complete shadow, and without shine.

Now, however, they began to glow. The luminosity extended upward to just below the waist. The same effect began at the shoulders and extended downward, tending to meet that below, eating steadily into the dark area that persisted longest about her waist. We tried moving the lamp standard to throw more and less light, but without effect in altering either the extent or entirety of the luminosity.

"Joan is melting away like a piece of ice," said Betty.

The ankles now began to dim, followed in reverse order by a dimming of the rest of the luminosity, until her appearance was again normal.

"Now," said Betty, "we are out all over the room."

The cold was felt, especially near the floor. The self-registering thermometer showed a drop of about four degrees, but as a door had been opened at one time for a few minutes, the record was not conclusive. It should be noted, however, that we were unable to bring about a like drop later by opening the same door.

Gaines was the first to note a feeling of pressure in the room, as if the air pressure had been increased. This was noticed by all, and was mentioned by Betty.

"Now it's all right," said she, "It has filled the room. We are in a different fluid substance."

To what extent that which followed was objective, in the usual acceptance of those terms, it is useless to speculate on now; nor to what extent it was self-induced or

brought about. The facts must be recorded as carefully as possible, and explanations left for fuller development.

Darby and I saw the same things, practically to the same extent, and at the same time. Gaines saw them sometimes. When he did not see them he was conscious of a strong current of some sort. Cass saw the same things, but less often, and sometimes not so completely. He also was conscious of a current. Mrs. Gaines and Margaret saw less, but were almost continuously conscious of the current. Darby and I were at no time conscious of currents. Some days ago Anne, through Joan, told Darby that Gaines was a good "feeder," and that while on that job he would see nothing. Darby did not tell Gaines this until after the latter had reported the fact mentioned above.

The usual mask, or shell was thrown in front of Joan's face. She then raised her hand to her physical face. The hand showed plainly THROUGH the mask; and it became evident that the physical face had vanished entirely.

That is, the hand, plainly visible, was shown through the mask, against an apparently empty background; though in reality it rested against her physical chin. This was repeated on request, and was seen plainly for some time by everybody.

I was seated within about four or five feet of Joan, who was more distinctly visible to me than to anyone else in the room. While I watched, not stared, - removing my eyes every moment or so to avoid strain, - first the outlines of her body merged with the black background, leaving boldly prominent the white of her arms, neck and face. Then swiftly the black seemed to close over these. Joan had vanished utterly, leaving only the black screen. She reappeared as swiftly at the end of three seconds. I remarked on this, but suspected it as perhaps the blurring effect of too attentive looking. I therefore tried, by staring intently, by blurring my eyes, and similar devices, to repeat this blotting out effect, but in vain. The most I could accomplish was a doubling of the white areas, or a blurring of their outlines. When I had fully satisfied myself as to this, the phenomenon automatically resumed.

At first this initial vanishment was the only complete one. The subsequent trials obliterated only parts. The forearm would disappear, or the face, or the neck. Darby began to get the same effects shortly after myself. In the leisure of the repetitions we were both enabled to notice the fact that all the details of the room remained clear. In other words, it was not as though Joan had been blotted out by fog or smoke.

"She will be replaced by something that can only be completed in this sort of substance. It is like making an aquarium," commented Betty.

The complete obliteration was repeated a number of times, each occasion lasting a little longer than the last, until Joan was invisible to upwards of half a minute at a time. Then in this complete blackness a head and shoulders would come, smaller in size than

Joan, sometimes full face, sometimes in profile, sometimes half face. It was illuminated, but not in the surface phosphorescent manner of the masks; rather more after the fashion of a frosted incandescent globe, from within. This appearance was clearly defined, but, - as far as I saw, - without features; in relief; as a silhouette. It was unlike the masks in that it seemed to give the impression of a living entity, - a personality. The guess was hazarded that this might be Joan's actual Beta, which was later briefly corroborated by Anne when she resumed vocal control.

Betty, herself still in the other consciousness, now took charge of Joan's coming out. She warned us to sit still, not to make sudden movements; saying that she had to "pack Joan back in neatly." She said we should not try to take her out until Anne spoke. This did not happen until after some moments.

"We demonstrated," said Anne, faintly.

9. THE TENTH MEETING

Unfortunately Mrs. Gaines was unable to be present at the tenth meeting. When the two stations had been put under, someone directed through Joan that Betty was to lie flat between herself and Margaret. As a mattress had to be procured and cushions arranged, the stations were brought back. They had been out perhaps a minute. Jokingly, Darby told Joan the session had lasted four hours. It was interesting to observe how unquestioningly she accepted this. She was much perturbed over the thought of having missed a suburban train! The arrangements perfected, the session was resumed.

The first thing noticed was a cloud of palpitating mist above Betty's face. Then Joan's upheld hand melted and contorted as usual. Both her features and Margaret's became indistinguishable, though they had been plainly visible, especially to myself, as I was sitting within five feet of Margaret. Darby, much interested, took a chair within two feet of Joan. Even when that near he could see flashes of illumination playing over her face in the manner of phosphorus on fingers that have handled the heads of matches, and also at one time a similar light on the back of her neck, which was in deep shadow.

"Margaret and I are to form a bridge over Betty, and then they will walk on it." said Joan.

For the next few moments bands and patches of the lucent mist played between Joan and Margaret. Then Betty's bare arms began to lose their outline and get fuzzy. The effect was much as though the arms had been encased in a loose chiffon sleeve. A band of lucence, more brilliant than the usual glow, ran across and followed the curve of her breast. The fuzzy chiffon effect gradually spread over the whole figure.

Anne now began to coax her in a very pretty manner: "Coom now, lass dear; coom wi' Anne," and the like. Betty complained that she was paralyzed, felt like cast iron. After considerable coaxing the chiffon effect of the whole figure seemed to have risen perhaps eight or ten inches above Betty, and to heave gently, like a ground swell. Under orders from Anne, Joan, moving woodenly, like an automaton, left her chair, half knelt, and thrust forward her hand over Betty.

"Try to put your hand between her Beta and the lass," instructed Anne.

As Joan's hand and arm were extended over and close to Betty's physical body, we could see that they were partly obscured by the mist-like chiffon. Anne commanded Joan to lift Betty up. Joan put both hands below the Beta and lifted strongly, raising the Beta perhaps six inches above its first position. While doing so she panted heavily, as though in great exertion; and after resuming her seat continued to breath pantingly for some moments. Betty's physical body, including the folds of the gown, now began to sharpen. It is to be noted that during this experiment both Joan's and Margaret's features, which had been lost before, were again clearly defined.

While this experiment was going on, both Gaines and Cass remarked on an outpouring sensation from their hands. Examining them at close range, we saw the thin smoky emanations coming off their fingers.

The first phenomenon of the next experiment showed as a broad ray, or series of rays, extending upward from Betty's head. This band was broad and indeterminate.

"Gather yourself together, lass," urged Anne sharply, "you're all over the place. Make yourself pretty now for the gentlemen."

In the center of this shaft Darby, Gaines, and to a much less degree Cass and I, thought to make out an upright form of about human proportions.

Betty announced herself as standing up. It was neither well-defined nor distinct. Betty said afterwards that the lack of force on the "negative pole" side had something to do with the fact that success was only partial. Mrs. Gaines absence threw the whole burden on Margaret.

"When this is successful," said Anne, "You will see Betty standing there."

The shaft thing around her is Margaret and Joan. When Betty is in that her image becomes intensified by it. That is the method."

The central vague image now began to fade, but the band or shaft persisted for a few moments after it had disappeared. Once Anne admonished sharply: "Don't go back too quickly, Marget," she cried, "Let Betty go first!"

"I was so heavy," complained Betty, "It was like being in a diver's suit and having to get up."

“Next we will do somewhat with Marget,” announced Anne.

With fairly startling speed a mask formed in front of Margaret. It was one of the steadiest and the most detailed yet shown: a man with a close-cropped white beard, a straight nose, dark well marked eye-brows ending abruptly next the nose, with a square effect, a high brow, and with an arching tuft or cowlick just to the right of center; the same as had been identified as Joan’s father the other night.

A second clear mask was shown, and a third started, but did not get far.

Anne said Margaret was getting tired, and abandoned it. Margaret was conscious throughout. By direction Betty came out. Anne said she wanted to try Joan alone. Anne was very particular as to the elimination of shadows, and that we should notice carefully what shadows could not be eliminated.

She started the experiment by causing Joan to disappear, as on the other evening. While she was visible, her arms to the shoulder were discernible as through gauze, although the stuff of which her sleeves were made was of thick opaque material. After Joan had been blotted out thus three times, I again saw her Beta glowing with the inner incandescence. She was now standing. The others also saw it, but intermittently. To me the phenomenon continued uninterrupted. The screen and the woodwork of the room, etc., were at all times plainly visible. In other words, it was not as if a fog had been drawn or formed before the whole vision. Anne explained that Joan’s Beta stepped in front of a screen formed to hide her physical body. The Beta turned in profile to the west, head and bust and arms, although Margaret, who was seated next Joan, reported that Joan herself had not stirred. It showed thus plainly the profile features, chin, nose, brow (without the eye bandage), though full-face features were indistinguishable. I requested that she turn to the east. This was done about three-quarters, again without movement of Joan’s physical body. Anne next announced that she would try to have Joan’s Beta step entirely away from the physical. For some time the Beta swayed slowly toward the west, seeming almost to break away, but always swaying back again to position. Then the Beta faded, and Joan reappeared.

“I would have you notice,” requested Anne, “that the lass has stood in an impossible position for twenty minutes, knees and heels together, and hands clasped. It has not tired her because we have held her up. Now watch and I will let her down into her chair.”

Joan, with arms rigidly extended downwards, and body erect, sank very slowly to a sitting position. This was done without any compensating, balancing flexions or leaning of the body. Subsequent experiments by some of us plainly showed that this would have been to a conscious person a remarkable feat of strength and balance, if indeed it could have been done at all. I requested the repetition of an experiment I had been told of. Joan extended her arms and clasped her hands in front of her at the level of her face. I

exerted considerable strength in trying to press the hands downward to her lap, but without success. At the same time I, and the others, felt of the muscles of her upper arms and shoulders. They remained loose and flaccid.

"I just want ye to ken how it is," said Anne, "In a book, an ancient book, not much read these days, it was written that your hands are upheld. Underneath the lass's hands are other hands. The miracles are not miracles; they are Law."

10. OUR FINAL MEETING

Our final meeting began about half past three in the afternoon, and at the request of the Invisibles Joan sat alone before the screen.

A mask of Anne was shown, with recognizable features as before. All but Betty saw this. She saw that the face was not Joan's; but that was as far as she got. Anne finally told Betty, who had been complaining of drowsiness, to sit next Joan. Almost immediately she went out, without the usual holding of the wrist, and without an eye bandage. The mask of Anne clarified and strengthened. I, who was on Joan's right, saw toward the back of her head a puff shape of gray that looked like the back part of a Tudor cape, or an outstanding roll of white hair. Anne's hair was black, and parted a little to one side. Asking what this might be, I got the reply: "It is the Beta of the lass coomin' over." At the fading of Anne's mask, Margaret was called for, and took Joan's other wrist. For some time nothing happened except the smoky emanations. "Watch the carpet," advised Anne.

We did so, and saw a bright spot form around Joan's feet. It gradually enlarged to a circle of which, roughly speaking, Joan's feet were the center, but which was wide enough to include the feet of the other two who sat next her. A cool breeze or feeling of evaporation was discernible about two feet above the floor. This afterwards concentrated around Joan's feet and rose in a cloud to about the height of her knee. Anne said the intention was to show a mist out in the room and standing; but that the lilac electric light was better for this than the daylight.

Darby suggested putting the operators behind the screen instead of in front of it. Anne assented a little doubtfully, but said we might try it, only to "wait for the blue light." Accordingly we took an hour's recess until the daylight should fade.

The session was resumed at 5:30. Joan, Betty and Margaret were placed behind the black screen.

"Ye will be watching the bottom next the carpet," Anne instructed.

Almost immediately the typical luminous fog began to seep through below the screen, until the sharp line of demarcation between the bottom of the black screen and the

lighter rug was blurred. Shortly we all noticed that the center panel of the screen appeared to bulge outward a little; and this bulge seemed to palpitate or waver. There were some quite sharp folds in the black stuff that draped the screen (which itself was stretched tight and “unbulgeable”). These folds over the bulging portion were completely obscured by the luminous fog, which was about in the proportionate dimensions of a standing human figure directly in front of the place where we knew Joan to be seated behind the screen. After a few moments this appearance moved about two feet to our left along the screen. The folds that had been obscured again came sharply into sight, while those to the left that had been clearly defined, now disappeared.

At this moment the telephone rang. In answering it, I passed behind the screen. To my surprise I found that Joan was no longer seated, nor even directly in front of her chair; but erect, and exactly behind the point at which the latest obscuration was taking place on the other side of the screen. In other words, the shifts of position and location were following exactly Joan’s to us unknown movements.

“Ye’ll no be tellin’ all ye know!” cried Anne, calling me by name.

Anne seemed quite jubilant over this much of success. She remarked that it had been no light feat to get the Beta out so far and through the thick stuff of which the screen was made.

The three now resumed their places in front of the screen. Under direction we completely covered Joan with a piece of black cloth thrown over her head and falling to the floor. The material was thick and impervious; so much so, indeed, that Darby rather objected on the ground that Joan might be smothered.

“We will take care of the lass,” Anne assured him.

Through this formless thick black drapery Joan’s figure was several times made distinctly visible in rather blurred outline as a glowing lucence, and then allowed to fade until merely the dark mass of the drapery remained. At first this luminosity extended above Joan’s head; so that it seemed to us probable that an attempt was being made to show her standing figure while physically she remained seated.

After some interval, Anne directed us to fix our attention at a point about two feet in front of Joan. Gradually there formed a wraith-like thin mist, of about human proportions as to length and breadth, but without definite shape. It was very thin, and the eye lost it easily. By itself it would have been a very dubious demonstration, but in connection with the extremely distinct phenomena we had been observing, we felt justified in recording it. The most convincing test of it was to look at someone through it. Then the obscuration though slight, seemed unmistakable.

"I hae actually the lass's Beta standing two feet in front of her." Said Anne, "She is not so tall as she is." (I.E. in the physical) "She is a verra good fit in hersel'."

Darby started to put his hand out toward the mist.

"Dinna touch it!" commanded Anne sharply.

"Why?" asked Darby, "Would it injure her?"

"Na," replied Anne, "But ye hae seen her start when ye touch her, and the jerk would disturb the ither twa lasses."

The black drape was removed.

"I had her hands around the wrists of some of ye," Anne told us, "but you did not know it. How can I make you feel when you are so stupid! The feel of the Beta is like cold and like evaporating. Come now, lad, sit on the floor in front of the lass and we'll make you pretty."

I did so. My sensations were that of sitting in an ice box with a trickling cold shower coming down from above. I noted afterward that this, however, did not cause me to shiver. The others reported that a mask was made on my face. I had no sensations other than the cold, except a strong impulse to suck in my cheeks.

Anne announced another recess until after dinner. She said that she would send out Betty herself without aid.

We resumed at 9:00 P.M. Margaret sat in the center, with Mrs. Gaines and Betty on either side. Joan made part of the audience.

A number of most excellent masks were produced for Joan's benefit. The most remarkable and novel was a very brief one of Margaret herself. This was not located as usual in front of her own face, but about a foot to the left of it, and between her and Mrs. Gaines. It endured as a luminous spot or globe about the size of a head for some time, but showed as a face for only an instant.

Joan was now put under, and by Anne's direction Gaines sat on the floor in front of her. Joan extended her hands, with Betty and Margaret still holding her wrists, passing them in a weaving motion over Gaines's head. Now Gaines is a round-faced man with a nose to match. He became a sharp-nosed person with a thin face and heavy black eyebrows. Darby and I were actually within three feet of him when this change took place. Anne kept up a running comment in a facetious vein. Gaines reported the same cold and shower bath effect that I had experienced.

Anne now called for Betty. She took Gaines's place on the floor in front of Joan. Darby and I drew closer until we were so near as almost to touch her. Her face seemed to change in feature and shape until we saw her before us as a child of about eight years, with square-banged dark hair.

I tried to focus my gaze to penetrate through the mask to distinguish the real Betty, but was unable to do so. The appearance of this new face seemed to all of us as of flesh and blood, and not of the luminous monotone of the usual masks. It was precisely AS THOUGH the actual flesh had been manipulated.

“Now we will play a joke on Betty; she will na mind,” said Anne.

Betty’s face lengthened; the brow became wide and low; high cheek bones came into prominence. The result was a grotesque.

“Now she’s a comic valentine,” quoth Anne.

Joan waved her arm with a sudden motion and Betty instantly reappeared.

This was a most astonishing performance of “magic,” considering the illumination, the close proximity of the observers, the complete change of appearance, and the fact that the result seemed more living than the portrait masks. No explanation was given. It seemed simply, to be done as an amusing thing.

11. CONCLUSION

This was the last meeting of us eight. The sessions had extended nearly six weeks, and those of us who lived at a distance could stay no longer.

It is evident that the original program was only partly carried out. This was, it will be remembered, to demonstrate and prove the existence of the Beta. The demonstration was given to our own complete satisfaction; and is invaluable in linking up the philosophical statements in THE SEVEN PURPOSES, OUR UNSEEN GUEST, and Betty’s teachings, of which this book is merely the A B C. It was not carried to the point of scientific proof.

Things went more slowly than had been anticipated. The phenomena were produced in increasing perfection, but it did not strike me that they had become certainly standardized so that they could be invariably repeated for scientific analysis. That is only an impression; I may be wrong there. At any rate, the group was forced to separate before the stage of scientific analysis was reached.

The Invisibles did not seem to be wholly dissatisfied.

“You have gone a long way; much farther than you realize now,” they told us at the last. “However, you will realize how far you have gone in this short time when I tell you that the results you have yourselves seen are as nothing compared with the results we are able to see here.”

“We’ve all done bully work together, haven’t we?” Joe expressed it, “It’s been worthwhile and we are well on the road over here, because we have a start on a new

manipulation. We have done much more here than you have there. You see we have more or less to do the work here before we can give it to you.”

“How much difference is there between this physical work we have done, and what is generally called materialization?” queried Margaret.

“Not much, except that it is more sensible, and you know what you are doing. It is being consciously combined with the teaching. It has been done before after a fashion, but not from a scientific standpoint. There is no particular value in merely seeing these masks, or the Beta, the stripped soul, except as it has scientific value. There have always been those who could do this, in a way. We are not ready for scientists yet.”

Such is a record of these, to me, extraordinary meetings. Anyone is, of course, at entire liberty to interpret it as he pleases. The only thing I vouch for is the accuracy of the report. The reader is at liberty to question anything but the absolute and entire good faith of the experimenters. Either these things happened, or we unanimously thought they did. On the most skeptical interpretation possible, the whole thing would be a remarkable example of collective hallucination. Personally, any but the simple and direct interpretation involves me in so many logical fallacies and intricacies that I have ended by taking the matter at its face value.

THE END



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